

From the Schwarzspanier House¹

My Boyhood Memories of Beethoven

by

Dr. Gerhard von Breuning

Vienna, 1874. Publisher: L. Rosner

Written for my children,
Gerhard, Constanze and Emma
and dedicated to their memory

To the Memory of

Dr. Gerhard von Breuning

and dedicated by faithful friends

Vienna, 1893

Translation and Annotation: Dr. John L. Miller,
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¹*Translator's note:* The "Schwarzspanierhaus" (House of the Black Spaniards) was so called because it was originally a monastery for Spanish monks, who wore black robes. The monastery was secularized in 1781 and eventually divided into rather elegant apartments. The building fell into disrepair over the years and was demolished in 1903.

Foreword

Several times through the years I have begun to write down my memories of the time spent with Beethoven, planning to include the stories my father told me of his experiences with the composer before my time. Collecting these fragments into a unified whole, however, was postponed again and again.

The approach of the centennial year, 1870, made it seem more urgent than ever to carry out my plan, but this time, again, my intentions were frustrated. On March 11 of that year death robbed me of my youngest son, just at the beginning of his nineteenth year, just as he was beginning to mature intellectually and spiritually!

Since then Vienna has celebrated the centennial of Beethoven's birthday splendidly, and the next year Bonn followed with its own festival--audiences thronging from every province to hear superlative performances of the Titan's masterpieces.

I received the following invitation to the Bonn Festival:

Bonn
July 8, 1871

My dear Sir:

Last year the undersigned committee had the honor of inviting you the celebration planned for the centennial of Beethoven's birthday. Unfortunately the festival had to be canceled, due to the sudden outbreak of the war. We have retained the program of last year and have decided to reschedule the Beethoven Festival on the dates specified in the enclosure. We hope that you will do us the honor of accepting our renewed invitation to attend. We would consider it very important if you would be so kind as to be our Guest of Honor at the Festival, because it adds special meaning to see among the guests those who had personal contact with the great Hero in whose memory the Festival is held. Your presence would be doubly welcome because it was in your family's esteemed home in Bonn that young Beethoven experienced the first bright moments in his bleak young life.

We remain respectfully yours, and await your kind acceptance,

Sincerely,
The Festival-Committee
Foreign Office
Chairman:
Kaufmann,
Lord Mayor

This flattering invitation from the Bonn Festival Committee, together with the cordial welcome they extended, persuaded me that my parents, my grandparents and my own association with Beethoven might well be of interest to others.

Indeed, I came to see sharing memories of the close contact I enjoyed with that genius as something of a responsibility. Thus I really owe this publication to the friendly encouragement of the Bonn Festival Committee. The demands of several other activities, however, have prevented the completion and publication of the work until now.

It will please me and the purpose of the words published here will be achieved if they succeed in arousing and holding the reader's attention. In any case these lines will bear witness to Wegeler's statement in his *Nachtrag*, when he says, "Beethoven's memory lives on in the Breuning family."

Vienna. Summer, 1874.

* * *

In August of 1825, on an afternoon stroll with my parents, it was my good fortune to meet Beethoven.² My father had planned to stop for a moment at his office, and we were just crossing the street that circles Vienna's inner city, where it intersects the glacis³ between the Kärtner and Karolina gates. All at once we saw a lone man striding in our direction, ramrod-straight and full of purpose. My parents and the man rushed forward to greet each other, each delighted at the unexpected meeting. He was of average height, full of strength and energy, his gait vigorous, his suit so inelegant as to appear working-class, and yet there was something about his total person that defied assignment to any social rank.

He talked almost without pausing for breath--about our health, about our relatives on the Rhine; he wanted to know everything! He asked (without waiting for an answer) why my father hadn't visited him for so long--there seemed no end to his questions. He said he had lived for a while on Kotgasse, more recently on Krugerstrasse, now he spent summers in Baden. With great delight and no break in his rapid monolog he told us he would soon (toward the end of September) move into our immediate vicinity: the Schwarzspanierhaus (we lived diagonally across the square to the right of it, in the Red House belonging to Prince Eszterhazy). This was particularly exciting news because he said he planned to visit us quite often. He immediately asked my

² *Translator's note:* Born August 28, 1813, Gerhard would have been a few days from his twelfth birthday.

³ *Translator's note:* "Glacis" is a term which exists, but which is not often used in English. Many, if not most, European cities have a glacis. It is the remnant of a military fortification, formerly having been either an embankment sloping up to a city wall or a moat. After such fortifications were no longer of military significance the wall was often removed or the moat filled. What remains, the glacis, has in many cases become a grassy knoll--a park-like area encircling the old, formerly walled, section of the city.

mother to keep an eye on his housekeeping and help bring some order to it, and then he went on at length on *that* subject. My father, when he could get a word in, spoke conspicuously loudly, emphasizing what he said with gestures, assuring Beethoven over and over that we would get together often, and finally we said goodbye for that day.

My father had often spoken of Beethoven, his famous boyhood friend, and I had told my parents over and over that I would like to meet him. Now I finally had. With all the impatience of youth I counted the days until we would be living next door to each other.

For the last several years Beethoven and my father had seen each other only seldom. Initially this was because of a rather serious disagreement between them (more about this later). Even after that was reconciled, the close association of their early years wasn't easy to restore, because both men were busy and Beethoven's frequent changes of address and his unsettled lifestyle made the sporadic attempts to seek him out the more difficult. In spite of these breaks in contact, however, the warm friendship from their boyhood days endured--firm and sincere.⁴ --But here I want to reach back into the past and help the reader understand the strong influence my father's boyhood home and family had on Beethoven.

A more or less daily visitor in my grandfather's house in Bonn and a trusted friend of the family was an older general named Baron Ignaz de Claer. He was governor of the city. Whether arriving at breakfast or in the evening, he served as a verbal newspaper for what was going on in the city and for anything else he considered worth telling. Once (it was on January 13th, 1777) he arrived at my grandfather's house noticeably shaken. He sat down, more withdrawn than usual, lost in thought and with hands crossed over the handle of his walking stick. It was plain to see that something was very different that day, and everyone quite naturally pressed him to tell what had put him into such a mood.

At last he began the following story: "A strange report was brought to me today. The watchman on duty last night at the court of Buenretiro had to be brought to the infirmary. His shift was from twelve to one o'clock, and his replacement found

⁴ Beethoven writes to Wegeler on October 7th, 1826 (see: Wegeler and Ries's biographical notes, Coblenz, 1838, pub. Bädeker): "-I well remember the love you've always shown me; --. Just as the Breuning family has. If we grew apart it was because of circumstances; each must follow the course of his own destiny and try to achieve what he is meant to achieve. Nevertheless, everything that is good binds us together, and that bond will never be broken--."

Translator's note: This and all footnotes not labeled "Translator's note" are Breuning's. Breuning makes an effort to indicate the highly individual punctuation seen in Beethoven's handwriting: with many dashes, periods, semicolons in odd places, sentence fragments, etc. In my translation I have tried to maintain that (irregular) format, except where it seemed to cloud the meaning of the English.

the poor man unconscious. He told the same story in the sentry's room and again before my adjutant this morning. He had hardly gone to his post when he noticed a brightening in the sky, which up to that time had been overcast. In one area over the castle it got brighter and brighter until an opening in the clouds appeared and finally a fiery rain poured down on the castle. Though it didn't set the castle ablaze, the rain of fire lasted a good ten minutes. After that it grew dark again and the break in the clouds closed. --And then immediately afterward the clouds opened again and--plain against the blue sky--the watchman saw a quite large and elegant coffin, surrounded by seven smaller, less elaborate ones. At the sight of that, overcome by fear, he fainted." When the General had finished his story, Emanuel Josef v. Breuning (my grandfather) said in an utterly strange and untypical voice, "That is my coffin." Those present could only look at each other, startled by that unexpected and peculiar remark. Though they tried to treat what my grandfather had said as offhand and insignificant, the oppressive mood persisted, and the group parted much less merry than usual.

Two days later, on January 15th, a devastating fire broke out in the part of the electoral castle that faces toward the city: a wing that houses and offices along with many art treasures. Since my grandfather was the Elector's Privy Counselor, as soon as he heard the news he rushed over to save the most important papers from his office (he lived very close by, on the Münsterplatz). Twice he single-handedly brought bundles of documents from the burning rooms, and a third time he reached the gate of the castle--almost safely out with still another load of papers--when a burning beam crashed down on him and shattered his spine. He died the next day, after several hours of agony. Born on October 11, 1740, he was only thirty-six years old. Besides my grandfather, seven workers died in the blaze. The watchman's vision and my grandfather's premonition had been realized. However, as had been the case in 1689, the flames turned aside when they reached St. Florian's Chapel, and Buenretiro, thereby protected, once again survived unscathed.

This "strange story, attested to by the most reliable witnesses," is reported by Chr. v. Stramberg in the *Rheinische Antiquariat* (Mittelrhein, I. Abteilung, 4. Band, Coblenz, 1856, pub.: Hergt) --though perhaps with some embellishment. Stramberg tells the story in his discussion of the portrait of St. Agathe, who is honored in the Rhine regions as the protectress against fire. He says: "St. Florian's name is held in high regard for saving St. Florian's Chapel and the adjoining portion of the castle in Bonn, not only in 1689, but again in 1777."

So the chapel and Buenretiro were spared the fire's destruction, but my grandfather and the seven workers had perished.

I have related this incident as I heard it over and over from my relatives. Also, many years later, at a chance meeting with my father in Reichskanzler Prince Metternich's reception room, Count Hatzfeldt recalled the catastrophe. He had seen the eight bodies lying in their coffins and remembered the unusual attention this event had aroused in Bonn.

It goes without saying that the unexpected loss of a thirty-six-year-old father causes great upheaval in any family, and it was no different in this case, in spite of the family's being well-to-do.⁵

The newly-widowed Frau Privy Counselor Helene v. Breuning, daughter of Stefan Kerich, personal physician to the Electoral Prince, was only twenty-six years old. Her children were:

Christof, born May 13, 1771, in Bonn,
 Eleonora Brigitte, April 23, 1772, Bonn,
 Stefan (my father) -- usually called "Steffen," Bonn, August 17, 1774,⁶
 Lorenz --called "Lenz" for short-- was born after his father's death, and was therefore posthumous.

The widow remained in the family home in Bonn until 1815, leaving only for occasional longer or shorter visits with her brother-in-law in Kerpen (a village between Köln and Aachen), or with her sister, Margarethe v. Stockhausen, in Beul an der Ahr (now the spa Neuenahr). The house in Bonn, designed by Cardinal Burmann, still stands, with its front grillework and its cardinal's hat over the entrance. It is on the Münsterplatz, to the left of that cold, metallic statue whose model--vigorous, warmhearted and gentle of personality, made it his home, going in and out of it daily.

Immediately after my grandfather's death one of his brothers, Johann Lorenz v. Breuning, Canon in Neuss, resettled in Bonn to direct the education of the minor children and to act as guardian of his deceased brother's family. They at once dubbed him "Uncle von Neuss." He served in this capacity until he died in 1756, in Bonn, at age 58.⁷

Besides "Uncle von Neuss," another of my late grandfather's brothers had great influence in the family. This was the brother (my mother's brother-in-law) in Kerpen I mentioned earlier. He was Johann Philipp v. Breuning, born in Mergentheim in

⁵ I emphasize this deliberately, since the "Bonn" author of the festival-piece "Ludwig van Beethoven, A Drama, etc." has gratuitously, erroneously and repeatedly given the daughter Eleonore lines referring to the poverty in the parental home.

⁶ Heribert Rau (in his novel, *Beethoven*) and Wolfgang Müller von Königswinter ("Furioso," in Westermann's *Monatsheften*) erroneously designate Steffen as the older brother and Christof the younger. G. Mensch (in his *Charakterbild: L. v. Beethoven*, Leipzig, Leuckart, 1871) erroneously calls Christof "Christian."

⁷ *Translator's note:* The German preposition *von* translates "from" or "of" in English. Thus, *von* in a proper name came to indicate nobility (estate-owning) and parallels the "of" in British titles. This double meaning of *von* gave the children's nickname for their "Uncle from (the town of) Neuss" a comical overtone.

1742. After 1769 he was Canon in Kerpen, where he lived until his death June 12, 1832. He was a very sensible and utterly lovable man, whose incomparable hospitality made his home a summer romping-place for family and friends as long as he lived. For a time Beethoven was among these, known to the family because he often played the organ in the church there.

With this surrogate-paternal guidance, and watched over by the many loving uncles, aunts, and others, my father's childhood and first school years passed.

These, in brief, were the circumstances of the Breuning family in Bonn.

Children draw playmates to them and schoolboys bring friends home from school. So, through the years, the initially small family circle in my grandmother's home came to include members from outside the family, and the ennobling influence of that virtuous woman extended not only to her own children, but to other young people as well. If the child's heart and spirit are molded upright and true in the home, unless he falls prey to bad influences he will form friendships only with children of like spirit.

One poor student's lovable and industrious character soon made him a virtual member of the family. This was Franz Gerhard Wegeler, son of a worker from Alsace. From an early age he felt the powerful urge to learn, to break the bonds of his modest beginnings and to become what he eventually did become to his family and to the world at large.

Franz had already found a firm place in the household when, in 1782, he met the son of a musician in the Elector's court orchestra.⁸ Still more child than youth, this young person was afire with passion for music, just as Franz was for science and art. Even then he had an impressive mastery of the piano.

Eleonore and Lenz needed a piano teacher, and to help support himself and his parents Wegeler's young friend needed to give lessons. That dual circumstance brought young Ludwig van Beethoven into my grandmother's circle of hospitality. The lady of the house soon won his love and before very long became a second mother to him. On occasion Beethoven could be headstrong and obstinate, and more than once she acted as a gentling influence on him.⁹ As for the children, in Beethoven they gained a friend forever, and in turn he gained friends who remembered him for the rest of their lives.

⁸ The story Wolfg. Müller tells in *Furioso*, of Wegeler's meeting with Beethoven on the peak of the Drachenfels, is most likely romantic fiction.

⁹ In grateful acknowledgment of this relationship, Beethoven later wrote: "She knew how to keep the insects away from the flowers" [*Sie verstand es, die Insekten von den Blüten abzuhalten*]. If Ludwig's character had been shaped solely by the unfortunate influences in his home, his entire education and development might easily have been jeopardized.

The day-to-day activities in the house grew ever more lively as the children matured, and the family circle was joined by bright and eager young people from outside. The general atmosphere of the period was enlivened by the thirst for knowledge, echoed and heightened by the literary currents of the day, and all these elements fired the interest of the youths gathered in my grandmother's home.

Wegeler was the oldest of the friends, born August 22nd, 1865, in Bonn. Beethoven, next in age, was christened on December 17th, 1770.¹⁰ These two were students, as were the three sons of the widowed Frau Privy Councilor. Wegeler and Lenz later turned to medicine, while Christof and Steffen studied law. Eleonore already played the piano fairly well, and Lenz played even better. Steffen and Beethoven took violin lessons together. Their teacher was Franz Ries, whose son, Ferdinand Ries, later studied with Beethoven and became a composer. Other sons of Franz Ries were Hubert and Josef. Hubert Ries was concertmaster in Berlin for many years, and along with me was Guest of Honor at the Bonn Festival. Josef is proprietor of Josef's Ries of London, which was formerly the piano manufacturer Josef Franz Ries in Vienna.

As to the anecdote with the spider--the story woven into earlier biographies, telling of a spider that lived in young Beethoven's room and grew so accustomed to the boy's excellent violin playing that it made itself at home there and would creep out to listen to the music, eventually being killed by an unknowing stranger--I never heard that story from my father or from Wegeler, or from anyone else, and in his Beethoven biography A. Schindler has already labeled it fiction. My father, who until the end of his life played the violin competently, if not masterfully, said repeatedly that young Ludwig, for all his pianistic accomplishments, never achieved any great purity of tone or exceptional facility on the violin, and that he often played out of tune, even before his hearing difficulties. After the onset of his deafness the violin playing quite naturally deteriorated further, and of course his deafness finally forced him to give it up completely.

While Franz Ries was giving Beethoven and my father their lessons together, Beethoven played a "Black Forest" violin, which he gave to my father as a memento after their joint study was over. I have saved the violin as a cherished souvenir, along with an old-fashioned violin case my father received from Ries at the time. Among his music my father had Fiorillo's *Caprices*, as well as some other violin pieces of the period. On the title page there is a picture of a little man playing the violin.

¹⁰ I say christened, not born, because Beethoven's birth-date is yet to be determined, though A.W. Thayer has ascertained the correct birth-year. It was Wegeler who first ascertained and made known the actual house in which Beethoven was born.

During my last visit to Bonn (August, 1871) I found that the sign on Beethoven's birth house had been altered: Bonngasse 515 was changed to Kölnstrasse 20, but everything else was the same. The attic room where Beethoven came into the world is still there, still in the second story of the courtyard wing to the left, still there in all its stifling smallness.

Much later, in Vienna, Beethoven remarked playfully to my father, "That little man is much too small to master those difficult *études*."

--And still another of the arts came to be represented in the house in Bonn: the circle of family and friends was joined by a pair of brothers, interesting from two different points of view. They were the subsequently-famous painters v. Kügelgen, a pair of charming twin brothers, who soon found their places as new friends among the family regulars. My father said they looked so much alike, or actually were so identical, that no one could tell which was which, and when they became daily guests my grandmother used to pin a different-colored ribbon on each so that she could tell them apart. Not until years later did their personalities develop enough individuality that one could differentiate the two.

Carl von Kügelgen became a landscape painter, and in the course of time went to St. Petersburg. Gerhard von Kügelgen, who had great expertise in Greek art and portrait painting, came to a tragic end akin to Winkelmann's. On March 27, 1820, at age forty-eight, he was murdered on the highway near Dresden. Among his works that I received from my father's legacy I have two masterfully executed medallion-portraits from the year 1790--the best likenesses I have of my father and my grandmother.

But youth goes by and never returns. It was a time of merry companionship as well as serious dedication to art and learning. Eagerly awaited visits of relatives and friends added excitement, and *all* the experiences seemed more intense just then and just there, on the picturesque banks of the Rhine, at the foot of the Seven Hills. For time and place and what one might call the convergence of events do have great influence on the moods of people, and it isn't in every time and every place that one finds such gifted, dedicated young people gathered as there were in the nurturing atmosphere of my grandmother's home. We may be certain that even then young Beethoven was the center of lively interest, his improvisations at the piano flooding the house with music through half the night.

But the dark thread running through Beethoven's life showed itself on occasion, even then. My father told me that Ludwig's young friends were especially sympathetic to his difficulties in dealing with his father, as for example when the elder Beethoven would drink to excess and cause a street scandal at night. The Bonn police would take action and young Beethoven, with childish love and devotion, would try to intervene, torn between feelings of love for his long-suffering mother, sympathy for his father and his sense of duty as a citizen. He defended his father as best he could, even to the point of misleading the law officers, always trying to avert the shame of seeing his father jailed. His friends, with their prominent position in society, were

often helpful--smoothing things over, consoling, protecting, acting as intermediary in certain situations. The family's kindness made a lasting impression on Beethoven, and for the rest of his life he remembered what they had been to him, just as the family never forgot what a mind and spirit that stroke of circumstance had brought close to them.

But if Beethoven's family brought him nothing but distress from the beginning to the end of his life (except for his mother and his grandfather, whom he dearly loved) there were also happy and fulfilling experiences in his young years. Well-documented are his early association with the art-loving Elector Max Friedrich, esteemed brother of Kaiser Josef II, Ludwig's early appointment as Electoral Court Organist (through the auspices of his first patron, Count Waldstein) and the numerous and generous gifts he received from Count Waldstein. The mischievous incident with the Court tenor, Heller, is often told, in which Beethoven wagered the tenor that he could throw him off pitch during the worship service in the palace chapel, and Beethoven's delight at accomplishing just that (though, to be sure, he did receive a "gentle reprimand" from the Elector). Memories are often recalled of the pleasant summers he spent with the Breunings at "Uncle's" in Kerpen, where he liked to play the organ in the village church, and of the merry journey to Mergentheim with the Electoral Court, as well as his amorous inclinations toward Fräulein Babette Koch (later Countess Belderbusch) and--together with Steffen--toward Jeanette d'Honrath, future wife of Austrian Fieldmarshall-lieutenant v. Greth. (I saw her as an older lady in Vienna in the twenties.) There was always a warm and unshakable bond of friendship between Eleonore and Beethoven, as is evidenced by the original title of his opera: "Leonore." --And his meeting with Haydn, who was returning from England--all this and more has been told and retold, and never more charmingly than in Wolfgang Müller's *Furioso*, particularly for those readers who like to read a poetic style that might tend a bit toward embellishment. The same incidents are reported with complete authenticity in Wegeler and Ries's *Biograph. Notizen* and in Schindler's Beethoven biography. A.W. Thayer's *L. v. Beethovens Leben* is equally to be recommended, particularly for its broad historical perspective of the time.

But time flies for young as well as old, and happy days fly fastest of all. Gradually, with the years, life's more serious side comes into view.

So it went with our group of merry youths. To become a physician and prepare himself fully for the life of service before him, Wegeler went to Vienna in September 1787, to study medicine at the famous medical school that flourished under Josef II. The older sons, Christof and Steffen, went to Göttingen to finish their studies in law. Beethoven was sent by the Elector to Vienna, at that time already an important center of music, where Haydn and Mozart had created and performed works of

unparalleled excellence. We can be sure that none of the group took leave of home and companions without a touch of regret. It was the first parting in each of their young lives, and it came about during times troubled by war. Keeping in touch through exchanges of letters--slow enough in peacetime, with the limping postal carriages--was now often impossible or accomplished only with lengthy delays.

But all were alight with the fire of youth, and their courage and confidence grew as they advanced toward their life's ambitions.

Beethoven arrived in Vienna in the winter of 1786-87 and was welcomed everywhere--prominent art-loving, aristocratic families receiving him most eagerly of all. Wegeler arrived soon afterward--also in 1787-- with excellent recommendations and support from the Elector. As had been the case with Beethoven, these introductions helped Wegler join a circle of influential people: the famous professors and physicians of Josef's reign: Brambilla, Gerhard v. Vering, Gottfried van Swieten, Hunczovsky, Adam Schmidt, and many others. And who, having once come into contact with Beethoven--that splendid torrent that swept over everything it encountered--could fail to be astounded and delighted? The highest musical genius had uttered the prophetic words already: "Pay attention to that one; he'll give the world something to talk about."

When his mother became ill Beethoven went home to Bonn once. Shortly after he arrived she died of consumption, on July 17, 1787, in her forty-ninth year. Soon afterward the little circle of friends was scattered once more, and never again would they all be together, for each young man plunged into the mainstream of life, dedicating himself to his chosen profession.

The Elector sent both Kùgelgens on three-year tours (May 4, 1791) with a "yearly stipend of 200 Ducats, with which, in Rome, they are to strive toward perfection of their splendid natural talents."

In early November 1792 Beethoven made his second trip to Vienna.¹¹ The trip became in fact a permanent establishment of residence in the city. Though in his letters to Wegeler and Eleonore he often spoke of returning, he was never again to see his home on the Rhine--not even did he go back for Wegeler's and Eleonore's wedding (28 March, 1802).

On September 1, 1789, in Vienna, F. G. Wegeler received his doctorate in medicine and immediately returned to Bonn to begin his career as general practitioner and professor. He soon built a thriving medical practice in Bonn and the surrounding

¹¹ Beethoven's family album, published by G. Nottebohm (*Beethoveniana: Aufsätze und Mittheilungen*, Leipzig, Winterthur, Rieter-Biedermann, 1872, now in the collection of the Imperial Court Library in Vienna), contains entries his young friends wrote during the last days of Beethoven's stay in Bonn: from October 24 on. On her page, dated "Bonn, Nov. 1, 1792," "Wittib Koch" has written the following note pertaining to the day of departure: "--on the evening of our goodbyes."

area. From October 1794 until June 1796 he was once again in Vienna, and enjoyed a happy reunion with his friend, Ludwig. On his return to Bonn his respected position helped him to win Eleonore's hand in marriage, and they moved to Koblenz, where he was active as Private Governmental Medical Counselor until his death on March 7, 1848. Eleonore preceded him in death, on June 13, 1841. His home was always open to guests and he enjoyed a particularly close association with the Rieves: father and sons, especially Ferdinand. Throughout his life he had friendships with many interesting people, and through exchange of letters remained a confidant of Beethoven.

Christof von Breuning became a Professor of Law in Bonn, later a government official in Köln, and still later Appellate Judge in the highest court in Berlin, in which capacity I met him in 1838, in Berlin. He died shortly after his retirement, on his estate in Beul an der Ahr, where he is buried.

In 1823-24 the Frau Privy Counselor Helene von Breuning moved to Köln, to live with her son Christof. Later she lived with her son-in-law Wegeler in Koblenz, where I saw her once again in the autumn of 1838. Age had dimmed her memory in the last few years to the extent that she confused the place she was then living and the people she saw daily with those of time past.¹² She died a few weeks after my visit, on December 9, 1838, having been a widow for sixty-one years.

Lenz von Breuning studied medicine, going to Vienna with Wegler in 1874, where he again enjoyed instruction from Beethoven. There he took part in my father's frequent evening musicales, in which the Hunczovsky family also participated. He died, barely twenty-one years old, after returning home from his educational tour (*Bildungsreise*), on April 10, 1798, a victim of the then-modern "Brownian method." My father told me over and over that he thought Lenz was closest of them all in friendship with Beethoven. The following is from Lenz's scrapbook:

¹² My friend Thayer refers to this in his *L. van Beethovens Leben*, saying: Dr. Wegeler, Frau von Breuning and Franz Ries, all as venerable in age as in character, sat down together and discussed the events of 1785-1788." In the last years of her life Grandmother Breuning had to be left out of such discussions, because of the circumstances mentioned above.

“Truth is there for the wise, Beauty for the gentle heart!
Each one needs the other.

Dear, good Breuning!

I shall never forget the time spent with you in Bonn, as well as here. May your friendship for me last forever, as will mine for you.

Vienna, October 1, 1797.

Your true friend,
L. v. Beethoven.”

(The album is in Dr. Jul. Wegeler’s possession.) F. G. Wegeler was careless in adding his comment, referencing the word “Bonn” (*Nachtrag zu den biographischen Notizen über L. van Beethoven*. Koblenz, Bädeler, 1845, p. 21). He says: “Lenz von Breuning, as the youngest of the three brothers, was nearest in age to Beethoven.” Precisely the opposite is correct, for Beethoven was five months older than the oldest and almost seven years older than the youngest of the Breuning brothers. But regardless of the fact that Lenz was the youngest and therefore the furthest in age from Beethoven, it is Lenz who finds cause to write Wegeler, in January 1796: “Generally speaking, he (Beethoven) now likes me very much.” This, Beethoven’s note, and my clear recollection of my father’s comments quoted above weaken Thayer’s contention when he says of my father (the middle brother) and Beethoven: “The two . . . might well have been acquainted with each other in 1785 or ‘86, but circumstances didn’t allow for a close relationship between them. The one was still a schoolboy, a child among children, while the other was already an organist and author, accustomed to moving among men.” The most one can say is that this is a subjective conclusion. Wegeler says of my father (*Biograph. Notizen*, p. 45): “he was the only one who had all the qualifications necessary to be Beethoven’s biographer. Except for a few short interruptions he maintained the warmest relationship with him from his tenth year until his death.”

As we have seen, Lenz left the circle of friends very early and forever, and Beethoven never saw any of those named again.

Steffen von Breuning was the only exception. Moreover, in a great many respects the course of his life paralleled that of his friend Ludwig. He was born in the same city barely four years after Beethoven and each took up permanent residence in Vienna. For a time they even shared an apartment there. Though the demands of their careers eventually took them separate ways, toward the end of their lives sheerest chance made them neighbors again--the one in the Schwarzspanierhaus, the other in

the Red House. They were overjoyed to be reunited for the brief period granted them before each went to his premature grave. The life of each was shortened by the ill-will and affronts of others; in Beethoven's case it was his relatives, in Steffen's the bureaucracy connected with his duties. They died within two months and nine days of each other and were buried in the same cemetery, their graves separated by only a few steps.¹³ The one is mourned by the whole world, the other by his family and those who knew and loved him.

At the outset of his career the German Government sent Steffen to Mergentheim, and after seven years there he was transferred to Vienna, as was the case with many Rheinlanders during the period when their countryman, Fassbender, presided over the Ministry of Defense in Vienna. Steffen was extraordinarily industrious, and his career advanced so rapidly that in 1818, in his forty-fourth year, he was already a Privy Counselor under Prince Hohenzoller's jurisdiction. Then intrigues, personal insults and overwork so affected his sensitive nervous system that he died before his time, on June 4, 1827, not yet fifty-three years old.

Wegeler's letter of recommendation to staff medical officer Gerhard v. Vering, in Vienna (1800), led Steffen to Beethoven. He found Beethoven quite acclimated to the city and the composer soon felt even more at home, in Steffen's apartment in the Red House, for Beethoven subsequently moved from his own apartment into Steffen's, where we find them living together and sharing the noon meal. A letter from Steffen to Wegeler on November 13, 1804 tells of this, and also describes the frightening progress of Beethoven's hearing difficulties, which had begun four years earlier. Because the letter (Wegeler: *Nachtrag*, p. 80) is an important one, it bears quoting here. In explanation of his long silence Steffen writes:

"My friend since boyhood days is the biggest cause of my neglecting those friends who are far away. You can't believe, dear Wegeler, what indescribable--I might even say horrifying--effect the deterioration of his hearing has had on him. Try to imagine depression--in his robust and hardy personality. --And withdrawal, and mistrust, often directed toward his best friends. --And indecisiveness, in so many things! There *are* some interludes where his original temperament returns, but by and large associating with him is very exhausting--you can never relax and be yourself. From May to the beginning of this month we've lived in the same apartment house, and on the very first day I invited him into my rooms. He was hardly there before he became seriously ill--for a short time almost dangerously ill. This went into a persistent, intermittent fever." (His particular susceptibility to liver disorders is therefore already evident at that time.) "Worrying about him and caring for him took quite a lot of my time and energy. Now he is completely

¹³ Steffen is buried with his second wife, my mother, in the vault of the Family v. Vering in the Währing Cemetery. Beethoven's grave is in the same row, a few spaces further up.

Translator's note: When von Breuning wrote this, 1871-74, he of course had no way of knowing that in 1888 Beethoven's body would be moved to Vienna's Central Cemetery (*Zentralfriedhof*), where it lies at present.

recovered. He lives on the *Bastei*,¹⁴ whereas I now live in a new house Prince Esterhazy built in front of the Alser Barracks. Now that I have established my own household he eats with me every day."

--This from my father's letter.

Steffen found himself more and more enchanted with Vering's daughter, who was just then blossoming in music and the other arts. He could hardly tear himself away for a visit to Bonn in 1807, and soon after his return to Vienna we find him a happy bridegroom, singing Julie's virtues and charms in numerous and varied poems (which I have in my possession).

Julie was a good pianist, and even tried her hand at small compositions (I've saved these, too). She was a student of Joh. Shenk, composer of *Der Dorfbarbier*, *Die Weinlese*, and other such works. I still have a mental picture of him in his riding trousers and spencer jacket. It was only natural that Beethoven took increasing interest in Steffen's talented eighteen-year-old wife, and we see him playing four-hand piano works with her, as he had with Lenz some years earlier. He encouraged her artistic efforts overall, even taking the time to arrange the Violin Concerto, Op. 61 into a piano solo for her, dedicating it to "Julie von Breuning, nee von Wering" (correctly: "Vering"). (The Violin Concerto in its original form is dedicated to Steffen, and was first performed by Clement on December 23, 1806.)

My father often told me of Beethoven's improvising half the night for the young married couple.¹⁵

¹⁴ In Baron Pasqualiti's house: Mülkerbastei, now No. 8. My father said Beethoven liked this house in particular because of its wide view and open air, and he lived there on several different occasions. His moving out at intervals was due to behavior typical of him: absent-mindedness, disregard of outward appearances--all of which brought him into conflict with neighbors, with house managers, and finally with house owners. The following is one example of several that could be cited. Beethoven had an apartment on the fourth floor, enjoying the widest view over the glacis, over several suburbs, all the way to Leopoldsberg and Kahlenberg, and to the right far out over the Prater and beyond. To see the Prater he had to lean out the window and turn his head to the right; his room was the last (the most eastward) next to the firewall. The neighboring house was only three stories high at that time, so the main wall was free-standing. If there were a window in that wall, thought Beethoven, my room would be transformed into a corner room, with open view on that side as well. That seemed quite simple to him: he called in a stone mason. Whether the mason, the house manager, or the house owner stopped the planned break-through before it started, or whether the mason had actually begun to chop through the wall I'm not sure, though I do seem to recall hearing the latter from my father. At any rate, when the work was stopped Beethoven flew into a rage over the meanness of the house master (whom he had thought to be his friend), gave immediate notice and moved. --But the remarkable foresight and warm invitation of his friend Pasqualiti led Beethoven to move back into the house after a time, only to move out again after some new slight he fancied he had suffered. Then, after he felt that a satisfactory reconciliation had been reached, he would move back in again. Finally they said Pasqualiti simply held the apartment open for Beethoven, guessing he would want to return to it from time to time.

¹⁵ I still own a Brodmann grand piano, at that time considered one of best. When one considers its range of only five and one-half octaves and its thin tone, one is hard put to see how it could suffice for Beethoven's torrential floods of improvisation. The fact is, rather, that the unyielding demands of Beethoven's sonatas transformed the piano into its present form and gave it its power--one might even say the piano had to be invented anew. The creation of his gigantic piano sonatas must therefore be seen as a double invention, for the instrument he had in mind, the instrument in its present perfection, the piano of the future was brought into being along with the sonatas. I even recall reading the suggestion somewhere that this piano be called the Beethoven Piano. In the *Jahresbericht des Conservatoriums der Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Wien*, School Year 1869-70, C. F. Pohl has published something very provocative about Beethoven's piano playing. Citing Carl Czerny's autobiography (in the archive of the *Gesellschaft*, a "previously unknown manuscript") Pohl says: "Czerny compares Hummel's and Beethoven's playing as follows: 'If Beethoven's

But fate seemed jealous of their happiness, and soon, on March 21, 1809, after a marriage of only eleven months, we see Steffen writing the tombstone inscription for his beloved Julie:¹⁶

To the
best of wives
Julie, nee von Vering,
Stephan von Breuning, Secretary
of the Imperial Ministry of Defence,
in deep mourning
dedicates this monument
of conjugal love.

She was born the 26th of November 1791, and blossomed in chaste beauty, combining the most rare earnestness of character with the loveliest feeling for purity and truth, all the virtues of gentle femininity, noble sensitivity to nature and art, and the most genuine, womanly, thoroughly steadfast spiritual consciousness.

She died March 21, 1809,
in the eleventh month of the happiest of marriages,
just as spring arrived.

"Spring awakened so wonderfully pure,
But spring will bloom for her no more;
Moments of happiness, then leaden sadness
That's the lot of the beautiful on this earth."

From that time until the end of his life my father lived in the Red House, and Beethoven visited him regularly. In 1811 Steffen writes to his mother: "I wrote to Wegeler that I've maintained my own household since the beginning of the year, with the help of a 66-year-old cook. Now Beethoven comes to eat with me. When he isn't here, as was the case in summer, I eat alone. He's supposed to go to Italy soon, so I'll be eating alone again." --But the trip didn't materialize. Instead, in spite of his

playing is characterized by massive strength, individuality, unprecedented bravura and virtuosity, Hummel's performance is a model of highest purity and clarity, of charming elegance and delicacy. The technical difficulties were calculated to achieve the noblest effect and always evoked the greatest admiration, in that they combined the Mozartian manner of playing with that of Clementi's so wisely devised school of playing. -- Hummel's devotees accused Beethoven of mistreating the Fortepiano, saying he lacked all purity and exactitude, that he brought forth only confused noise through his use of the pedals, that his compositions are forced, unnatural, without melody and failing in regularity. On the other hand Beethoven's adherents contend that Hummel is devoid of genuine inspiration, that his playing is as monotonous as a barrel organ, his hand position resembles a garden spider and his compositions are nothing more than reworked *motifs* of Haydn and Mozart. Pohl then quotes from a correspondent in Vienna, writing in 1799 (*Allgemeine Musikzeitung*, Nr. 33): "Beethoven's playing is exceptionally brilliant, but somewhat lacking in delicacy, and it occasionally becomes indistinct. He shows his talent best in free improvisation, and in this he is truly quite extraordinary. The ease and the perfection with which Beethoven takes a theme given him on the spot and varies the figures--not as many virtuosos do--hit and miss-- but really developing and perfecting it--since Mozart's death (and Mozart remains the *ne plus ultra*) I have never felt such satisfaction as that which Beethoven afforded me."

¹⁶ Julie rests in the Währing Cemetery, to the right, directly opposite the "Family Vering Burial-place" [*Grabstätte der Familie Vering*]. Since March 14, 1870, my son Franz also lies there. He was prematurely taken from me on March 11, 1870.

advanced hearing loss, Beethoven resumed playing quartets at Steffen's on certain days of the week and, as had been the case for as long as they had known each other, the two friends often discussed music. It was in such discussions, as well as on other occasions, that Beethoven spoke of the irritation he had experienced in staging his opera.

My father writes to his sister Eleonore and her husband:

Vienna
June 2, 1806

Dear Sister and dear Wegeler,

. . . As I recall, I promised in my last letter to write you about Beethoven's opera. Because I know you're interested, I want to keep my promise. The music is as beautiful and perfect as any you will ever hear. The subject is interesting, dealing with the release of a prisoner through the faithfulness and courage of his wife. But for all that, probably nothing has caused Beethoven as much exasperation as this work, which the public won't fully appreciate until sometime in the future. First of all, it was performed at the worst possible time: seven days after the French marched in. Naturally the theater was empty and Beethoven, noticing some imperfections in the treatment of the text, withdrew the opera after three performances. After the return of civil order he and I set to work on the opera.¹⁷ I reworked the entire libretto with him,¹⁸ making the action move more quickly. He shortened many of the pieces, and afterward the opera was performed three times, with great success. But then his enemies in the theater emerged, and because (especially at the second performance) he had insulted several of them, they prevented further performances. Even before this they had created a great many difficulties for him, of which a single example can represent many: At the second performance he wasn't even able to make them retain the revised title, "Fidelio," as the work is called in the French original and under which it was printed after Beethoven's revisions. Contrary to word and promise, at the second performance the first title, "Leonore" was on the posters. The conspiracy is made more uncomfortable for Beethoven because he was to be paid according to percentage of the profits, and the cancellation was something of a financial setback for him, all the more difficult to recoup because the treatment he suffered robbed him of much of his enthusiasm to work. I think perhaps I pleased him most when I, without his knowledge, had a little poem printed and distributed in the theater--at both the November and March performances. For Wegeler I'll copy both of them here, because I know from old times he likes that sort of thing. I remember that I wrote some verses when he was promoted to *Rector magnificus celeberrimae universitatis Bonnensis*, so now he can make a comparison and see whether my part-time poetical genius has progressed. The first little poem was in unrhymed iambic verse:

¹⁷ Ries describes this (*Notizen*, p. 103 ff.) according to a report he received from the tenor Röckel: "After the failure of the opera in 1805 Beethoven's friends decided to shorten the work. To this purpose a meeting was held at Prince Lichnowsky's. In addition to the Prince those present were: the Countess (who played the piano and is recognized as an excellent performer), the (poet) Privy Counselor von Collin, Steffen von Breuning, with whom Beethoven had previously discussed shortening the opera, Herr Meyer, the first bass, Herr Röckel, and Beethoven."

¹⁸ The text for *Lydien's Untreue* is also by my father, "translated from the French," and among his papers I found, in my father's handwriting, the complete song which Beethoven composed on the text. I own the original, and at the appropriate time made it available to my uncle Wegeler for his *Nachtrag*.

You, on your higher path, we greet you!
 Your noble calling placed you where you are.
 Your shyness kept you overlong from view;
 You hardly start the race; the crown is yours;
 The older warriors welcome you with joy.

How strongly works the power of your tones;
 It streams full forth, like rivers rich;
 Art and grace entwine in lovely union,
 Our hearts felt your own suffering.

We felt emotion surging in our hearts.
 T'was Leonore's courage, love, her tears.
 How rare her faith: it peals rejoicing strong,
 How sweet her bliss, subduing anxious fears.
 Go boldly forth; your far-flung progeny,
 Rapt, awaits your magic tones.
 The Halls of Thebes can tell no better tale.

The second¹⁹ consists of two stanzas, and contains a reference to the French troops present at the time of the first performance of the opera:

Hail, and hail again, on your high course,
 Which you have trod in anxious days of dread
 When grim awareness broke the magic spell
 And frightful doubts assailed us.
 As stormy waves assail the fragile boat.
 Rude scenes of war forced gentle art to flee;
 We shed then tears of woe, and not of joy.

Your step, so full of strength, must raise our hearts.
 Your gaze, steadfastly turned to highest goal
 Where art and feeling join in warm embrace
 Yes! Look there! The fairest muse bestows
 Her wreath on you, and from the laurel groves
 Apollo sends his own anointing beams
 That long will rest on you! May strength and
 Beauty true forever shine forth in your tones!

--But making these copies has tired me very much, and this letter is already long, so I'll close, only adding the

¹⁹ The first poem was printed in octavo format, the second on a sheet folded in four and entitled: "To Herr Ludwig van Beethoven, on the occasion of the revival of the opera he set to music (first performed on November 20, 1805), now performed under the new title, *Leonore*. Gerold's lettering."

Translator's note: Gerold refers to an Viennese bookselling and printing firm, established in 1775. Later in von Breuning's text the firm is cited as having printed other documents. Carl Gerold's Sohn (Geroldverlag), Vienna, is still in operation as of this writing: 1988.

news that Lichnowsky has sent the opera to the Queen of Prussia, and that I hope the performance in Berlin will make the Viennese wake up to what they have here."

But in spite of all efforts this magnificent opera has never held a lasting position on the stage, and without fear of contradiction one can say it wasn't until the summer of 1859 that the work found general understanding and appreciation in the Viennese theater. This was when the German opera season closed with Aloys Ander as Florestan, and then the new season opened with the same cast.

A London music critic's detailed account begins:

"Hofrat Stephan von Breuning's prediction of forty-five years ago has been dazzlingly fulfilled in this truly flawless performance of the opera" (1851, in London). The critic continues (in the *Illustrated London News and Wiener Theaterzeitung*, June 1851): "The music lovers of London have had twofold occasion for celebration. Beethoven's *Fidelio* was performed for the first time in Italian and was actually playing in two theaters at the same time. Word-of-mouth as well as newspaper accounts vie with each other in praising the brilliant success of both performances of this 'most German of all German operas.' Of the four overtures the one in E was played before the performance began, and the great *C-Major* 'Leonore' before the third act. Stormy 'bravos' demanded a repetition, as happened after many other musical segments. In Her Majesty's Theater Balfe conducted, with recitatives substituted for spoken text. In the royal Italian opera house Costa directed, and curtain calls crowned the efforts of both conductors. One gains some notion of the beauty of the performance when one is reminded that the chorus of prisoners was supported by such singers as Gardoni, Calzolari, Pardini, Poultier, Scotti, Ferranti, F. Lablache, Lorenzo and Massol, with solo roles sung by Mlle. Cruvelli, Mr. Sims Reeves, Balanchi, Coletti, etc., and in the latter performance by Mad. Castellar, Signor Tamberlik, Formes, Tagliafico, Stighelli and others. A masterwork like this one can only be performed by musicians who have mastered their art, and that is exactly the case here: real perfection."

My father married a second time--married Constanze Ruschowitz, my mother. Beethoven was also very friendly toward her. He was drawn to women in general, very much enjoying their company. For a time she had the impression that Beethoven wanted to court her. He "chanced to meet her" with conspicuous regularity, and would then accompany her on her way, as for example to the "Kaiserbad" on the Danube, where she was going for her bath. She was not a little surprised when, coming out of the bath more than an hour later, Beethoven would be sitting on a bench in front of the bathhouse, waiting to accompany her back to the Red House. And there were other such incidents. Often, right up to the time of his death, he would say to my mother that he regretted never having married. Only a woman of quite special emotional and intellectual depth could make a man like Beethoven happy. Such women are rare, but they can be found. It would have to be a woman who could understand his flights of brilliance and who, when his mood swung downward, wouldn't burden him further with the weight of the mundane. She would be his feminine guiding light, as the poet puts it, in the truest sense of being drawn onward by the

womanly.²⁰ She would know how to protect him from the rude disturbances of the outer world--even to becoming his "angel Leonore." Even if he had been one of those "whom lucky chance had made a friend to one who was his friend," it would be questionable whether "he would win a gracious wife to share in his rejoicing," although he knew well how to sing women's praises.²¹

Beethoven's heart was repeatedly "alight with flames of love," but only in the context of marriage: "Bis ich Dich erlaubt mein nennen darf" (until I'm allowed to call you my own).

My mother sometimes said she couldn't understand how women could find Beethoven attractive, since he was neither handsome nor elegant; he even looked unkempt and rather wild. My father would always answer: "And yet he's always had good luck with the ladies." It was the noble, elevated air about Beethoven that women sensed, whether in friendly or romantic relationships.

From the beginning of his celebrity to the end of his life Beethoven's highly individual characteristics gave rise to numerous anecdotes and stories about him. Many of these are either untrue or greatly distorted. For example, there are the anecdotes in the *Jugendalbum* that are supposed to sound romantic, but turn out to be downright tasteless (Jahrgang 1859, Stuttgart: Hallberger, p. 145; the four pictures from Beethoven's boyhood, by Emil Ohly: "The Pomaded Head"; "The Forget-me-not"; "Music and Rhine-wine"; and "The Little Improvisor." Also totally fabricated are "Beethoven's Last Exit" (*Presse*, Vienna, March 9, 1866), "Beethoven's Torn Shoe" (Cl. Jäger, in *Haus: Fremdenblatt*, Vienna, June 24, 1870), and everything *Illustrierte Welt* (Stuttgart: Hallberger, 1871, 19. Jahrg.) printed to titillate its readers under the often-repeated sentence: "Beethoven was never without love." There is not a correct statement in the entire article, as for example the description of Beethoven: "His was a squat, sturdy, strongly-built figure," and further, the reference to "the ugly, round, red face ravaged with pox-scars and framed with thick, black, matted hair." Let me state here once and for all that his face was by no means red and pox-scarred, but merely spotted with brown pox indentations, as is plain to see in the life-mask of 1812. But I am glad to verify what "a contemporary" in the same article says of Beethoven: "As soon as his face brightened in friendship all the winsomeness of childlike innocence spread over it. When he laughed you not only believed in him, but in all of humanity; he was so warm and

²⁰ *Translator's note:* In the original German the reference to the last lines of *Faust II* are clear. The allusion doesn't come across so clearly in English. Von Breuning's text: ". . . ihn weiblich leitend -- in des Wortes weiblich-anziehendster Bedeutung --".

²¹ *Translator's note:* In the original German the reference to Schiller's *An die Freude* (the text for Beethoven's Ninth Symphony) is clear: "Wem der große Wurf gelungen,/ Eines Freundes Freund zu sein,/ Wer ein holdes Weib errungen,/ Mische seinen Jubel ein!"

genuine in word, gesture, and gaze."

The truth about Beethoven is that his basic personality traits were nobility of spirit, tender emotional responses alternating with quick flashes of temperament, distrust and retreat from the outer world and a love of sarcastic joking. There is no need to provide additional documentation for the nobility of his character; a look at the Heiligenstadt Testament, written in 1802, a glance through his published letters, especially those to his nephew, and his actions in general give ample witnesses to his refined sensibilities. His mistrust of others was rooted in the tragedy of his deafness; his quick outbursts of temper due to suddenly realizing and then exaggerating an injustice he felt he had suffered. This happened over and over, but the misunderstandings were quickly reconciled in the most charming manner.

His remoteness from the world around him did result in occasional peculiarities. For example, when walking in a secluded forest area in the oppressive summer heat he had no hesitation whatever in taking off some articles of clothing, hanging them on his walking stick, throwing the stick over his shoulder and continuing his walk. He is said to have done this most often in his favorite wooded area between Baden and Gaden, and my father warned him repeatedly that there might be complaints from the people who chanced upon him during these walks.

His absent-mindedness once almost cost him the entire proceeds from a performance of the "Battle of Vittoria"--a performance given for his benefit. He had carelessly stuffed the money into his coat and then lost it on the Josefstadt glacis. Luckily, someone walking behind him picked it up and handed it back to him. Beethoven thought nothing of it, accepted the packet with hardly a word (he took honesty for granted), and went on with his walk.

The incident with the manuscript of the *Kyrie* of the D-Major Mass is well known. In the move from the city to the country house in Döbling it was lost for a time. He was dismayed over the loss, only to find the manuscript again, quite by accident-- the cook had used pages from it to wrap butter and other such things in the kitchen, mistaking it for scrap paper.

Schindler has already told of the occasion when Beethoven, working on the *Credo* of the same mass, didn't eat for a few days. Another time he came home without his hat; it had been blown off in a storm without his being aware of it.

The following can be added to the tales of his absent-mindedness: One day he went into the inn "Zum Schwan," the inn by the Mehlgrube (now the Hotel Munsch) to eat lunch. He called the waiter, who didn't come at once. He called again, taking out his notebook and starting to compose. Finally the waiter came and asked for Beethoven's order, but the deaf master didn't hear him. Being familiar with Beethoven and his habits, the waiter simply went back to his work, expecting to be called

again. Beethoven wrote on for a long time, totally absorbed in thought. Finally he summoned the waiter and asked for his bill, although he'd had nothing to eat.

On the other hand, the report of the incident in the *Gasthaus* "Zum Rothen Hahn" (in the Landstrasse suburb), must be counted among the far-fetched exaggerations. Beethoven was supposed to have ordered a soft-boiled egg, to have found it too hard and to have thrown it at the waiter. One of the wine establishments Beethoven frequented for a time was on the corner of Himmelpfort and Rauhensteingasse: "Zur Stadt Triest." Another was the "Jagdhorn," on Dorotheengasse. When the Schuppanzigh Quartet played his chamber compositions, he liked to wait in the corner of the tavern "Zum Igel" to see how the work was received (the tavern by the Wildpretmarkt--the house behind the hall of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde* that stood until 1869).

If the above stories (and many more could be added) bear witness to Beethoven's isolation from his surroundings, there is also no lack of stories to illustrate the sarcastic and humorous side of his character.

Grillparzer told me (during a visit in March 1860):

"Beethoven liked to make jokes and play tricks that deviated utterly from customary social behavior. Occasionally his moods became downright disagreeable, but for all his excesses there was something so ineffably touching and uplifting about him that you had to respect him and feel drawn to him. The only associations in which he felt comfortable were those with friends who knew him as he really was and for whom he felt some regard. Conversation with him was quite difficult--first of all because you had to write everything down, but also because he constantly jumped from one subject to another while you were writing, so that when you were through you had to remind him of the original subject, and this always caused some slight confusion. His awkwardness in social situations finally made it necessary for him to have devoted friends with him at all times. His only associates besides these were those who sought him out for personal gain."

Referring to this last, I mentioned that Schindler's enemies often accused him of such a motive. Because my favorable opinion of Schindler contrasted with that of some of my friends, I wanted to hear Grillparzer's thoughts on the subject.

Grillparzer went on: "As to Schindler, I'll never forget how devastated he was when he told me Beethoven was near death." --

And further [Grillparzer]:

"After a few days, when he told me Beethoven had died, I felt that at least the last third of the funeral oration I had written for him wasn't as good as it might have been if I'd had more time. I was caught unaware, shaken by the news. I can never work well when I'm overwhelmed by an event. It was just the same when I wrote Ottokar's lament over the body of his wife: I was too moved; tears came into my eyes. That is how it is with us. Of course one must empathize in the situation, but one must also somehow stand over it."

Grillparzer went on recalling significant experiences with Beethoven:

“One day I visited Beethoven in his apartment--the one on Ungargasse, near the glacis. He was standing by the piano, holding his hands on the keys. When he saw me he struck a powerful chord with both hands, laughing as if to say, ‘You thought I might play something for you, but I’m not going to.’ --And I didn’t dare to ask him, either.”

The following experience convinced Grillzarzer that his interpretation of Beethovens’ behavior was correct.

Grillparzer:

“We--that is, my mother and I--lived in the same house with him in Heiligenstadt. His apartment faced on the alley, ours on the garden. We shared a common staircase and foyer. When he played you could hear it through the whole house, and in order to hear still better, my mother often opened the kitchen door, which looked toward his apartment. Once she walked out the kitchen door and onto the stair landing--still part of our own apartment. By chance Beethoven stopped playing just then and walked out of *his* door that opened onto the landing. When he saw my mother he rushed back into his apartment, came out a moment later with his hat and stormed out of the house. He didn’t play again that whole summer. In vain my mother tried to convince him, working through his servants, (he could still hear then) that she was only in the corridor by chance, that she hadn’t intentionally gone out to listen to him. She even had the kitchen door barred so you could no longer go out that way to the stair landing, but instead had to go down through the garden to reach the courtyard. --Nothing helped; he didn’t play again.”

And Grillparzer went on with his stories of Beethoven:

“It was in Hetzendorf; it must have been between 1823 and ‘24 when I had the most frequent contact with Beethoven. I remember visiting him once when there was still no regular coach service to the area, so I had taken a carriage. When I was ready to go back to Vienna he said he would like to come with me. I thought he would probably go only a short distance, but he rode with me all the way to the Burgtor. There he had the driver stop, whereupon he got out and ran away like a madman. At some distance he turned and looked at me, laughing aloud. I didn’t know what to make of it until I noticed a folded paper on the seat next to me. It was six Gulden in Viennese currency: the fee for the coach. That was it; he was delighted to have outsmarted me. From anyone else I would probably have taken this behavior as an insult.” (These two stories have since appeared in Grillparzer’s complete works.)

Grillparzer went on:

“Another time I was eating with him and Schindler in Hetzendorf. Beethoven brought five bottles of red wine out of the adjacent room, set one before Schindler, one at his place, and three before me. In so doing he meant to say I should drink my fill!”

But Grillparzer spoke disapprovingly of Beethoven in regard to the (“preliminary”) 100 Pounds Sterling the composer got from England during the final days of his life. When I touched this subject in conversation with Grillparzer he expressed his patriotic feelings with characteristic candor:

“He could have found sufficient support in Vienna, so that he wouldn’t have needed alms (the 100 Pounds were nothing more than that, for a pension could have been arranged for him). Archduke Rudolf, Lichnowsky and Lobkowitz had even guaranteed him the pension, asking neither his thanks nor acknowledgement, and were subsequently faithful to their promise. --And yet,” (Grillparzer quickly added) “for all his moods--and as I’ve said, they often bordered on rudeness--there was something so touching and noble about him that one had to hold him in esteem and feel drawn to him.”

Katharina Fröhlich--in whose house at Spiegelgasse 21 Grillparzer lived comfortably from 1848 until he died--told me the following, in March 1860. (She was the youngest of three sisters with this name and well-known as the childhood friend of Schubert.)

“Beethoven lived in the house in Döbling belonging to my father (the turreted house to the left, modeled after Prof. v. Jäger’s on the opposite side of the brook--he lived in the courtyard wing, second floor). When he was in bad humor and no one dared go to him, I, then a child, was often sent to him with the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*, his favorite reading. Then he usually smiled at me, and now and then would sit down at the piano and improvise. He liked to play an F-Major chord with his left hand and run up and down the keys with his right, making capricious gestures. Once he got so wild in his expression that I was frightened and wanted to leave, but he motioned for me to stay, commanding me with a gesture of his finger to sit down, and then he played more calmly.”

An interesting incident I have known about for several years was recently published for the first time by Ed. Hanslick (*Neue freie Presse*, 1870): “Beethoven as Cupid.” Ludwig Löwe²² was in Töplitz (Bohemia) in 1811, and had a “romantic arrangement” with the innkeeper’s daughter, Therese. Because of this Löwe never arrived at the vacation resort until after the other guests had gone. Beethoven also came to the resort late in the season, since he was sensitive about his hearing loss and didn’t want to encounter other people. The girl’s father discovered the “arrangement” and had a serious talk with Löwe, who agreed to stay away from the inn out of regard for the girl, whom he loved very much. After a time he chanced to meet Beethoven in the garden of the resort, and Beethoven, who had always liked Löwe, asked him why he no longer came to the “Stern.” Löwe entrusted Beethoven with his secret and then asked Beethoven if he would take a note to Therese. Beethoven was glad to serve a friend and even offered to bring back Therese’s answer. The correspondence went on this way for some time. Then Löwe went to Prague and so didn’t know when Beethoven left the resort, but by then the lovers were betrothed. A few weeks later Löwe received notice that Therese had died. In 1823 Löwe came to Vienna to play some guest roles and visited Beethoven, who had forgotten the events at Töplitz. Löwe refreshed his memory and told him the rest of the story, and Beethoven was very sympathetic to Löwe’s misfortune. In further conversation Beethoven learned that Löwe was in Vienna for a guest appearance. He told Löwe that since he was deaf he would like to see him in a play with which he was very familiar. That turned out to be their last meeting.

I gathered reliable confirmation and occasional revision of my memories of Beethoven when I last met with Anton

²² *Translator’s note:* Ludwig Löwe (d. 1871) was an actor then well known for his portrayal of the young heroes of Schiller and Grillparzer.

Schindler, on the 9th and 11th of July 1863, in Bockenheimer, Frankfurt am Main (28 Hasengasse), where he lived during the final years of his life. These last, intimate conversations, lasting several hours each, were sad for both of us, rekindling memories of our association with Beethoven so long ago. The following comes from these meetings:

“It seemed that Beethoven could relate to certain people only in a joking manner. For example, he always called Tobias Haslinger (formerly of the music establishment Steiner & Co.) “Little Adjutant,” with particular emphasis, in the Viennese style,²³ on the “little,” alluding to Haslinger’s position secondary to Steiner’s.”

(See Beethoven’s letter to Haslinger, quoted later, about the Clementi piano method, and a similar letter in Nottebohm’s *Beethoveniana*.) At Schindler’s I saw a canon (in manuscript, of course) which Beethoven had composed on the name Graf Moritz Lichnowsky. The occasion, if I recall correctly, was that the Count [German: *Graf*] had given him some unfortunate advice on the establishment of an academy. The text of the canon runs: “Lieber Graf, Sie sind ein Schaf.”²⁴

One sees example after example of Beethoven’s delight in playing jokes, even bizarre ones. On a page from a letter in Beethoven’s hand I found, in the large, heavy script he liked to use, a laconic message and underneath: “Date not given.”

A. W. Thayer showed me a Beethoven letter with the greeting: “Lieber Holz, vom Kreuze Christi!” --And there are other examples.²⁵

I, too, have a quite special Beethoven letter, which was found on my father’s writing desk. Extending across the full width of a double sheet of music paper--not folded, but laid out flat--Beethoven wrote in pencil:

"For Herr
Hof-Sekretär von Breuning."

And on the reverse side of the same sheet:

"If you happen to go walking
on the glacis today
between 4 and 5
you’ll find me --"

Schindler went on: “During the winter of 1822-23 Beethoven lived at Kotgasse 61 (now Gumpendorferstrasse 14) on

²³ *Translator’s note:* The word-play is clearer in the German. The suffix *erl*, common in Viennese informal speech, means “little,” with a connotation of endearment. Beethoven called Haslinger “Adjuntanterl,” rather than “Aujutant.”

²⁴ *Translator’s note:* The English, of course, doesn’t rhyme: “My dear Count, you’re a sheep” --in other words, “you’ve been duped.” An English equivalent might be, “You’re the goat”.

²⁵ *Translator’s note:* The pun is on the word, “*Holz*,” which means “wood” in German. So, “Dear Wood, from Christ’s cross.”

the third floor, with a view on Pfarrgasse (now Leimgrubengasse) 20.” He was very uncomfortable in this house, plagued by the coarseness of the house manager. It was here that he received the well-known New Year’s greeting from his brother Johann, on whose visiting-card proclaiming himself, “Johann van Beethoven, Land-Owner,” Ludwig scrawled his retort: “Ludwig van Beethoven, Brain-Owner.” Schindler:

“That was when he was working on the Ninth Symphony. In early summer he moved from the Kotgasse address to Penzing, to the turreted house that still stands today (at that time 62 Parkgasse) next to the then-wooden pedestrian walkway over the Wien River. The house belonged to a tailor. Mornings, when he shaved, he had the habit of standing by the window, and when this became known those crossing the bridge would stop and watch him. This annoyed Beethoven more and more, and since there was no way to keep the people from stopping on the bridge, Beethoven decided simply to abandon the apartment. For 100 Gulden Viennese currency he immediately rented four rooms in a beautiful villa in Hetzendorf (now 32 Hauptstrasse) belonging to the Baron Pronay. The Baron, having the greatest esteem for Beethoven, put the large park at his disposal, asking only that during the evening Beethoven not make any noise in the one room in Beethoven’s apartment that faced the garden, because the Baron’s room was directly below, and he was a very light sleeper. At first everything went very well. Then the Baron, out of somewhat excessive reverence, began to irritate Beethoven with his deep bows every time they chanced to meet. The more this went on, the more uncomfortable Beethoven felt in the house. In order to demonstrate his annoyance to the Baron, Beethoven started making himself as unpleasant as possible. From then on he deliberately ate his evening meal over the Baron’s bedroom, and when Schindler, who came for a visit of several days, reminded him of the stipulation relating to that room, Beethoven began to make disturbances with even more vigor. He drummed on the table with his fists; he shoved the table back and forth, etc. Schindler didn’t approve of this behavior and finally left the room. The next morning he told Beethoven he was returning to Vienna and the only response he got was, “You will of course have your coffee before leaving?!” The Baron’s awe for the master continued unabated, the deep bows were no less frequent and Beethoven was no less uncomfortable. Finally he gave up this charming apartment for one in Baden (Rathausgasse 94) although a locksmith lived there.²⁶ So it happened that in this same year Beethoven had four apartments at the same time, and during all this, as I’ve said, he began the Ninth Symphony!”²⁷

For the coming winter, 1823-24, he moved to Ungargasse, to the house on the left corner of Bockgasse (now Beatrixgasse) 5, facing on the latter:

in the summer of 1824, back to Baden and --

in the winter 1824-25 to Krugerstrasse 1009 (new numbering: 13), third floor, to the right of the staircase landing --

²⁶ In his short article Dr. Hermann Rollett assembles all the information relating to Beethoven in Baden, and says (p. 7) that instead of “locksmith,” it should be “copper-smith” (*Beethoven in Baden*. Distributed in celebration of 17 December, 1870. From the weekly *Badener Bote*, printed by J. Grätz in Baden, Vienna, published by the author).

Translator’s note: Von Breuning gives no hint as to why having a locksmith (or copper-smith, as suggested by the note above) would be undesirable for Beethoven (“although a locksmith lived there”). Given Beethoven’s democratic disregard for social status, one might guess it was because of the noise from the workman’s shop (?)

²⁷ *Translator’s note:* In this section Breuning has intermingled Schindler’s reported discourse, in direct quotation, with his own comments, without particular attention to opening and closing quotation punctuation. The meaning seemed clear, so I haven’t “corrected” Breuning’s punctuation.

in summer of 1825 back to Baden and from there, in autumn, he moved for the last time--to the Schwarzspanierhaus (Alservorstadt: old number 200, new: 5).

Caspar Carl was the actual name of Beethoven's brother, but he preferred to be called "Carl," because he thought it more elegant. With that I want to tell about the disagreement between my father and Beethoven that caused one of their temporary breaks in communication, and I must say that this time the quarrel was more serious and the break longer-lasting. Caspar Carl was a bureaucrat in Vienna, a cashier, and his reputation for character was not the best. One of my father's friends had gotten wind of this and felt obliged to tell my father about it so that my father could warn Ludwig about getting into financial entanglements with Caspar Carl. My father gave his word not to reveal the source of this information and conscientiously carried the message to Ludwig, as he had promised. But Ludwig, in his never-ending efforts to reform his brother, wasted no time in going to Caspar Carl and taking him to task concerning what he had heard about his questionable financial practices. After much haranguing Ludwig gave in to Caspar Carl's insistence and told him that the source of his information was his friend Steffen. Caspar then went directly to my father, demanding to know the originator of this "denunciation," and when my father steadfastly refused to reveal the name (Rösgen), Caspar resorted to the most vile accusations, even going so far as to deliver an open letter to the receptionist at the Ministry of War, attacking my father's integrity. Angered and hurt by this impertinence and Ludwig's breach of confidence, my father reproached Beethoven sharply, and the conversation ended with my father's saying he couldn't continue a friendship with one so unreliable. The tension between the two lasted quite a long time, until Ludwig wrote that unforgettable letter of reconciliation:

"May this painting²⁸ once and for all lay to rest our recent disagreement, dear, good St. I know that I have wounded you, and my remorse, which you must have noticed, has punished me enough for it. What I did wasn't out of malice; if it had been so I would never again be worthy of your friendship -- I did have some mistrust and there were persons involved who are unworthy of either of us -- For a long time my portrait has been meant for you; you know I always wanted you to have it--to whom else could I give it so wholeheartedly as to you-- true, good, noble Steffen. Forgive me if I have hurt you; I suffered no less myself, not seeing you for so long and feeling all the more strongly how dear you are to my heart and will be forever.

Your
(the signature is missing)

(no date)

²⁸ Referring to the miniature portrait of Beethoven by Hornemann: an excellent likeness painted in 1802. The miniature is in my possession, and is published for the first time in this book.

--You will surely fly as trustingly into my arms as before. --"

(On the outside: "Pour Mr. de Breuning.")

It goes without saying that such a heartfelt overture brought complete and immediate renewal of the friendship which, after all, had been briefly interrupted only because the two had such sensitive feelings.

Unfortunately the financial predicament of his brother already had caused Ludwig to borrow 2,300 Gulden from Frau von Brentano, in Frankfurt am Main (it was in 1810 or later) a debt which Ludwig couldn't repay until 1823. According to Schindler, it was in reference to Frau Brentano that Beethoven often said he had true friends only in Frankfurt.

From further conversations with Schindler about Beethoven I want to share the following:

Indicating a tree with two trunks growing out of a single root, to the left as you go out the Hetzendorfer Gate of the Schönbrunn Garden toward the Gloriette, Beethoven said to Schindler: "In 1803, sitting at the foot of one of these trees, I composed *Christ on the Mount of Olives*." But he couldn't be certain which tree, since there are many there with the same shape. It must have been between 1817 and 1825 when he was there with Schindler.

Another time, when Beethoven was walking with Schindler along the Nussbach [stream] near Heiligenstadt, he said, pointing to a tree, "Here is where I composed the *Scene by the Brook* (of the Pastoral Symphony)". This is now commemorated by a bronze bust from Fernkorn's studio, erected in 1863.

Beethoven had begun work on the Tenth Symphony, and some isolated sketches of it exist, including themes of the first movement and scherzo. This last (as Schindler sang it for me) seemed somewhat similar to the theme of the first movement of the Fifth Symphony. Beethoven had simply written "X. Symphonie" over the sketches, which Schindler published in *Musikalisch-kritisches Repertorium für Musik*, Leipzig, 1824: Whistling.

Beethoven's copyist for thirty years was Schlemmer. Copying his manuscripts was difficult and very few could manage it. Schlemmer lived in the rear wing of a house on the Graben, not far from the Kohlmarkt. He had trained some helpers, one of whom had worked for him for years, living on Fischhof (then Galvagnihof), near the Hohen Markt. My mother told me he did his copying in a gloomy nail-smith's arch under the passage-way of the gate.

Among other things, I asked Schindler for the true facts relating to the story of Hummel's playing his (Schindler's) concerto, which he had promised the deathly-ill Beethoven to do. My recollection was that Hummel subsequently wanted to go

back on his word.

Schindler was surprised and somewhat taken aback that I remembered the incident, which he had deliberately left out of his Beethoven biography. He told me the following:

"Well, since you remember the incident, I'll tell you the facts. Yes, it's true that Hummel had promised Beethoven in mid-March, when Beethoven was on his death-bed, that instead of his own concerto he would play mine in the Josefstädter Theater on April 7, 1827. After Beethoven's death Hummel wanted to go back on his word. But Beethoven had once loved Hummel's wife, whose maiden name was Röckel and who, now a widow lives in Weimar. Beethoven had wanted to marry her, but Hummel won her away from him. When she heard that her husband was thinking of breaking his promise she said to me, 'I have too much respect for Beethoven's memory to allow that. You needn't approach my husband; I promise you he'll play your concerto.' --And Hummel did play it, and as a matter of fact also improvised on a theme of Beethoven in an unforgettably beautiful manner."

I attended that concert with my father. The audience was still shaken from Beethoven's death, only a few days earlier, and I well remember the enthusiastic applause Hummel received that evening.

On that occasion Schindler showed me a considerable number of letters to him from Beethoven, as well as letters from Meyerbeer, Humboldt, Ungher and others. There was also a packet bound with string, which Beethoven had left. It contained several printed opera texts, as well as some texts in manuscript for the composer's consideration as musical settings.²⁹

Other items from Beethoven's estate in Schindler's possession were the *Odyssey* and Sturm's *Betrachtungen über die Werke Gottes* (Reutlingen, 1811, vol. 2) with numerous marginal notes and underlines in Beethoven's hand. Some of Beethoven's notes had been partially cut off by the bookbinder during Beethoven's lifetime.

There was also a letter to Schindler from my mother, in which she writes that Hotschevar (Nephew Karl's guardian after my father's death) was trying to secure some documents, and that she found herself in the position of defending Schindler against him.³⁰

Rediscovering all these things after so many years made me sad and at the same time happy. I had seen them often, even daily, in that time so long ago--his walking stick made from a sugar cane, his unwieldy silver eye glasses, the old-fashioned monocle with the string attached, two brass stamps (one with a broken handle) that printed the entwined letters "LvB," the two

²⁹ Grillparzer's *Melusine*, written for Beethoven, was among these. As is known, Beethoven never carried out this operatic project; the text was set to music by Conradin Kreutzer.

³⁰ *Translator's note*: Presumably referring to Beethoven documents which Schindler had preserved. There is no indication that Karl had any interest in anything his uncle left, other than its potential financial value.

statues of cossacks he had bought and left standing on his desk to use as paper weights, a metal hand bell that rested on three feet and more things of that sort.

Schindler intended all these things to go to the imperial library in Berlin after his death, "after [the library] shall have acquired the greatest part of the conversation books and other such items through purchase and shall have erected a Beethoven Museum there." In our discussion Schindler remarked that public access to the Beethoven items in the imperial library would be prohibited for a period of ten years. On hearing that I felt compelled to ask him if he would make me an exception to this stipulation as he gave further items to the library. My reasons for this request seemed self-explanatory and Schindler agreed at once.

During my last visit Schindler gave me a music notebook--a fragment of the trio in A-Major, "Ich labt' ihn gern, den armen Mann. . .," from *Fidelio*, with Beethoven's autograph corrections. Several times after this last visit I exchanged letters with Schindler, from Vienna. Before I received the *Fidelio* notebook Schindler had given me and promised to send, Schindler died (January 16, 1864--he was born in 1796, in Medl, Moravia). However, his sister's son, Egloff, gave me the notebook soon afterward, in Vienna, faithfully following his uncle's directive. In the notebook I found, in Schindler's hand: "From A. Schindler to Dr. Gerhard von Breuning, as evidence of how Beethoven corrected his manuscripts. See *Biographie v. Beethoven*, vol. II, p. 340."

* * *

After changing apartments so many times, fate had it that this was the great man's last move. Beethoven was coming to the Schwarzspanierhaus, into a trusted familial group that rekindled fond memories of his youth. He moved into the house on the Alservorstädter glacis (old numbering: 200, new: Schwarzspaniergasse 5) between the 29th of September and the 12th of October, 1825, Michaelmas-time.

If our joy at this turn of events had determined its length it would have lasted much longer, but unfortunately this was not to be. The friendship that grew out of our living so near to each other--a renewed friendship from younger days for my parents, a new friendship for me--was to be as short an episode in my young life as it was inspiring, and it was to end so unexpectedly and painfully as to remain in my memory for as long as I live. It might be that the brevity of the episode even heightened the impression on the happy and carefree twelve-year-old I then was. Though the stroke of fate that ended the period changed my life utterly, my memories of that happy time shall remain with me forever.

Since that time biographies, reports and anecdotes about this last period of Beethoven's life have appeared in abundance, and much of what has been told and published is nearer fiction than truth. My own memories of the time confirm this and it was borne out further by looking into the conversation books and by talking with Schindler and others. So I want to try to set down my memories of that period. I feel the more called to do so since the scantiest and most inaccurate information has accumulated concerning this period of Beethoven's life, and I am the last living of those few who were with Beethoven several hours each day during the final three months of his life--that is to say during his illness.

Beethoven was as happy as we were over the coincidence of finding an apartment so near ours, and he waited with great impatience for his moving time. On that first chance meeting he had immediately asked my mother if she would help him organize his housekeeping, because he had never been very efficient in that area, and he repeated this request at each of the several visits required to set up the new apartment.

The apartment couldn't have been more suitable. The Schwarzspanierhaus on the Alservorstädter glacis faces south, and at that time it wasn't surrounded by any of the new buildings since constructed. From the apartment there was a wide view over the glacis and the inner city directly opposite, with its bastions and church towers. To the left you could see Leopoldsvorstadt, and past that the tall trees of the Prater and Brigittenau. In front were the exercise grounds of Josefstadt, with the imperial stables, and further, Mariahilfer and other outskirts of towns. Just to the right you could see the Red House where, in the ten-windowed apartment on the third floor, we lived. The house and the adjoining church had been built by Benedictine monks from Spain, and their requirements had dictated the somewhat unusual arrangement of the windows. When Beethoven moved in the adjacent church was being used as a warehouse for military beds.

To keep the prelate's apartment higher, the middle portion of the house has only two stories, with nine windows in a row, whereas on each of the side wings there are three stories, each with four front windows. The arrangement of the windows is such that the top row forms an unbroken line. Counting from the church, Beethoven's third-floor apartment starts with the fifth in this upper row of windows and ends with the ninth (the one just past the main entry door).

One reached the apartment by means of a beautiful main staircase. Through a simple, rather low door in the third floor one entered a spacious anteroom with a window (the one just over the main [north] entrance of the building) looking out onto the courtyard. Going directly through the anteroom one entered the kitchen and a large servant's room. In all, there were four windows on this side, looking into the courtyard. The very spacious, rectangular courtyard of the house is enclosed on three

sides by the building itself, and at that time was bordered in the back by a large private garden. The garden space has long since been sold for building lots and the houses that were built there created a little alley, which led directly from the Lackierergässchen toward the anteroom window described above, and then went at a right angle into the Garnisongasse toward a subsequently-built wing of the General Hospital. The alley was formed in 1845, when the principal owner of the building was a bookseller named Dirnböck. The suggestion was made that Dirnböck name the alley for himself, but with praiseworthy modesty, he instead named it Beethoven-gasse.

Wegeler (*Nachtrag*, p. 81) adds the explanatory remark to "Alser-Kaserne": "The new alley formed in the last few years--the Beethoven [Alley]-- runs directly behind this house and that named the Schwarz-Spanier, the house in which Beethoven died." This erroneous statement must be attributed to Wegeler's forty-nine-year absence from Vienna.

From the anteroom to the left one enters a very large room with a window looking out onto the street (this is the one over the apartment house entrance) [on the south side] and from this room, again to the left, one enters a similar room with a window. Going to the right from the entry room there is a large room with two windows, and finally from this room there is a large room with yet another window (this is the fifth window from the church), from which a small connecting door leads to the servant's room. These five windows look out onto the glacis. Light, warmth, spaciousness, having my father as a neighbor--all these and more combined to make this apartment a very comfortable one for Beethoven--just the home he had been longing for. The apartment was familiar to me before Beethoven moved in, because these same rooms--with the four additional, windowed rooms that separated Beethoven's apartment from the church--had belonged to Fieldmarshall-lieutenant Baron Minutillo, whose sons were my playmates. (This apartment was approached by means of its own spiral staircase.) This was in the early 1820's, and I mention the previous tenants to refute the contention that the apartment was a modest one. The apartment is divided today just as it was in Beethoven's day, except that the kitchen has been moved. I visited it on the 29th of May, 1869, for the first time since being there with Beethoven. By chance it was the 33rd anniversary of Beethoven's funeral. Several friends were with me: (A.W. Thayer, Prof. Linzbauer, with his wife, and pathologist Walther and wife.) I visited the empty apartment again a few days later, with my family.

The apartment, giving ample witness to Beethoven's cynical lifestyle,³¹ was arranged as follows:

³¹ *Translator's note:* Based on Gerhard's description of the apartment's layout and furnishings, it is difficult to guess what he means by "cynical" (*cynische Lebensart*). Perhaps he means something like "iconoclastic."

The single-windowed entry room [on the south side] was furnished, to the best of my recollection, only with a simple dining table, a few chairs against the walls, and a sideboard on the right wall. Over the sideboard hung a head-and-shoulders oil portrait of Beethoven's beloved paternal grandfather, Ludwig. (Nephew Carl's widow now has this painting.) It portrays the grandfather in a green coat with fur trim, holding a music book in his hand. It was the same painting that was once held by the landlord in Bonn as security for money owed, and the only piece from his parental legacy that Beethoven had sent to him in Vienna. The single-windowed room to the left [still on the south side, looking onto the street and glacis] was bare of furniture, except for a writing desk no longer being used (this is now in my possession). It was to the right, near the window. There was a painting in the rear of the room, in the middle of the wall--a large portrait of Beethoven with a lyre, before the temple of Galitzinberg. It is now owned by the widow of nephew Carl, and there is a copy, made about the same time as the original, owned by A.W. Thayer. All over the floor lay stacks of music, printed and hand-written, in total disarray: his own compositions as well as those of others. This room was seldom entered by anyone, and when I went in from time to time, out of curiosity or boredom or because Beethoven had sent me in for something, I would wander among the apparently old, certainly casually thrown together rubbish. At my young age I had no appreciation of those treasures, which would be sold by the bundle six months after Beethoven's death--all those manuscripts, some of them of unedited works, that would be scattered all over the world for a few Gulden!

The two rooms to the right of the entry-room [on the south side] were the first rooms in the apartment where Beethoven actually lived. The first was his bedroom and piano room. The second was his composition room, the place where his last works were created, as for example, the Galitsin quartets.

In the first, the two-windowed room, stood two grand pianos, crook to crook, the keyboards opposite each other. The English grand, given to him by the Philharmonic Society of England, had its keyboard toward the entry door. The names of the donors, of whom I remember Kalkbrenner, Moscheles, and Broadwood, were signed in ink on the soundboard under the treble strings. The piano, from the Broadwood factory, only reached to C in the treble. On the other side, with the keyboard toward the composition room, stood the grand from the Graf factory in Vienna, lent to Beethoven for his use. On the Graf the treble extended to F.³² Over the keyboard and action was a device intended to concentrate the sound and direct it to the ears of the

³² In May of 1866 the supplement to *Die Presse* published the genealogy of a piano supposedly owned by Beethoven. It was from the piano manufacturer S.A. Vogel, in Pesth, and belonged to Samuel Gyulai, in Klausenburg (Belsö-Farkas-utsze 81). The very fact that it has a "masterfully executed coat of arms and a clearly recognizable portrait of Beethoven in his youth" leads to the assumption that rather than Beethoven having owned the piano, some Beethoven admirer ordered the piano so manufactured and so adorned.

person playing. It was constructed of thin wood, arched like a soundboard, and resembled a prompter's box. In the last years even this didn't help, as an experience I had in the summer of 1826 unequivocally demonstrated. I shall relate that incident later. A chest of drawers stood between the two pillars to each side of the windows. On the wall above the chest there was a bookcase with books and papers. It had four shelves and was painted black. On the chest, in front the bookcase, lay several ear-trumpets and two violins (incorrectly identified as Amatis). All of this was in total disorder and covered with thick dust. Beethoven's bed, a night stand, a table and a wardrobe next to the heater completed the furnishings of the room.

The last room (again, with one window) was Beethoven's workroom. Here he sat, at a table placed somewhat apart from the window and directly before the door to the room, his face turned toward the large room, the right side of his body to the window. Among several chests in this room was a narrow, tall, very simple dressing-table and bookcase, which A.W. Thayer now owns, having received it from Fräulein Annacker's estate.

* * *

So my mother took over the task of setting up his household. Her first task was to find suitable servants. A cook ("Sali") was engaged, and in fact she proved to be devoted and dependable, serving Beethoven as housekeeper and caretaker until the end of his life. A kitchen maid was hired for "Beethoven-Sali," and the necessary kitchen utensils were bought.

As his household was being set up Beethoven determined to invite us to dinner--he had talked about it for a long time--and my father received the rhapsodic and humorous letter still in my possession, a letter Wegler published with my permission, but incorrectly annotated "probably 1820":³³

You are my dear friend above all and so am I, yet I still don't like my situation -- I would have invited you for a meal but before that I need several people, whose clever author the cook and whose clever works are not to be found in the cellar, but kitchen and [wine] cellar are not up to it; you wouldn't be well served in their company -- that will soon change -- don't accept Czerny's *Klavierschule*, I'll find out about another one of these days --

Here is the fashion magazine I promised your wife and something for your children. You can keep the journal for good -- just as anything I have is yours for the asking --

with love and
respect
your friend

³³ *Translator's note:* Though "rhapsodic" [*rhapsodisch*] is the word Gerhard uses to describe the letter, "chaotic" might be the modern reader's chosen term. Containing sentence fragments and what appear to be "inside jokes," I am translating the letter as close to verbatim as English allows, leaving it to the reader to interpret the individual phrases. As Gerhard says, the thrust of the whole is plain.

I hope we'll
see each other again soon

Beethoven

(The magazine contained scenes of Switzerland: Lucerne, etc. Later he asked to have it back temporarily, but in his intervening sickness and death the magazine went astray. Probably he lent it to someone else.)

The letter quoted above glows with almost idyllic anticipation of peace and comfort in the new surroundings, a feeling of "home" that Beethoven had had to forgo for a long time, and it attests no less to his need for companionship, for he was by no means antisocial. On the other hand, he had had some unfortunate experiences with strangers and relatives and he wasn't eager to repeat these.

Though his housekeeper did her best, Beethoven continued to be as disorderly as she was orderly. There was dust everywhere; papers and other belongings were thrown together in heaps; his clothes were unkempt, for all the dazzling whiteness of his linen and his constant bathing. His excessive washing, rather than being a sign of lower intestinal disorder as some have speculated, might well have contributed to the onset of his hearing problem, perhaps through rheumatic inflammation. When he had been composing at his worktable for a time and felt himself getting overheated he had the habit of rushing over to the washbasin and splashing a jug of water over his head. Then, somewhat cooler, he would hurry back to work, or maybe go outdoors for a walk, making but the hastiest gesture of drying his thick and unruly hair, paying not the slightest attention to the large amount of water spilled onto the floor. He went through this process at breakneck speed, so as not to interrupt the flow of inspiration, and he spilled so much water that it soaked through the floor and leaked down the ceiling of the apartment below, whose tenant complained to the house manager, then to the owner, and finally gave notice and moved.

My mother, who had the proper housewife's dread of dust-covered dishes and flatware, wasn't exactly overjoyed at Beethoven's repeated invitations for us to dine with him, and she found one excuse after another to decline, inviting Beethoven to our table instead. Because of this I never had the adventure of eating a meal in his apartment. But he was always glad to accept our invitation and would often send over a fish when he found a good one at the market. Fish was one of his favorite foods, and he liked to share the things he loved with friends.

When he had lunched with us--and often when he hadn't--he would join us for an afternoon walk--particularly on Sunday, because it was rare for my father to treat himself to a weekday afternoon off. Our walks over the glacis became quite routine, so for variety we might go over the Linienwall or to Hernalds and Ottakring, or even as far as Schönbrunn. During the

walks Beethoven soon noticed how I stayed so close to my father, following his every motion as if glued to him, and he gave me the nickname "*Hosenknopf*": "Trousers-button," because I stuck to my father "like the button on his trousers." Later he called me "Ariel," after the messenger in Shakespeare's "Tempest," because I alternated between running ahead and then back to join the group and was in general so lively. These were his names for me from then on, even during his illness, so that when he would send a note meant for me to our apartment in the Red House he always began it with one or the other nickname. In all I had twelve such notes, folded small, either enclosed with messages for my parents, or addressed to me directly. Three began with "Dear Trousers-button," nine with "Dear Ariel." Eleven were written with pencil, one in ink. To my eternal regret, these letters are now lost. Most likely some unknowing person took them for waste paper and threw them away when we moved from our apartment after my father's death.

Because of his habitual carelessness in dress, Beethoven always attracted attention when he appeared on the street. Walking alone, most of the time lost in thought, he would mutter and hum to himself, gesturing with his arms. When walking with others he spoke very loudly and energetically and, since those with him always had to write their answers in the conversation book, his walks consisted of constant stops and starts. This was conspicuous enough in itself and made more so because answers to questions were gestured and mimed.

Other people out walking would turn to look and the street urchins mimicked and cat-called behind his back. His nephew Carl refused to go out with him, once even telling him outright that he was ashamed to be seen on the street with him "because he looked so foolish." Beethoven confided to us that this hurt him deeply. For my part, I was proud as could be to be seen with such an important man.

The felt top hat was common then. Beethoven's had lost its flat upper surface and instead had a bulge on top, because he would come home, often dripping wet from walking in the rain, swing the hat once and slap it onto the upper spike of the coat rack. He always did this, with no concern for room furnishings, even in our apartment. Seldom or never brushed, be it from rain or dust, the hat had a permanently matted look. Also, to keep his forehead free, he wore it pushed back from his face. The wild gray hair streamed out both sides, as Rellstab said so well: "not curly and not stiff, but simply a mish-mash." In those days the coat collar was worn turned up behind the head. Beethoven's hat, pushed back from his forehead, collided with the collar. This gave the crown of the hat an outward bulge, and the constant friction eventually rubbed the coat collar threadbare. Walking against the wind, his coat tails, never buttoned, flapped around his arms. This was particularly true of the blue swallow-tailed

coat with the brass buttons, and the ends of his long white neck-scarf, fastened to the wide shirt-collar, whipped after him. His double lorgnette (he was short-sighted) hung loose on a cord. He loaded his coat pockets. Besides the handkerchief (hanging out) there was the thick music notebook, folded into quarto size, the conversation book with the heavy carpenter's pencil³⁴ (for communication with acquaintances he might chance to meet) and, for as long as it did any good, the ear trumpet. The weight of the music notebook lengthened one coat tail considerably and, because of constantly drawing the book in and out, the pocket lining on that side was often inside out. The well-known pen drawing of Beethoven gives a good idea of his appearance, though Beethoven never wore his hat to the side in the exaggerated way the artist rendered it. The image I've outlined here is forever etched in my memory. Over and over I saw him just so from our window, about two o'clock (his lunch time) coming over the glacis from the Schottentor, where the Votivkirche now stands, in his usual forward-leaning (but not stooping) posture, *sailing* toward his apartment. Sometimes I was allowed to go with him.

Conversation with him on the street was most difficult, because there often wasn't time to write. The following incident gave me conclusive proof, if that were necessary, that he was totally deaf. Once we were expecting him for dinner, and it was almost two, our mealtime. Past experience gave my parents good reason to guess that he might be engrossed in composing and forget the time, and they sent me to fetch him. He was at his work table, facing the open door to the music room, working on one of the last quartets (the Galitsin). Glancing up, he signaled me to wait until he had put his thought to paper. For a while I kept still, then I edged over to the *Graf* grand piano, the one with the amplifying shell and, not convinced of Beethoven's deafness for tones,³⁵ I began to depress the keys softly. I looked over at him to see whether he was disturbed by my tinkling. I saw that he hadn't heard anything and played louder, finally *pounding* on the keys. I had no further doubts. He had heard nothing at all, and wrote on undisturbed, finally finishing and indicating that he was ready to go with me. He asked me something on the street and I screamed my answer directly into his ear, but he understood mostly through my gestures. But once at dinner one of my sisters cried out in a high, ringing tone, and Beethoven was so happy to have heard it that he laughed aloud, showing his full set of gleaming white teeth.

³⁴ Beethoven showed his characteristic clumsiness in that he never could properly sharpen a quill, and his rather broad fingers weren't suited to sharpening and using a regular pencil--the point would break almost at once. This may be why he chose pencils such as carpenters use, with broad, thick lead.

³⁵ There were self-styled experts who maintained that the great composer was deaf only to conversation and ordinary sounds, but not to musical tones.

Also characteristic of him was the animation with which he discussed subjects of interest to him. Once during such a conversation with my father, pacing up and down in the room, he spit into a mirror, instead of out the window, and wasn't even aware of it.

If his brother Johann and most of all his nephew Carl had only stopped tormenting him Beethoven's life would now have been very pleasant, except for his deafness, and he was reconciled to that. He could easily have freed himself of both of them; it was simply a matter of deciding to do so. The brother was well-to-do; he had a pharmacy in Linz (which my father had helped to prosper by sending him military requisitions) and he had built up a considerable enough fortune to live from its income. Partly out of love and partly out of a self-sacrificing sense of duty toward his deceased brother, Beethoven concerned himself with his nephew much more than the boy deserved. A personality such as Carl's is better left to go through its own maturing. After his uncle, who had treated him with such love and consideration, died, and Carl left the military, he became a quiet, orderly person and a good enough head of family. He died in Vienna on 13 April, 1858.

But Beethoven's blind love, with which he could have embraced the world-- "*Seid umschlungen Millionen, diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt*" --was carried to extremes with his nephew. He never gave up, no matter that Carl's irresponsible mother constantly interfered with Beethoven's every positive influence in the boy's education. At one time, for the sake of the boy, he was involved in a lawsuit that lasted for years. It isn't difficult to understand that his creative output at that time decreased, which did prove to be the case.

Every time he met with my father he asked his advice about the nephew. With loving concern he expressed his misgivings over the boy's marks in school, told how brother Johann and Carl's mother acted against him at every opportunity, making his life more difficult, etc. Besides this, other favorite topics of conversation with my father were the artistic and financial successes of the last two large works: the Ninth Symphony and the D-Major Mass, and his plans for future compositions, such as the form the contemplated Tenth Symphony would or should take "to achieve new appeal," and whether or not it should use a chorus. He also said he regretted never having gone to England and never having married. Often the two friends recalled memories of their shared youth.

In short, our life now was that of close neighbors, firm friendship and mutual high regard.

But I was still shy, for I sensed his prominence if I didn't really understand it, and I didn't dare act on the wish I felt more and more strongly--to visit him whenever I wanted to. Therefore I was all the more delighted when he visited us. Before

very long he asked about my piano lessons, asked the name of my teacher. It was Anton Heller, a name Beethoven didn't know. He replied: "Hm, hm, all right." --My father assured Beethoven that my teacher was good, but said that I didn't practice enough. At that Beethoven said: "Play something for me." I did, and he, hearing nothing, watched my hands very closely. Finding fault with my hand position, he immediately played a scale for me. It was on the same Brodman grand piano on which in times long past he had played with Julie, on which, while he could still hear, he had improvised. "Which piano method is Gerhard using?" "The Pleyel." "I'll get him the Clementi; when all's said and done it's the best. He should work with that one and I'll advise him along the way." The piano method wasn't available in Vienna, and therefore couldn't be had immediately; he had to order it.

When I was with Schindler in Bockenheim, in 1863, I found a memorandum in a packet of opera texts. In Beethoven's hand, in penciled script that was already badly smudged, I read:

+ mirror
 + ducats
 + flannel
 + scissors
 + soap for
 washing
 + Breuning
Klavierschule
 + at brother's
 the business of the busts, etc.
 + cakes
 + flour

[the following written vertically on the page, to the right of the above]

+ soles
 suitcase
 get hay
 chamber pot

Schindler gave me this note, along with Beethoven's last laundry list. In October, 1870, at A.W. Thayer's, in Trieste, I found Jahn's copy of the letter³⁶ in which Beethoven refers to the piano method.

³⁶ My friend Thayer, with characteristic courtesy, has granted me permission to publish the letter.

"To Herr Tobias Haslinger
Well-born
formerly B. r. e. a. d. , now art dealer
Best gentleman North American Music Dealer and also
Retailer!

Only here a half day, I ask you what the *Clementi Clavierschule costs, translated into German*. [Emphasis Beethoven's] Could you please get me the information at once, and tell me if you have it, or if you don't, where I can get it?

Best Sir, Sir, Sir, Sir, I wish you the best in your freshly painted business office. Take care that your former nest is converted into a beer-house, because all beer-drinkers are good musicians and you have to take care of them, too. Yours truly

Beethoven."

After a long wait the Clementi piano method finally came and, from the Schwarzspanierhaus, Beethoven sent it to my father with a letter. I've allowed Wegeler to publish the letter in his *Nachtrag*. It reads:

Dear Werther!

Finally I can make good on my bragging: here is the Clementi *Clavierschule* for Gerhard. If he uses it the way I'll show him, he'll see good results. --I'll see you soon and give you a warm hug.

your

Beethoven

So that this letter wouldn't get lost and I would be certain to have it as a souvenir, my father sewed it into the center of the piano book.

Intrigued by the incident described above, when Beethoven demonstrated the scale for me, my mother and I very much wanted to hear him play something or, better yet, improvise. Neither my mother nor I had never heard him play. We talked with father about it, but he said he found the situation with Beethoven's deafness so sad that he couldn't bring himself to remind him of it by having him play, like an automaton, not hearing anything. So that scale was the only thing I ever heard Beethoven play. In playing the scale he held his fingers quite curved, so that the hand covered the fingers, and he seemed to favor the so-called older hand position in contrast to the rather flattened finger position more usual today.

The splendor of his improvisation is well known, and it was said that occasional false tones in no way detracted from the effect of the whole. Julie's brother, Dr. Jos. von Vering, told me that toward the end of Beethoven's career as a public performer he heard him play one of his piano concertos in the Theater an der Wien. At that time he was already so hard of hearing that he continued to play after several strings in the piano were broken; he wasn't even aware of it.

The first flight of Mdme. Garnerin was announced for the 28th of August, 1826. With a parachute she was to descend to earth from a dizzying height, a feat never before seen in Vienna. This immediately aroused everyone's attention. That day was also my thirteenth birthday, and Beethoven was invited to dine with us in celebration and then to watch Garnerin's latest experiment from our window, which provided a good view over the trees of the Prater. He brought a copy of M. Artaria's newly-published lithographic portrait of himself "with the *Missa Solemnis*" by Stieler, so that my father could send it to Wegeler in Coblenz.³⁷ While waiting for the Aeronautical Extravaganza comparisons were made between Beethoven's portrait and its model. My father's opinion was that no portrait looked exactly like Beethoven but that among the newer ones this was probably the best likeness, particularly if you didn't look at individual details and if you held the picture to the window and looked through the reverse side of the paper, which softened the sharp outlines. This remark pleased Beethoven very much.³⁸

On September 24, 1826, my Saint's Day, Beethoven was again our dinner guest, along with my tutor, Waniek. Before the meal Beethoven showed us the golden medallion he had received from Louis XVIII (now in the archive of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*). During the meal he told us that the Viennese Magistrate had named him a citizen of Vienna and in so doing had remarked to him that he hadn't become an actual, but rather an honorary citizen. At that Beethoven replied: "I didn't know that there were also dishonorable citizens of Vienna."³⁹

In the afternoon we all walked to Schönbrunn. My mother had a visit to make in Meidling (bordering on Schönbrunn)

³⁷ See Wegeler and Ries's biography, p. 61: Beethoven's letter to Wegeler on 17 February, 1827.

³⁸ Though the excessively sharp outlines of this first printing prompted this remark, I must agree with Schindler II, p. 290, that the later printing by Spina is too pale and flat, and must state that the lowered position of Beethoven's head was not characteristic of him.

Among other portraits of Beethoven, the best likenesses are: the medallion-portrait from the year 1814, by Letronne, though the mulatto-like facial characteristics are exaggerated, the portraits by Jäger and Schimon (this in Schindler's biography) and--according to my father's repeated judgment--above all the medallion-miniature-portrait of 1802, by Hornemann, which is in my possession and which is now being made public for the first time. Quite particularly true to nature is the life-mask of 1812, made by Joh. Klein. (The mold passed to the son of the painter Danhauser and then came into the possession of the sculptor Ant. Dietrich, who died on April 27, 1872, in Vienna. I own a very good copy of that.) Streicher owns a good bust. Schaller's bust is now in London. It was not duplicated and was completed at Carl Holz's instigation after Beethoven's death, was purchased by Med. Prof. Gattin Frau Fanni Linzbauer, nee Ponsing, Frau Linzbauer, an avid Beethoven admirer, who presented the bust to the London Philharmonic Society on the occasion of the hundred-year jubilee, in thanks for the money the Philharmonic Society had sent Beethoven during his final illness. The Royal Concertmaster, Mr. Cousins, made a special trip from London to Ofen to receive the bust, and returned to London with it. (I have a photograph of it.) All other portraits are more or less distortions or outright misrepresentations.

The full-length portrait recently published as "Beethoven," adorned with medals, with tight trousers and tasseled boots, is by a painter formerly in Berlin, named Wittich.

Schindler correctly states that the best representation of Beethoven's personality in a portrait is the one by Friedrich Rochlitz (see his work: *Für Freunde der Tonkunst* vol. IV, p. 350ff., and Schindler II, p. 291.

³⁹ *Translator's note:* The pun is on *Ehrenbürger* and *Schandbürger*.

and I went with her. My father, Beethoven and my teacher waited for us on a bench near the flowerbeds of the Schönbrunn gardens. As we walked on through the gardens Beethoven pointed to the French-style hedges, trimmed in the form of walled alleys, and said: "Purely artificial--bobbed like the old starched skirts. I only feel comfortable when I'm in natural surroundings." An elderly infantry soldier then passed by and Beethoven was immediately ready with a sarcastic remark: "A slave, who has sold his freedom for five kreutzers a day."

As we were walking home some boys were playing at bowling in the middle of the alley to the right, in front of the Schönbrunn bridge. The little ball they were shoving toward the pins accidentally hit Beethoven on the foot. Believing they did it deliberately, to tease him, he whirled toward them, yelling: "Who said you could play here? Must you carry on your mischief right here?!--" and he started to rush at them, to chase them away. My father, fearing the roughness of the street urchins, calmed Beethoven down rather quickly, emphasizing that the ball only grazed him and had done little harm.

It had become dark as we made our way home, and we missed the path going through the "Schmelz," so we had to walk across a plowed field. Beethoven was humming and growling melodies aloud as he swayed rather clumsily from one clump of dirt to the next, and because he was short-sighted he was glad to accept guidance and a supporting arm now and then. When we reached the Red House we said good night. My teacher went on with Beethoven to his apartment and was invited to an evening snack of soup and an omelet. As they ate, Beethoven continued to speak of his nephew Carl, as he had all day. A few days earlier Carl had pulled the nearly-disastrous prank of trying to shoot himself, and among other things Beethoven said, "My Carl was in a boarding school. Those institutions produce only hothouse plants."

Once--it might have been in early spring, 1826, Beethoven and my father were discussing music, as they so often did, and Beethoven asked my father if he went to concerts. My father answered that just then he couldn't find the time. "But Gerhard? Does Trouser-button go? I'll send him tickets. I can get them for the asking. Even if he doesn't understand much of it now, he'll learn to listen, and that's good for him." A few days later my father received subscription tickets for me, sent by Beethoven, to the "Concerts spirituels" which were then held in the Landhaussaal, and with them was a small rectangular, stiff piece of paper resembling a claim check for a cloakroom, on which nothing more than "No. 6" was printed. My father could make no sense of this, and assuming that the scrap had found its way into the envelope by mistake, thought no more about it. When we were walking together in the Great Alley of the Schönbrunn garden a few days later, my father remembered the tickets and, thanking Beethoven for them, asked if the "No. 6" meant anything. "Yes, that's the ticket for the sixth quartet performance

at Schuppanzigh's, which closes the cycle. And the performance is going on right now. What a shame to miss something like that! How could you not understand that? It's perfectly obvious, or you should have asked me," etc. He talked on and on about it, phrasing it this way and that, seeming annoyed and almost distrustful, as if we had deliberately not gone to the concert so that we could take this stroll. Not until my father and I had assured him over and over that we very much regretted the misunderstanding did he calm down, admonishing me to attend the rest of the concerts without fail. I made good use of the tickets and the advice, and from then on I received tickets to these musical performances as long as Beethoven lived. To this I owe my early favorable impressions as well as my lifelong devotion to good music. I heard the two Czernys, Linke, Schuppanzigh, Holz, Lutz and C.M. v. Bocklet when they were at their best, and in the audience were Schubert, Weigl, Eybler and other famous musical personalities, whom I met. One very vivid memory among many was at a performance in the Landhaussaal of the choral movement of the Ninth Symphony. The last two of those persons listed, and Schindler as well, shook their heads thoughtfully and expressed the opinion that in this work "Beethoven had gone too far." I needn't mention Abbé Stadler and several other music devotees, who even as late as the forties and even under Nicolai's superlative direction would sit and listen to Mozart, Haydn and others, and then leave the hall at the beginning of a Beethoven composition. One of Schindler's remarks, as recent as 1863, showed me how difficult can be for musicians who are set in their ways achieve full understanding of the huge, new creations--and Schindler, of all people, had such unique opportunity for thorough exploration of Beethoven's works. I asked him what he thought of the D-Major Mass. He answered: "A magnificent work, the most ingenious ever written, etc., only too bad that Beethoven didn't cut out the trumpet passage at the opening of the *Agnus Dei*; it doesn't fit there; it detracts." When I, pretending to concur with his opinion, asked him if he had talked with Beethoven about leaving the trumpet out, he answered, "Well, you know he never let anyone say anything about his compositions and he stubbornly refused to let anyone, even me, see a work before it was completely finished." This odd passage of all passages, how mighty and exalted it is!

Just as Beethoven now began to concern himself with the development of my musical taste, so had he from the very beginning with his nephew Carl. According to Schindler, Carl achieved a refined musical understanding, and occasionally Beethoven even sang or played a new theme for him, asking his opinion about its appropriateness for a projected work. But it didn't go so well with Carl's studies; he spent too much time in coffee houses and getting into debt. The most urgent exhortations, the most moving letters from the loving uncle had no effect, in part because every threat was blunted by the assurance of tenderest love and because Carl's utterly frivolous mother, with her coarse feelings and actions, exerted a constant negative influ-

ence on the boy.

The time for the engineering tests was approaching and debts were falling due. Carl was prepared neither in knowledge nor in his pocketbook, and fearing his uncle's reproaches more and more (he said he was "sick and tired of them," and that he found them "tasteless") decided to change his life--not to take a better direction, which would pleased his uncle immensely, but to kill himself. He bought two pistols, went to Baden, climbed the tower of the Rauhenstein ruin. At the top of the tower, he placed a pistol to each temple and fired, superficially wounding himself in the scalp so that he had to be taken to the General Hospital in Vienna.

The news was shattering for Beethoven. The pain he felt over this incident is indescribable; he was devastated, like a father whose much-loved son had been lost. When my mother happened on him on the glacis he was totally distraught. "Do you know what has happened to me? My Carl has shot himself!" -- "And -- is he dead?" "No, he only grazed himself. He's still alive; there is still hope that he can be saved -- but the disgrace he brought on me, and I loved him so! . . ."

The surgeon Ignaz Seng, who is still living, told me of the following encounter with Beethoven: "I was the assisting

physician in the Vienna General Hospital, in the surgical division headed by Dr. Gassner, one section of which was the so-called Three-Gulden floor. I lived to the left, on the big courtyard across from the Mittelhaus; the directors lived on the ground floor. One day in late summer of 1826 I was on duty and making my rounds when a man in a gray coat came up to me. I took him for a simple peasant. He asked me drily: 'Are you Assisting Physician Seng? They sent me to you from the reception office. Is my nephew, the foolish boy, the scoundrel, etc. in your care?' After asking the name of the patient sought, I answered the question affirmatively and said he was in a room in the Three-Gulden floor, bandaged from a gunshot wound and would he like to see him? Upon which he answered: 'I am Beethoven.' And as I was leading him to the patient he went on: 'I really shouldn't even visit him; he doesn't deserve it; he has caused me so much trouble, but . . .' and then he went on, talking about the catastrophe, about the nephew's lifestyle, about how he'd spoiled him too much, and so on. I was quite astonished that beneath this outward appearance the great Beethoven stood before me, and I promised to give his nephew the best of care."

On one side Carl's shot had missed totally; on the other side the temple was merely grazed. Once the wound healed only a minor scar was left, which Carl could hide by combing his hair forward.

The uncle, who was wounded much more deeply, immediately consulted with my father as to what was to be done with the unfortunate nephew. After a good deal of deliberation the two friends decided to ask Carl if he would like to enter military service. When he said he found the idea agreeable my father immediately made the necessary preparations. Beethoven declared himself willing to pay all the expenses of equipment, outfitting, etc. which were required of a cadet, "if only he will become a useful person in his new status." Because of my father's position as Privy Counselor in the Department of Defense

[*Hofrat am Hofkriegsrat*], Baron Stutterheim was glad to do him a favor, and made a position for Carl in his regiment, saying that in time, if he applied himself and my father recommended it, he would make an officer's rank available.

Though he very much regretted having to give up the plans he had made for his beloved nephew Beethoven gradually got used to this prospect and was still hoping for improvement in Carl. And though Beethoven's noble temperament had already endured much, his anguish in this affair wasn't over. The police intruded into the matter, concluding that inadequate religious instruction must be at the root of the problem. Carl was directed by the police to receive immediate instruction in religion, since his guardian "was so incapable of teaching him basic moral principles." Beethoven's letters to Carl, absolutely overflowing with moral sermons, should have made such a theory unworthy of attention! Once, when officials asked for proof that he was of the nobility, he simply pointed to head and heart as the seat of *his* nobility. In the wake of everything else that had happened he was so shocked and hurt by the suggestion of the police that his health began to deteriorate.

My father and Schindler advised Beethoven to take a trip to get his mind off the matter, and unfortunately brother Johann invited him to visit at his estate at Gneixendorf, near Krems.⁴⁰ Ludwig, who was always inclined to trust his brother, was at once beguiled into accepting the invitation. Hardly had he arrived there, as indicated in letters to my father a few days later, when it became obvious that the gullible Ludwig had once again fallen into the trap of his vile, greedy, heartless and shallow brother, and my father began to have grave concerns for Ludwig's health. When the exhausted man, who had already endured so much, arrived at Johann's estate, hoping to spend some carefree time recovering, Johann put him up in a room totally unsuited to the wet, cold November weather. The room was poorly heated, shabby, barely adequate for habitation. Johann refused to provide more heat, gave Ludwig poor and insufficient food, and after three days' stay announced to him that he had to pay room and board.⁴¹ In a letter to my father from Gneixendorf, Ludwig complained bitterly at the turn of events, when he had been led to expect a brother's loving care. In addition to that there was the hateful association with Johann's wife and foster-daughter. And yet, even with those household and social conditions tending to undermine body and soul, his spirit by no means faltered.

Another composition--to be sure, his last, his swan song--was composed at Gneixendorf: a creation fresh and fanciful, bursting

⁴⁰ *Translator's note:* Without meaning to editorialize, I urge the reader who first encounters the story of Beethoven at Gneixendorf here to realize that what follows is Beethoven's version, filtered through the consciousness of a thirteen-year-old boy who worshiped him and who was recalling the episode almost fifty years after the fact. There are other, more balanced accounts of Beethoven's stay in Gneixendorf, into which the interested reader might look.

⁴¹ In the conversation books from Gneixendorf, Autumn 1826, (now in the Imperial Library in Berlin) one reads in Johann's hand: "If you want to live with us, you can pay 40 Gulden C.M. per month. That comes to 500 Gulden C.M. for the year."

with enthusiasm. It is the finale to the Quartet Op. 130, in B Major (rather than, as is well known, the original fourth movement, published separately by Artaria as the *Fugue for Strings*, Op. 133: Schindler, 3rd Ed., II, p. 115, and Thayer's Chronological Catalog of Beethoven's Works, Berlin, 1865, p. 165).⁴² This offers proof enough that Beethoven's compositions were not influenced by transitory personal circumstances, that is to say that the wellspring and character of his art did not depend his mood of the moment, as some zealous analysts with made-up theories have tried to demonstrate. Ferdinand Hiller expresses this same view. In the *Kölnische Zeitung*, Dec. 17, 1870, he says:

“ . . . Nowadays people have a special interest in investigating details of great men's personal lives. There is nothing wrong with that, so long as they don't try to draw too close a parallel between their creative works and deeds and the circumstances of their lives (this can lead to the most monstrous errors) and so long as they don't, with perverse enthusiasm, try to find the significance of their works in the most insignificant aspects of their person and actions. . . ”

But if the miserable conditions in Gneixendorf couldn't stop Beethoven's creative activities, they did have damaging effect on his body, already weakened from the indignities he had suffered and therefore the more vulnerable to unfavorable external influences.

Beethoven, finally tiring of his unbefitting reception and treatment in Gneixendorf and feeling ill, wanted to return to Vienna. To save its use, Johann denied him his good, enclosed carriage and gave him a shoddy, open one, without regard to the cold and wet December day.⁴³ The miserable homeward journey arranged by his brother brought on an attack of peritonitis. Whenever spirit and body are in weakened condition, whether through insults or poor care, a detrimental external circumstance is the more dangerous. The illness to which Beethoven fell victim, though erroneously described by biographers as pneumonia,⁴⁴ can be medically proven to be peritonitis. The decisive points are as follows: First, only peritonitis, not pneumonia, can cause abdominal edema and, second, while in the very beginning of the illness there might have been some catarrhal irritation in the

⁴² On the same sheets of music paper on which Beethoven wrote the fourth quartet movement in Gneixendorf, one sees sketches for a quintet movement in E Major, with motifs laid out (see Nottebohm's *Beethoveniana*, p. 81). Nottebohm tells also of finding sketched notes for a four-hand piano sonata. I remember clearly that Diabelli, who had commissioned the composition, repeatedly visited Beethoven during his illness, and in my presence urged the completion of the work. Beethoven rejected the suggestion outright. Every time, as soon as Diabelli had left, Beethoven said to me: “Diabelli insists that I work on this sonata. He thinks he can force me to do it, but for as long as I'm sick I'm not working on anything.”

⁴³ *Translator's note:* Again, without wanting to offer anything like a rebuttal, I urge the interested reader to investigate other versions of this story.

⁴⁴ Schindler, *Biographie*, 3rd Ed., Aufl. II., p. 134, says (and later biographers have used him as reference and repeated): “The sickness that befell Beethoven began as a chill in the abdomen, and developed into pneumonia,” and he adds: “This was, however, diagnosed by Dr. Wawruch much too late, and by the time the correct diagnosis was reached, dropsy had developed.”

breathing mechanism, during the course of his illness he didn't cough, his voice remained very strong and he never had difficulty breathing, except insofar as the excessive accumulation in the abdomen later pressed outward alarmingly. Finally, because during his death agony of almost three days the lungs were completely healthy and strong. Therefore there can be no question of a previous illness involving the lungs.

To come to the point, Beethoven was sick when he returned to Vienna. Because of the composer's ineptness in practical matters my father wasn't immediately notified that he had returned, although an earlier letter to my father had aroused grave concern about Ludwig's health. Upon receipt of the letter he had said: "I'm afraid Beethoven is in danger of becoming very ill, if not edematous." The contents of the letter, which I wasn't able to find among the papers my father left, must have indicated symptoms of that disease from the very beginning, and my father, though not a doctor himself, frequently associated with doctors and had correctly recognized the illness. In the meantime the nephew acted with his usual irresponsibility, by first forgetting his uncle's request to find him a doctor and then, after a few days, remembering it quite coincidentally during a billiard game, and casually asking the proprietor of the coffee house to send a doctor over to his uncle. This is how Dr. Wawruch finally came to Beethoven and became his attending physician. Beethoven, in the meantime, had grown more seriously ill.

To be sure, this man was a professor in the medical clinic for surgeons and within the context of the period had some experience and reputation in his specialty. He was also known for his good Latin, but he hadn't proven himself outstanding as a physician. The medications he used, at least in this case, can be categorically described as inappropriate to the affliction and of no benefit.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ An account by Dr. Andreas Wawruch, "Ärztlicher Rückblick auf L. v. Beethoven's letzte Lebensperiode," written immediately after the death of the great composer and found among Wawruch's papers after Wawruch's death, was published by Alois Fuchs in the *Wiener Zeitschrift für Kunst, Literatur and Mode* (No. 86, April 30, 1842, Ed. Friedrich Witthauer). The account teems with inaccuracies and with "assertions dictated either by vanity or other motives," as stated in Ant. Schindler's response (*Frankfurter Conversationsblatt*, No. 193, July 4, 1842, pub. J.N. Schuster). In that article Schindler reports accurately and truthfully that "all activities having to do with Beethoven's sickness and treatments, almost every meeting with a doctor, as well as any other visit during the four months, was either in my (Schindler's) presence, that of Hofrat von Breuning or of his son (who is now a Doctor of Medicine), since we took turns in this sacred service," etc. He indicates further that almost all of Beethoven's conversations and activities during the last eight years of life, including this sad period, are preserved in the master's conversation books (which Schindler then held, but which are now in the Imperial Library in Berlin). Schindler concludes by wishing for the appropriate, conscientious and unbiased person to make use of this resource in a way that he, Schindler, as a participant in the events, might not be able to.

Dr. F.G. Wegeler, in his *Nachtrag zu den biographischen Notizen über L. van Beethoven* (Coblenz, 1845, p. 13), further underscores Schindler's suspicions of "Dr. Waurach" (correctly, Wawruch): "Dr. Malfatti is supposed to have prescribed iced punch for the dropsy sufferer, because as a long-time friend of Beethoven, he was aware of his strong inclination toward spirits." Wegeler calls Wawruch's assertion "utterly unfounded." I can witness only that Wawruch was neither a long-time friend, nor a friend of Beethoven at all, and the things he reports are so completely pulled out of thin air that they can be viewed only as an example of self-aggrandizement.

Obviously, as soon as my father heard the report of Beethoven's arrival he hurried over to him. I went with him, and while my father, over-burdened with official duties, couldn't get to his friend's sickbed before about four o'clock in the afternoon, I stayed there before and after my tutorial hours, so that I was with Beethoven daily from twelve until two o'clock, and then from three or four until five.

As happy as the previous time had been, so cloudless and imperishable my memory of it, so now began a sadder time for me. To be sure, I was more often with the great man I so loved, several hours each day, but it was a sad time, whose bitter impressions are the more lasting because I was so young.

As he had when he was well, the ailing Beethoven lay in the two-windowed room (the one passed through before reaching the workroom). The bed was alongside the wall that separated the large room from the small one used for composition, opposite the entry door. The head of the bed was against the rear wall, so that Beethoven, with his face turned toward the middle of the room, could see everything that went on.

Next to the head of the bed stood a bedside stand, and further over, next to the heater, a long table. Next to the bed there was a small table, and next to that two or three chairs, for the few friends who visited him. On the bedside stand there was a polished black box in which he kept household money, and to the side of the stand, on the floor, a small, yellow, folding lap-desk.

On a little table next to the bed lay a bell, once a doorbell, which Beethoven probably had brought with him when moving from one or the other of his apartments. Although ancient and inelegant, the bell served him well. Sali could hear its loud clangor from the most distant room of the apartment, even through the wall. On the table with the bell there was always music paper, pencil, the conversation book, and slate and chalk, to enable the ailing and deaf man to communicate with his visitors. The conversation book was made of drawing paper, folded into octavo form and sewn. In the book or on the slate visitors wrote what they wanted to say to Beethoven. I mostly used the slate, which I now regret, because the conversation books contain only scattered lines in my handwriting to give a hint of my boyish comments. But the substance of our conversations and the experiences we shared are so engraved in my memory that I can recall most of them very clearly.

Fortunately after Beethoven's death Schindler gathered up the conversation books, as he saved so many other things from the apartment, and most of these are now in the Imperial Library in Berlin. Without Schindler's intervention a rich source of material on art, science, and especially on the details of Beethoven's life would have been scattered to all parts of the world or,

more likely, would simply have been lost. This is the more true because my father, in somewhat exaggerated concern that he take nothing that wasn't specifically given to him, would neither take a memento for himself nor allow me to do so.

Although forty-seven years have passed since I spent that sad and unforgettable time at the sickbed of our friend, it is still difficult for me to put details on paper without being overcome with emotion. Though physically ill, he was intellectually and spiritually strong, and hardly ever did a word of complaint pass his lips. Though no longer actually writing compositions, he was busy with long-range plans for new works (for example the Tenth Symphony). He talked about current events that interested him, and of course he was occupied with the progression of his illness and with financial matters. He was worried that a long-term illness and an eventual extended rest in a sanatorium might put him into financial difficulties.

It is worth noting that he seemed--finally--almost to stop worrying about his nephew, or at least to worry less about him, that is, after my father had once got him installed as a cadet in a regiment in Iglau. Out of gratitude to my father and to the commander of the regiment, Fieldmarshal-lieutenant v. Stutterheim, he dedicated the string quartet in C# Minor, Op. 131, to him. But he grew more annoyed every day with the meaningless visits of Dr. Wawruch, who soon had Beethoven drinking a truly astonishing quantity of *Salep-dekokt*.⁴⁶ The housekeeper Sali had already taken 80 six-ounce bottles back to the pharmacy for the two-kreutzer deposit, and she soon did the same with another 80 bottles. Wawruch had also ordered that Beethoven's drinking water be mixed with a few spoonfuls of *Weinstein*⁴⁷ and sugar, and the number of these drinks I stirred up during my visits alone was unbelievable. None of this did any good, as any lay person might guess, because merely treating symptoms is useless if the basic cause of the disease isn't dealt with. The build-up of fluid in the poor man's abdomen increased to such an extent that the first puncture and draining was called for as early as the 18th of December. The operation was performed by Chief Surgeon Seybert. It had come to this because Wawruch had done nothing to alleviate the root cause of the problem and because he did nothing even after tapping the abdomen, which immediately began to accumulate fluid again, retaining it in spite of the undetermined amount that trickled from the inflamed puncture for days after the operation.

Beethoven had sent for his previous doctors: Professor Braunhofer (this choice would have been no better) and Dr. Staudenheim. Both found the distance to the Schwarzspanierhaus (just over the glacis, immediately adjacent to the inner city)

⁴⁶ *Translator's note:* This is a drink that was thought to be soothing to the membranes. The active ingredient came from the dried tubers of certain orchids.

⁴⁷ *Translator's note:* tartaric acid, used to cause the effervescence in drinks, baking soda, etc.

too great, or at least they used this for an excuse to decline coming. They probably thought they wouldn't be paid enough. I heard Wawruch make periodic comments to my father, to Schindler, etc, about his fees, too, probably out of the same fear of being insufficiently compensated. He seemed always to have the payment for his services in mind, and in general acted cold and unsympathetic, in utter contrast to his statements in the "Medical Account" mentioned above. Besides the absence of personal rapport, it was obvious to Beethoven that the treatments were doing no good, so at the very least he knew *this* doctor wasn't the right one for him. My father was also annoyed with Wawruch's posturing and showing off his Latin before a sick man who needed help so badly. He did speak good Latin, but his ostentatious use of it was particularly irksome under the circumstances. So it wasn't seldom (in fact, it was almost every time) that Beethoven, when we were involved in a conversation and I had to announce Wawruch's arrival in the next room, would turn his face to the wall with the words: "Ach, that ass!" And he would answer Wawruch's questions monosyllabically and then finally not at all. Wawruch's unsympathetic and brusque behavior was obvious even to me, but he unconcernedly and pedantically continued his visits in spite of Beethoven's increasingly obvious lack of trust in him. This and the fact that Beethoven's condition wasn't improving at all concerned me greatly. Wawruch's arrival made an extremely disagreeable impression on me. After the man would leave I would quite openly tell Beethoven what I thought, and the master, who felt worse and worse, would launch into ever-more violent invectives against Wawruch, and speak almost as strongly against Seybert, though Beethoven considered the latter somewhat better. But in fact Seybert went no further than Wawruch in treating the disease itself, but confined himself to the technical aspects of the [abdomen-puncturing] operation.

How I would like to have persuaded my father to use his influence to bring about a change in doctors, and I approached the subject several times. Because of the strained relationship with Johann van Beethoven, however, as well as for other reasons, my father didn't feel that he could interfere.

Beethoven had, incidentally, another friend who was a physician and, as a matter of fact, a man with the most celebrated name in medicine in Vienna. This was Dr. Malfatti. He sent for him, but this man so esteemed by the public had once felt himself insulted by Beethoven, and refused to come. Not before further mediation (see Schindler, 3. Aufl. II., p. 153) was this old friend brought to the bedside of the deathly ill man. I was present at that first visit as well as at several subsequent ones. Beethoven awaited the doctor with eager anticipation and his face was almost transfigured with joy as Malfatti entered. He seemed sure that he could draw from Malfatti's very presence the recovery he had so long and vainly sought. But the usually ingenious physician seemed little inspired by Beethoven. On his first visit he prescribed iced punch "to enliven the digestive

organs that had been exhausted through overdose of Wawruch's medicine." That provided a welcome, but too short-lived refreshment. But on the next visit, a few days later and unfortunately after the puncture and draining had already been performed, he prescribed a kind of steam bath that noticeably worsened the condition of the one who was so eager for improvement. The treatment had to be abandoned after one application. Jugs filled with hot water were stacked in a bathtub and birch leaves spread over them. Then the sick man was placed on top of the leaves and the tub and body covered, except for the head, with sheets. Malfatti thought this would work on the skin and induce profuse sweating, but the effect was exactly the opposite. The body acted like a salt block, immediately drawing the surrounding steam into it and swelling visibly in the apparatus. The puncture that had just relieved the body of excess fluid and hadn't yet healed had to be re-opened within a few days.

Beethoven waited for Malfatti's subsequent visits as if for the Messiah, but he only came at intervals of several days, in the meantime sending his assistant, Dr. Röhrig, in his stead. Even the visits of the substitute drew joyful response from Beethoven, though he was visibly disappointed not to see the Savior himself. I remember one occasion quite clearly, when Malfatti didn't make a visit specifically promised, and Wawruch entered instead. Beethoven turned his body toward the wall in a fury, letting "Ass" escape from his mouth with unusual vehemence. Wawruch either didn't hear or paid no attention.

I often heard him call out: "Ach, that one!" his anticipation turned into disappointment, when brother Johann entered, but when Schindler or my father or I, a mere boy, would come in, he always welcomed us with a friendly smile.

But I want to give myself and my reader a rest from this sad litany of sickness and suffering, and tell some incidents of a different nature that occurred during the illness.

First I have to say that the situation I had most desired, to be in close and daily contact with Beethoven, was now realized in full measure, and I wanted to address him with "*Du*," as my father did.⁴⁸ For some time I had loved him with all my heart, and I took no little pride in being among the very few loved by him. I asked my father how I should lead up to asking Beethoven if I might say "*Du*" to him. I tried to get him to ask Beethoven's permission, but he suggested instead: "If it means so much to you, just be direct about it. Simply say "*Du*" to him; he won't be offended. It will either please him or else he won't even notice." Knowing how well my father understood Beethoven's thinking, I ventured to follow his advice the very next time I

⁴⁸ *Translator's note:* For those readers not familiar with German, "*Du*" is the second person singular personal pronoun, corresponding to the obsolete English form, "thou." "*Du*" is reserved for family members and close friends, and it is most unusual for a child to address an adult not in his immediate family with "*Du*." It was even more unusual in the nineteenth century than it is today, and was a sign of a quite special relationship.

was alone with him. This was in the early stage of his illness. With quaking heart, but also with impudent boldness I tried it. The first time I wrote I addressed him with “*Du*.” I watched his face anxiously as I held the slate for him to read. My father was right: Beethoven didn’t react at all, and this form of address was ours from then on.

But now to the incidents themselves.

One morning during his illness (about mid-February, 1827) a complete edition of Handel’s works arrived, beautifully bound in quarto-format, sent to him as a present from the harp virtuoso Stumpff. He had long wished to own these works, and the gift was in response to a remark he had made to that effect. When I came into his room toward noon that morning, as I did every day, he pointed to the works, piled on both pianos, his eyes shining with pleasure. “Look! These came this morning: a gift for me. I’m so happy to get them; I’ve wanted them such a long time. Handel is a composer I can learn from. He’s the best, the most honest of all. Bring the books over to me,” and he went on and on, happy and excited. And then I began bringing the books over to his bed, one by one. He leafed through each one as I gave it to him, stopping now and then at certain passages, and then laid each volume in turn to his right side on the bed, toward the wall, until finally they all were stacked up together there. I’m sure he kept them there several hours, because when I came back in the afternoon they were still on the bed. And again, full of excitement, he began praising Handel’s greatness, calling him the most classical and solid of all composers.

Often when I came in I found him sleeping. I would sit quietly beside his bed, so as not to interrupt the sleep he so needed to strengthen him. One such time I was leafing through the conversation book that was lying on the bedside table, to see who had visited and what was talked about. Among other entries I found this passage: “Your quartet that Schuppanzigh played yesterday wasn’t appreciated.” After a short time, when he waked up, I pointed to the phrase with a questioning gesture. His terse and simple answer was, “They’ll like it one day,” and he went on to indicate in cogent and thoughtful language that he wrote what he considered to be good--that he wasn’t swayed by contemporary opinion: “I know [that what I’ve just said is true]; I’m an artist.” (“*Ich weiß, ich bin ein Künstler.*”)⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Schindler II, p. 281, answers, “Never,” to the question often put to him by music enthusiasts, “whether Beethoven ever expressed the hope that his works would one day find the respect they deserved,” and then he modestly adds his opinion: “but he might have hoped for a revival of his complete works, if only in the distant future, for he considered all his compositions except the symphonies and the quartets as good as dead.” And then Schindler refers to Goethe’s introduction to the *West-Östlichen Divan*, where the poet speaks of works that one understands immediately, and of more difficult works that are understood only after many years, and he finds the following words marked in Beethoven’s hand: “. . . and a second, a third generation growing up will reward me doubly and triply for the injustices I’ve had to suffer from my contemporaries.” Beethoven then copied that specific phrase in one of his diaries. And in conversation with a group of friends, referring to the ubiquitous influx of Italian music, he said emphatically: “Never mind; they can’t rob me of my place in history.” The answer he gave me, “They’ll like it one day,” gives one cause to hope that the

No one else was there, and we talked further about musical matters. I took the opportunity to ask him why he had never written a second opera, though I already knew from my father that one main reason was the frustration and annoyance he had experienced in staging *Fidelio*, and knew furthermore that this opera was little appreciated and even less lucrative. He answered: "I wanted to write another opera, but I haven't found a suitable text. I need a text that inspires me--something pure, ennobling. I've never been able to set such texts as Mozart used. I can't find the right tone for frivolous texts. I've received many librettos, but none was right for me." And he went on: "I wanted to write much more. --A tenth symphony⁵⁰ a requiem, and the music to *Faust*. I wanted to write a piano method--it would have been entirely different from anyone else's. But I won't get to any of that, and while I'm sick I'm not working at all, no matter how much Diabelli and Haslinger press me, because I have to be in the mood. I have long periods when I can't compose anything, and then suddenly it comes back."

Another time I found a sketchbook lying on the furniture in the room. It was made of cheap, machine-made music paper, ruled transversely, the pages interleaved and folded, and it was completely full of musical sketches: miscellaneous bits and pieces, starts and stops, and even across the top, in the white border, he had drawn freehand staff-lines and written the most diverse musical thoughts there as well. It was a strange sight.⁵¹ I held the sketchbook before him, asking if he really found it necessary to note down his inspirations like that. It hard for me to believe that such a great intellect needed the same kind of memory reinforcement as those less gifted. He replied: "I always carry a notebook with me, and when an idea comes to me I write it down at once. I even get up during the night when a thought comes to me, otherwise I might forget it."

Another time (in mid-February) Diabelli had brought Beethoven a lithograph of the modest house in which Haydn was born, in the Moravian village of Rohrau. Diabelli's publishing house had just issued the lithograph, and he brought it to Beethoven as a gift. Beethoven was delighted, and when I came at noon he showed it to me immediately. "Look; I got this today.

Master, though then considered bit old-fashioned by the majority of his contemporaries, at least drew some comfort from his faith in his own artistry and his hope for future recognition, although one must admit that there is a wide abyss between hope and realization.

⁵⁰ Out of gratitude for the 100 pounds he'd received on March 1, 1827, from the London Philharmonic Society, he planned to dedicate the symphony to the Society. It seems to me that Beethoven intended to weave English themes into the work, but Schindler contradicts this. It may be that my memory is vague on this point.

⁵¹ Two such sketchbooks were subsequently in the possession of Aloys Fuchs, in Vienna. He told me he had shown them to young Mendelssohn when he was in Vienna, and that Mendelssohn immediately recognized every single motif, knew the finished work and passage where Beethoven had used the material, and went at once to the piano and played each composition. Fuchs was so overwhelmed by the boy's brilliance, so moved by young Mendelssohn's transfigured attention to the notebook that he gave it to him.

Look at that little house, where such a great man was born. Your father can have the picture framed for me; I want to hang it.”

That afternoon, when I came back with my father, Beethoven asked him about having the frame made and I took the picture with me. My father asked my piano teacher to order a simple frame of polished black wood, according to Beethoven’s wish, and to bring the picture back, framed, as soon as possible. Heller was very pleased at being afforded the honor of doing something for the great Beethoven, and he not only carried out the wish within a few days, but obliged even further, by writing in the white border of the picture, in elaborate calligraphy, “Jos. Hayden’s Birthplace in Rohrau.” I pointed out the mistake to my father, that instead of “Haydn,” “Hayden” had been written, but my father told me not to mention the error, that Beethoven wouldn’t notice it. I followed my father’s advice when I first brought the picture to Beethoven, but later was so disobedient as to draw his attention to the mistake. My impudent remark had surprising repercussions. In an instant Beethoven was as irritated and angry over the handsomely framed picture as he had been pleased with it before. His face red with rage, his voice furious, he demanded, “Who wrote that?” “My piano teacher.” “What’s the ass’s name? --Such an ignoramus claims to be a piano teacher, claims to be a musician, and doesn’t even know how to write the name of a master like Haydn. He must correct it at once. It’s a disgrace,” etc., etc. I was sorry to have put my good piano teacher in a bad light with Beethoven, and was trying to make amends any way I could. I told him my father had forbidden me to mention the misspelling, and had “said you wouldn’t notice it.” At that he grew even more angry, saying he *had* overlooked it in the first moment, but he certainly would have seen it later, as would anyone with any education--on and on in this vein. The scene ended with my taking the picture home to have the mistake corrected, and getting a good scolding from my father for my gratuitous remarks. When I brought the picture back a few days later Beethoven was still grumbling about the error and, though I tried every way I could to excuse my teacher, Beethoven would relent only so far as to say, “He may be a good enough piano teacher, but he’s a superficial person, like most of them. They’ve learned just barely enough to get by and don’t want to learn any more.”

But that modest lithograph provoked still another characteristic scene. At my father’s next visit Beethoven began to express doubt that anyone who could make such an error in spelling could possibly be a suitable piano instructor for me. After my father had reassured him on this point, Beethoven asked him how much he had paid to have the picture framed. My father was reluctant to tell him the insignificant amount, but Beethoven insisted. “All right,” my father wrote, “Two gulden and 15 Xr. W.W.” (I’m not even sure that was the correct amount.) Beethoven: “Take the little black chest from the bedside cabinet; you’ll find the money in it.” Father did so, but not finding coins in that exact denomination, took out a five-gulden note, to make

change. Beethoven was just then very weak and drowsy, and had closed his eyes. When my father noticed this he waited with the little case open until Beethoven opened his eyes, so he could see what he had taken out and the change he returned. Beethoven seemed to take no notice but, as if mildly annoyed that his sleep had been interrupted, said only, "Fine," making a gesture as if brushing the matter aside. My father was hardly out the door when Beethoven awakened fully, and said he was hurt that my father, his friend, could have thought he might not trust him. He went on, reproachfully: "Why did your father show me the banknote? Did he think I had no faith in his honesty? Our friendship goes back far enough that we should take each other's integrity for granted," and so on. This trifling incident showed me how sensitive and easily offended Beethoven was. He was hurt that his friend had imputed this unattractive personality trait to him. But Steffen was no less sensitive. One day during the illness a letter came, with the address: "To Herr Ludwig van Beethoven, Composer in Vienna." My father took quite serious offense that the writer had addressed Beethoven in such a manner, "as if he were a potter." I must say that my father was quite often offended on behalf of the unfortunate, ailing friend he had known since boyhood, because of the insignificant appreciation and sympathy the great man was afforded during his illness.⁵²

The following will show how good-hearted Beethoven was, allowing me, still so young, to chatter away to him by the hour, and will show how he went along with my every childish whim: I had composed a waltz--an utter trifle, had written it down and was burning with eagerness to show it to Beethoven, to see what he would think of it. But my vanity was tinged with anxiety, and I asked my parents if they thought I could dare to show him my piece without running the risk of being laughed at. They encouraged me to go ahead, and I wasted no time following their advice. I fairly flew to him at noon with the sheet of music in my pocket. He was almost always alone, but that day, of all days, Tobias Haslinger and his son Carl were there. That made me very uncomfortable and more shy than usual. I waited and waited, hoping they might soon leave. They didn't; they stayed, and it was getting close to my dinner hour, when I had to be at home. Although I was reasonably sure I would be alone with Beethoven that afternoon, as I was so often, or certainly the next day or the next, I grew more and more impatient; I was in

⁵² *Translator's note:* This passage seems almost impossible to make clear in English. The writer of the letter addressed Beethoven as a "*Tonsetzer*:" literally, "tone-setter," which is a standard designation when one wishes to use a German term for one who writes music rather than the Latin/French-derived, "composer." Stephan was annoyed that the more flattering term, "*Tondichter*" ("tone-poet") had not been chosen. Further, the German word for "clay" is *Ton*, which in earlier orthography was *Thon*. The passage, and Stephan's outrage makes sense only with this information in mind. The passage in the original reads: *Als eines Tages während der Krankheit ein Brief unter der Adresse: 'An Herrn Ludwig van Beethoven, Tonsetzer in Wien' ankam, ärgerte sich mein Vater ernstlich darüber, dass der Schreiber Tonsetzer statt Tondichter überschrieben hatte, 'als ob er ein Töpfer wäre, es fehlte dafür in dem Worte "Ton" nur das 'h.'*

such a hurry I couldn't wait. Beethoven and I were together so much I felt totally at home with him, but I was quite timid because the Haslingers were there, and both of them were accomplished musicians. But I fought down my shyness, seized a momentary lull in the conversation, drew the page of music out of my pocket, impudently wrote on the slate that I had tried my hand at composing, and handed slate and music to Beethoven. He smiled at me, saying, "Let's see what you've done." He took the page, read it attentively, reached for a pencil, and said: "There's only one mistake in it, where you doubled the tonic in the bass." With the pencil he wrote in the correct note and gave the sheet back to me. Then Haslinger took a look at my creation, and the indifferent way he laid it aside left me no doubt as to its true worth. I very much regret that this page of music was lost along with the twelve letters I mentioned earlier--lost during our change of apartments after my father's death.

Among those who visited Beethoven daily during his illness were my father, myself, Schindler, brother Johann and, at the beginning, as long as he was in Vienna, Beethoven's nephew. Carl Holz came often, Tobias Haslinger came occasionally, either alone or with his son, Carl, and then there was Diabelli. Now and then Baron Eskeles' head butler, Rauch, came, as did the well-known piano teacher, Dolezalek and the violin virtuoso, Clement. Among the strangers who came through Vienna and visited were the singer, Schechner (she died in 1870), Hummel, with his fifteen-year-old pupil Ferdinand Hiller,⁵³ and a handful of others not named, among them Schindler's sister and the Baron Gleichenberg. One sees evidence of all these visits in the conversation books.

Rauch usually brought stewed fruit, sent by the mistress of the house where he was employed. Since Beethoven seldom touched it, or only ate a bite or two, I usually got to eat it. The fruit, a few bottles of wine from Malfatti, the picture of Haydn's birthplace, and finally the hundred pounds and the encouraging letter from the London Philharmonic Society stating their readiness to meet his terms and provide everything he needed and wished for--these were the gifts Beethoven received from well-wishers during his illness. These few visits gave him a great deal of pleasure. Malfatti's visits galvanized him, because he placed all his hopes for recovery in Malfatti's expertise. But Malfatti came much too seldom and the other two doctors, who in this case could do nothing, much too often.

They were, indeed, ineffectual, for none of their medicines, none of their operations provided more than slight and

⁵³ Interesting, as well as accurate, is Dr. Ferd. Hiller's written account of the time ("Aus den letzten Tagen Ludwigs van Beethoven." *Kölnische Zeitung*, 16 Dec., 1870, also printed separately). In that work so much of what I'm reporting finds explicit confirmation.

temporary relief from the illness that worsened day by day. To put it briefest terms, the operation to tap the fluid in the abdomen, once performed, had to be repeated at more and more frequent intervals. The fluid accumulated again and again, and more rapidly, and the edematous swelling of the lower abdomen worsened to an alarming degree. Lying in bed became extremely painful for him; the wounds from the operations more inflamed and feverish, and fluid trickled from the wounds--more accurately, *flowed* from the incisions, running out as far as the middle of the room. Gradually the strength waned and the end approached.

He was told it was time to bow to the practices of the Catholic Church and he submitted to the ceremony with stoic calm. Certain people said later that when the priest was leaving Beethoven said: "*Plaudite amici, finita est comoedia*" [applaud, friends; the comedy is over]. When I visited Schindler in Bockenheim he told me Beethoven had called out that phrase once when the doctors had had a longer than usual consultation, and my own memory confirms this last absolutely.⁵⁴ I recall precisely that my father, Schindler and I were present when he spoke the words. He recited the phrase in his customary sarcastic-humorous manner, and by saying it he meant that nothing more could be done, that further spouting of medical terms in Latin was useless, that his life itself would soon be over. My memory is absolutely clear on this and I feel obliged to give special emphasis to it because certain overly-pious people have accused Beethoven of scoffing at religion. Comments Beethoven made in many contexts throughout his life make it clear that he had great faith in God.

One afternoon two days before life actually began to slip away, when his strength was visibly sinking and there could be no further doubt that the final release was approaching, my father took on the painful task of bringing his dear friend Ludwig the necessary papers to sign. Even then my father hesitated a long time, conferring with Schindler and Johann as to whether this really had to be done or could be postponed, so that the poor man wouldn't have to that know it was already time to get his affairs into order for the end. But recurring periods of clouded consciousness raised the fear of sudden total inability to function rationally, and on the other hand also gave some hope that Beethoven might simply sign the documents without much thought.

⁵⁴ Anselm Hüttenbrenner (d. Graz, 1868) writes to A.W. Thayer from Hallerschloss, Graz, on August 20, 1860: ". . . It isn't true that I asked Beethoven to take the Last Sacrament. Rather, at the request of the wife of the music publisher, Herr Tobias Haslinger, now deceased, I prevailed on Jenger and Frau v. Beethoven, Land-owner, to ask Beethoven in the most delicate way to strengthen himself by taking Holy Communion. That Beethoven said the words *Plaudite amici, comoedia finita est* to me on the morning of March 24, 1827: on the occasion of the Last Sacrament, is pure fiction. I wasn't even there. And Beethoven certainly made no such comment to anyone else; it would have been in utter opposition to his honest and upright character. On the contrary; Frau v. Beethoven told me that on the day her brother-in-law died he said, after receiving the Last Sacrament: "Thank you, Father. You have brought me comfort."

The next day and the day after the powerful man lay unconscious. His gasping and rattling could be heard from considerable distance. His strong body and lungs fought heroically against the encroachment of death. This gives added support for earlier comments made on the subject, that the lungs could not have been diseased. It was frightful to see. Though we knew he was past suffering, watching that noble human succumb to the powers of dissolution, knowing that it was irreversible and that all intellectual contact with him was over--this was horrifying. As early as the 25th of March he wasn't expected to last through the night, but we found him still alive on the 26th, though rattling more violently, if possible, than the day before. The 26th of March, 1827 was finally accorded the unhappy honor of being the day of Beethoven's death.

My father, Schindler, brother Johann and I were standing around the bed in the afternoon. It was clear that the rattle was growing gradually weaker, and having it finally over was to be wished. It had snowed often during the months of February and March that winter, but there had been no snow for the last few days. That afternoon, however, massive clouds accumulated in the sky. My father and Schindler, exhausted by the long death-watch and thinking of the many things that would have to be done in the limited time they would have after Beethoven's death, decided to find a suitable grave site, and left the sickroom. On an impulse I asked my father to find a place for him in the cemetery in the Währinger district. Father's Julie was buried there, and her parents as well, and we had walked there together many times, so that sad place was less foreign to us than other cemeteries. He readily agreed to the suggestion, since he wanted one day to be buried there himself. There were no empty plots near Julie and the place my father wanted to be buried, but there were some above the Vering family vault, the "Ruhestätte der Familie Vering," and this unexpected coincidence brought the friends back together, though in death, for soon afterward, when my father died, he was not buried next to Julie but, at the wish of his brother-in-law Vering, in Vering's tomb.

[While my father and Schindler went out to select Beethoven's grave site] I had remained with the dying man, along with brother Johann and the housekeeper Sali. It was between four and five o'clock and the cloud-masses were gathering and shutting out the daylight more and more. Suddenly there was a violent storm and the clouds released giant snow-flurries and hail. As in the immortal Fifth Symphony, as in the eternal Ninth, where people speak of knocking on the doors of fate, the heavens, with gigantic tympani strokes, seemed to be trying to signal the heavy blow it was dealing the world of music. At 5:15 I was called home to my tutor. The final release was expected minute by minute and I said my last goodbye to the living--or at least still breathing--man.

I had been home hardly a half hour when the housekeeper came to tell us that death had occurred at 5:45. At this last

moment, by chance, Anselm Hüttenbrenner from Graz was present.⁵⁷

Years later Alois Fuchs showed me a watercolor-drawing which depicts my father, Schindler, Johann, Hüttenbrenner and me surrounding the dying Beethoven. As far as the moment of death is concerned, though, it was as reported above.

Nothing of what remains to be told has anything to do with the living Beethoven, the Beethoven who was our companion, but only relates to that part which was the Genius in him, that part which created the immortal masterpieces.

Tragödia finita erat.

The next day the funeral announcement, written by my father, appeared.⁵⁸ Danhauser requested and was granted permission from my father to make the death mask. The pertinent letter from my father appears in facsimile in Schindler's third edition, volume two.

The scene in the music room that has so often been falsely reported occurred that day. Father had gone to the apartment of the deceased with brother Johann, Schindler and Holz, to look for the papers pertaining to the estate--namely for the seven bank certificates which were to go to the nephew as sole heir. They were certain that these documents were there, but no one knew where Beethoven had put them for safe keeping. My father was convinced they were in the little yellow lap desk already mentioned, beside the night-stand. When they weren't found there, or anywhere else, Johann began to make remarks to the effect that the search was only a pretense, and my father came home for his meal extremely upset, planning to rejoin the group and resume the search immediately after lunch. According to what my father said later, the scene was beginning to get

⁵⁷ Anselm Hüttenbrenner writes in the letter mentioned above (20. August, 1860), to A.W. Thayer: “. . . On the 26th of March, 1827, about three o'clock in the afternoon, when I came into Beethoven's bedroom, I found Herr Hofrat von Breuning, his son, and Frau von Beethoven, wife of Johann van Beethoven, Land-owner, Apothecary from Linz, and also my friend, Josef Teltscher, portrait painter. I believe Herr Prof. Schindler was also present. After a while the gentlemen named left the composer, then struggling with death, and had little hope of finding him alive on their return. In Beethoven's last moments there was no one present except Frau von Beethoven and myself. . .”

⁵⁸ Invitation to Ludwig van Beethoven's Funeral, which will take place on March 29 at 3:00 p.m. Please assemble in the apartment of the deceased: Schwarzspanierhaus No. 200, on the glacis before the Schottentor. The procession will move from there to the Dreifaltigkeits-Kirche by the P.P. Minoriten in the Alsergasse.

The world of music suffered the irreplaceable loss of the famous composer on the 26th of March, 1827 about 6:00 p.m. Beethoven died of complications of dropsy, at 56 years of age, after receiving the Holy Sacrament. The date of the Requiem Mass will be announced later.

L. van Beethoven's
Admirers and Friends

(This card was distributed by Tob. Haslinger's music store)

Printed by Anton Strauss

I am grateful to my friend, Musikdirektor M. Durst, that I again have an original Invitation: a gracious gift from him.

very unpleasant when Holz accidentally pulled on a nail that protruded slightly from the lap desk, and a drawer and the bank certificates fell out.⁵⁹

That afternoon the autopsy was performed by Dr. Joh. Wagner, the predecessor of Rokitansky. So that a precise examination could be made of the musical giant's long-barren hearing organs, the bone of the temple and skull on both sides was sawed through and removed. (Hofrat Hyrtl told me recently, while showing me what he declared to be the skull of Mozart--he said he had documentary proof of this--that he had seen Beethoven's hearing organs when he was still a student. He said they were in a sealed glass jar at Autopsy Assistant Anton Dotter's for a time--during the long years Dotter served in that capacity. Later they supposedly disappeared.) When Beethoven's body was lifted from the bed in preparation for the autopsy they discovered for the first time how severe the poor man's bed-sores were. During the entire course of his painful illness there had been hardly a word of complaint from him. There is only a single passage in the conversation books where my father promises to bring a salve to relieve the raw places in the skin. He had complained to me more often about the pain caused by the inflamed wounds from the operations.

On the 28th of March Beethoven lay in his casket in the two-windowed room, in front of the music room door, face turned toward the entry door. Because the temple bones had been sawed out the jawbone had no support, the face was quite distorted and only remotely resembled Beethoven's face when alive. (See Danhauser's very accurate lithographic portrait-drawing of March 28.)

I wanted to snip a lock of Beethoven's hair, but my father wouldn't allow it while the body was being displayed, so as not to further disfigure its appearance. On March 29, when I entered the mourning room with my father, we found that strangers had already cut off all the hair.⁶⁰

The funeral took place at three in the afternoon. If Beethoven had seemed virtually forgotten by the Viennese during his long illness, the news of his death had shaken them from their indifference. Several hours before the funeral's announced time a mass of people had already gathered in front of the Schwarzspanierhaus, and the crowd continued to grow as the endless stream

⁵⁹ These certificates were therefore not, as the *Graz Tagespost* erroneously reported, found together with the letters to the Countess Giulietta Guicciardi in the "secret compartment of the writing desk now belonging to me."

⁶⁰ It was quite different with Schubert. When his remains were exhumed, on October 13, 1863, we found his hair preserved in thick abundance, a wreath of flowers around it and a portion of a comb still holding it in place.

of those participating and those merely curious came from every direction. There must have been 20,000 people packed into the area between the entrance to the house and the glacis, where the Votivkirche now stands. Every artist of note had come. A group of singers, in Vienna to perform in Barbaja's excellent productions of Italian opera, wanted to sing at the coffin. The shoving and pushing kept increasing; there had never been anything like it. Then the coffin was carried down the steps and set down in the dooryard before the house. When the Italian singers tried to assemble around the coffin to begin the funeral music the crowd began to surge through the gate into the dooryard, trying to force its way into the house and making so much noise that nothing could be heard. In anticipation of this my father had requested troops from the nearby Alser military barracks, and he had them bar the main entrance of the house. When the ceremonial music at the coffin was over they opened the gate to the plaza again, and the coffin was lifted and carried out into the street. The crowd shoved its way after it, filling the street so quickly that we in the group of principal mourners--Brother Johann, father, Schindler and I, instead of remaining directly behind the coffin, were pushed farther and farther back, following as best we could, while the coffin was already nearing the corner where the Red House stands. Eight conductors: Eybler, Hummel, Seyfried, Kreutzer, Weigl, Gyrowets, Würfel and Gänsbacher, held the ends of the shawl draping the coffin. (In his "Memorial," in the *Kölner Zeitung*, Dec. 1871, Ferdinand Heller states quite correctly: "The coffin was covered with wreaths -- there were no medals on it -- Beethoven had never received any.")⁶¹ A large number of musicians surrounded the coffin, carrying candles. The procession seemed endless. The massed populace, numbering into the thousands, was now in motion. All of Vienna seemed to be there. Beethoven's *Funeral March* (from the Piano Sonata, Opus 26) was played as the coffin rounded the corner of the Red House and went toward the parish church on the Alserstrasse. On the steps of the church the pushing and shoving grew in intensity, as it had earlier in front of the Schwarzspanierhaus, so that the military guard, trying to maintain control, at first refused to let us in. We had to identify ourselves by our hats with mourning bands, and it was only through the most vigorous insistence that we finally got into the overcrowded church.

After the ceremony the procession went to the Währinger cemetery, where a funeral oration written by Beethoven's friend Grillparzer was to be recited at the grave side. But, since giving [secular] speeches on consecrated ground was then pro-

⁶¹ I was once told that Beethoven, when asked whether he would like a medal or money for his dedication of the Ninth Symphony to King Friedrich Wilhelm III, is supposed to have answered, with only a moment's hesitation: "Money." --How much truth there is in this story, I don't know, but Beethoven did write to Wegeler (October 8, 1826): "They said something to me about the Order of the Red Eagle, Second Class. What that looks like, I don't know, because I've never sought that kind of decoration, but I wouldn't be averse to it, because of the things it brings with it in this day and age." (See Wegeler's *Notizen*, p. 58.) He received a ring with inexpensive stones.

hibited, Heinrich Anschütz recited the solemn and moving oration beside the coffin while it was outside the cemetery gate. There was no lack of tears here, nor at the grave itself, as the mighty Titan was lowered into the narrow pit and his friends and admirers scattered the first earth over his remains.

Just at that time one heard a lot of talk to the effect that a price was being offered for Beethoven's skull. The rumor was so persistent that my father consulted with Johann, Schindler and Holz as to whether it might not be advisable to bury the coffin turned around: that is, with the foot-end toward the cemetery wall. Though watchmen were to be stationed at the grave the first several nights, the fear was that they might fall asleep and someone might tunnel through the wall and reach the head of the coffin. They finally decided against so reversing the orientation of the coffin.

GRILLPARZER'S WORDS

spoken at Beethoven's grave

by Anschütz

were as follows (as Grillparzer gave them to my father at the time and as I, at my father's request, immediately copied them down):

In standing here at the grave of this departed one we are at once the representatives of a whole nation, the collective German people, mourning the loss of half of what was left to us of the celebrated, vanished glory of indigenous art, the spiritual bloom of the Fatherland. To be sure, the hero of song in the German language and tongue still lives among us--and long may he live--⁶² but the last Master of resounding song, the noble tongue through which music spoke, the Heir and Magnifier of Handel and Bach, of Haydn and Mozart, lives no more, and we stand weeping over the broken strings of a silent instrument.

A silent instrument! Let me call him that! For he was an artist, and what he was, he was through art. The thorns of life wounded him deeply and, as a shipwrecked man embraces the shore, so he fled into your arms, blessed art, you good and true, you shining sister, comforter of sorrows, you heavenly art. He clung fast to you, and even when the gates through which you entered him and spoke to him were sealed, when he became blind to your features, deaf to your voice, still he carried your image in his heart. And when he died it rested yet on his breast.

He was an artist, and who may stand beside him?

As the leviathan surges through the seas, so he coursed through the boundaries of his art. From cooing of the dove to rolling of thunder, from subtlest interweaving of stubborn materials to that terrible place where art is transmuted into the chaotic caprice of battling forces of nature: he plumbed it all; he mastered it all. The one who comes after him will not continue in his footsteps; he will have to begin anew, for his predecessor stopped only when he

⁶² *Translator's note:* The reference is rather obviously to Schubert, who was, as has been noted, present at the ceremony.

reached the boundaries of art.

Adelaide and Leonore! Celebrators of the heroes of Vittoria and pious⁶³ music of the Mass. Children, you, of three and four-part voices! Stirring symphony: “Freude, schöner Götterfunken,” you swansong! Muse of songs⁶⁴ and strings! Assemble at his grave and cover it with laurel-leaf!

He was an artist, but also a man, a man every sense, in the highest sense. Because he withdrew from the world, they called him hostile, because he avoided sentimentality, called him unfeeling. But he who knows his strengths doesn’t run away; he stands and defends. It’s the keenest point that first blunts and bends or breaks.⁶⁵ He who feels too deeply will avoid feeling. If he fled from the world it was because of a love so deep it found nothing to receive it in this world, no echo among his fellow men. If he withdrew from mortals, it was because they wouldn’t come up to him, and he couldn’t come down to them. He was alone, because he never found his partner. But unto death he held all mankind in his heart: held flesh and soul of all the world in his father’s heart.⁶⁶

So he was; so he died; so he will live for all time!

But you, you who have been led to this place, hold your tears. For it brings not sorrow, but joy to stand at the coffin of a man of whom one may say, he achieved greatness; he deserves no reproach. Go from here sadly, but resolute. Take with you a flower from his grave--in remembrance of him and his work. And whenever in your life the power of his creations, like a gathering storm, overwhelms you, think back on this day, think back on him, who achieved greatness, for whom there is no reproach--.⁶⁷

Of other eulogies published and distributed on that day of great mourning, I cite the following:

BEETHOVEN

Poem by Johann Gabriel Seidl

You heard him yourself! The words he
Said to you have hardly died away.--
You heard him yourself! His thousand tongues
Called forth for you emotion’s angels.

You heard him yourself! --Heard? --Saw:

⁶³ In the *Complete Works* of Grillparzer it reads: humble.

⁶⁴ In the *Complete Works*: muse of song.

⁶⁵ In the *Complete Works*: who knows himself hardened, doesn’t flee! The sharpest points are those, etc.

⁶⁶ In the *Complete Works*: He fled the world because in all his loving heart he found no weapon to resist it. He withdrew from men, after he gave them everything and got nothing in return. He stayed alone because he found no Second Self. But to the grave he kept all mankind in his loving heart, his father’s heart for family, country, his people: the whole world.

⁶⁷ In the *Complete Works*: But you who have followed our train of mourning to this place, contain your grief! You have not lost him; you have gained him. No one enters the Halls of Immortality while living. Her Gates will open only when the body falls away. The one you mourn now stands among the timeless great ones, forever safe. Go home, then, saddened, but resolute! And whenever in your life the power of his creations, like a gathering storm, overwhelms you, think back on this hour and remember: we were there when they buried him. When he died, we wept.

For he who hears him sees as well
 The noble Master's form before his soul!
 No painter paints him as he paints himself.

His paint, his colors are the tones;
 The human heart, the canvas that he covers.
 Thereon he paints with brush of song
 His total Self, -- his soul of joy and pain.

...⁶⁸

He lives! --The liar calls him dead!
 Like the sun, which comes, delights, transfigures,
 And, its day's work done, departs,
 So came he, too -- so home is he returned!

He lives! His life is in his tones.
 No God can tear them from their earthly home!
 From grandson forth to grandson's sons,
 The roots of art lie deeper, far, than blood!

He lives! You saw him, heard him. Hear him yet!
 My feeble wreath is wilting even now.
 The only fete that renders him his due
 He celebrates himself, in his own song!

A poem by Freiherr von Schlechta was distributed, and yet another:

At

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN'S FUNERAL

on 29. March, 1827

By J.F. Castelli

Pay tribute to the tears that flow,
 When a good man finds his grave.
 When friends draw 'round in mourning,
 For one once held in love.

The mourning-train that rolls today,
 Spans wide: as wide as heav'n and earth,
 As far as tones resound: for *this* departed
 Weeps the world.

⁶⁸ *Translator's note:* Here I have omitted seven stanzas, of similar style and sentiment.

Weep only for yourselves alone! --
 Who stands so high exalted
 Endures the dust no more
 His spirit reaches out toward home.

For this the muse has called him home
 Enthroned beside her even now
 He hears from high above the throne
 The tones of his own chords resound.

But here his memory lingers,
 In light of fame lives on
 His name. For he who leaps ahead of time,
 The rush of time can ne'er destroy.

Immediately after the interment a portentous event took place. Franz Schubert, Benedict Randhartinger and Franz Lachner went together to the *Mehlgrube*, a Gasthaus on the Neuen Markt. Wine was ordered, glasses filled, and Schubert raised his glass with the cry: "To the memory of our immortal Beethoven!" When the toast had been drunk he filled the glasses again, calling out, "Now, this is to the one among us three who first follows Beethoven!" Sad to say, he had prophesied his own end, for in the following year, on November 19, 1828, this musical genius did, indeed, follow Beethoven in death. Beethoven had said of him on his deathbed: "Truly, the divine spark lives in Schubert." And the desire Schubert expressed in feverish delirium, to be buried "next to Beethoven," was granted. On the upper side of the cemetery, only five graves distant from his idol, he found the resting-place he had wished for.

On April 3rd, a few days after the funeral, Mozart's immortal *Requiem Mass* was to be performed for the immortal Beethoven, in the Augustine Imperial Parish Church [*k.k. Hofpfarrkirche der Augustiner*]. The wish was for the Italian singers to participate, but the impresario Barbaja had them under a contract that imposed a fine of two hundred Gulden on any singer who gave a public performance outside the theatre. Undaunted, and without the slightest hesitation, Lablache sent Barbaja 200 Gulden, along with the blunt notice that he *would* sing. Such was his devotion to the spirit of Beethoven. The church could hardly contain the throng of people who gathered there. I stood with my father next to Canova's monument to Christine, said to be the best location in the church for acoustics. No one has since heard the *Dies irae* sung like that; no one has since experienced such a reverent performance of the *Requiem* as was heard on that day. Lablache's voice with the trombone--that overpowering passage--the effect of the whole was simply shattering.

A second requiem mass in Beethoven's honor was celebrated on April 5, in Karlskirche. Cherubini's *Requiem* was

performed.

But what was more painful for us than any of this was seeing the rooms in the Schwarzspanierhaus--rooms that had become sacred to us--desecrated by the auction only a few days later, in that same month of April, when Beethoven's household articles were sold off. A pathetic pack of second-hand dealers had found their way there, and articles of clothing were pulled at, furniture was sniffed over; in short, everything was rummaged through and haggled over as it came under the auctioneer's hammer. Even during Beethoven's illness my father had not been well; this is plain to see in the conversation books, yet he forced himself to be present as much as he could, in spite of repeated turns for the worse in his health, "so that there would be no chance that cheating would lessen the heir's estate." I stayed with him. It was heart-rending for us. My father bid for and bought the little black chest and the yellow lap desk we had handed Beethoven so often during his life and also bought--for his friend Hofrat Baron Neustäder--the roll-top desk that had stood in the vestibule and the bedstead from the bedroom, once again bidding for them at auction. (After the Baron's death the desk came into my possession.) He bought the water-dipper for my piano teacher, Anton Heller. (After Heller's death this also came to me. Heller had had the spoon engraved, "A.H." on one side, and "L. v. Beethoven, deceased March 26, 1827" on the other.) The Graf piano was reclaimed by the factory. The Broadwood piano was auctioned, but my father didn't buy it because the keyboard extended only to C, which made it inadequate to the demands of the new music of the Beethoven's time. The bookcase which had been in the music room must have been bought at that time by Fräulein Annacker, because after her death A.W. Thayer acquired it from her legacy.

I received a lithographic reproduction, in a black frame, of Louis XVIII's Beethoven-medallion, a compass, and two portraits of ladies, one of whom Graf Gallenberg recognized as being of his mother (nee Giulietta Guicciardi).

Following the emotional strain of the auction in Beethoven's death-chamber, my father's health worsened rapidly. He contracted a liver ailment; the inflammation heightened, and soon he was confined to bed. On June 4 of the same year, at midnight, the same hour as his Julie had died, he followed his exalted friend into the hereafter.

My father's death altered the course of my life completely. Being not yet fourteen, I only subsequently learned the particulars of the second auction (November, 1827): the disposition of Beethoven's intellectual and spiritual legacy.⁶⁹ Because of this I have none of the precious manuscripts and autographs; all fell into other hands at low prices, and sometimes downright

⁶⁹ *Translator's note:* A minor, Gerhard was allowed to attend the first auction only because of his father.

cheaply. None of these manuscripts or autographs came to me, because my father had strictly forbidden my taking even the smallest part what Beethoven would have given me by the handful if I had thought to ask him while he was alive.

For the purpose of raising money for grave monument, a concert consisting solely of Beethoven's compositions was held in the Assembly Chamber of Vienna's Provincial Diet. Until a few years ago a small willow tree stood before the monument. Single leaves, plucked as souvenirs, must have found their way to every corner of the world before the tree withered and died. The lattice-work surrounding the grave comes from the year of the exhumation: 1863.

For several years after the death of the great "Brain-owner" his brother, the "Land-owner," played a singularly bizarre role. If the latter's sole interest in Ludwig's work during his creative life was in the anticipated financial gain, now he strove to play his late brother's enlightened admirer. At concert performances of Beethoven's compositions he would sit in the front row, imposingly clad in blue waistcoat and white vest, and at the close of every composition one heard "Bravo! Bravo!" boom forth in loud, grating tone from his gaping mouth, while his bony, awkward hands (in white gloves) applauded ostentatiously. And those gloves: too large, folding over the ends of the fingers, were frequently seen in other places as well. They and their wearer drew attention to themselves through elegant rides in the Prater, when Johann, sitting stiff and high in an old-fashioned phaeton, drove two, or more often four plump and clumsy brown horses in heavy harnesses. When he didn't drive himself he slumped as if poured into the coach, and in the second seat were two squat servants in faded uniforms with gold tassels. People said of these that only one was a coachman, the other a janitor from his apartment-house on the Alleegasse, costumed as a lackey. When not in use the livery outfits as well as the horses' harnesses were said to hang in Johann's front room. Judging from their cut and quality, they might have come from a rummage sale. Brother Johann was utterly different from Ludwig physically, as well. Johann had a long face, a big nose, one eye that squinted outward and a wide mouth with one corner perpetually drawn up sharply, giving his face the perpetual effect of a smug and complacent smile. His overall appearance and the show he put on earned him the universal nickname "Archduke Lorenz," after the well-known character who struggles for elegant appearance, but succeeds only in presenting a pathetic caricature of himself. It's only too bad that he wasn't named Lorenz. Johann died in Vienna in 1848. He had made himself as ridiculous after his brother's death as he was insignificant during Ludwig's life. Nephew Carl's widow has a portrait that's a perfect likeness of Johann.

His ill-reputed sister-in-law, the widow of brother Caspar Carl, died only a few years ago, in Baden, near Vienna.

As mentioned earlier, nephew Carl's widow is still living, as is a son, Ludwig, and four gracious daughters, of whom

three are married. Thayer and I see many similarities to her immortal great-uncle in the youngest daughter, still unmarried.

It was only after two major Beethoven monuments had been dedicated elsewhere that the Viennese turned their attention to the condition of Beethoven's and Schubert's graves. In 1845, with the generous help of Franz Liszt, Bonn finally erected Hähnel's bronze statue of her great son, and through the efforts of *Hofkapellmeister* B. Randhartinger and other friends of the arts the "Beethoven-Way" was dedicated near Heiligenstadt, with a bronze bust from Fernkorn's studio. These events prompted the offhand comment from our violin virtuoso and artistic director, Jos. Hellmesberger, that "Beethoven's and Schubert's graves are much too vulnerable to various kinds of mischief." The Board of Directors of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde* then appointed a commission to inspect the grave sites, and in the course of a debate it was decided "to protect the earthly remains of Beethoven and Schubert from further deterioration." (See: "Documentary Description of the Exhumation and Re-interment of the Earthly Remains of Beethoven and Schubert. Completed under supervision of the Directors of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde* of the Austrian Empire in October, 1863." Vienna: Gerold, 1863).

Of my family members living in Vienna, my son Gerhard and my younger sister Marie were with me at the exhumation. Here I feel obliged to make some comments from the medical standpoint, concerning certain features not emphasized in the "Documentary Description." It was most interesting, physiologically, to find a positive relationship between the compact thickness of the roof of Beethoven's skull and the delicate, downright feminine thinness of Schubert's and to compare this to the character of their music. Further, the surface of Beethoven's gums was exceptionally even, yet the upper row of teeth protruded forward to a surprising degree: almost directly horizontally. This wasn't noticeable when Beethoven was alive, except for the fleshy, somewhat prominent upper lip. Equally surprising was finding that the back molar on the lower left side had been quite competently gold-filled. This was remarkable for two reasons: first, it was rare in that time (in the twenties) to find such a good dental restoration, and secondly, even more astonishing that Beethoven had summoned up the patience for such a tedious operation. We took this opportunity to have the skulls of Beethoven and Schubert photographed, by J.B. Rottmayer (now in Trieste), and to have plaster casts made, by the sculptor Wittmann (now in Schwechat, near Vienna). If one sees gaps in Beethoven's teeth, though he had none in life, it is because some teeth were not found when the body was exhumed. --All of this took place within nine days: from the thirteenth to the twenty-second of October. As a member of the Board of Directors of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*, the care of Beethoven's skull was entrusted to me, as that of Schubert was to my colleague Dr. Standhartner. One can imagine what powerful emotions, what memories swept through me during the short time I

had the head in my possession. It was cleansed of the remnants of earth that had clung to it, Professor Romeo Seligmann took plaster impressions, and at night I kept it next to my bed. In short, I watched with pride over that lifeless head, from whose mouth years ago I had so often heard living words!

Not until long after Beethoven's lifetime, and through the tireless efforts of such as Otto Nicolai, Jos. Hellmesberger, Frau Clara Schumann, Joh. Herbeck, Otto Dessoff and others, were many of Beethoven's greatest compositions appreciated. One need only consider the fate of the Violin Concerto, the D-Major Mass, even the Ninth Symphony, *Fidelio*, and so on and on, (not even to mention the last quartets, which some were prone to call "insane") to see that most of the finest works were misunderstood and neglected until the beginning of the 1840's, when masterful performances and stubborn persistence in programming them led the Viennese public finally to understand and enjoy these idealized works of art. J. Hellmesberger has quite recently increased the number of these works, through his discovery and excellent performance of a new gem: the first movement of yet a different violin concerto (in the archives of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*). --All to the benefit of the eager throngs of listeners who now assemble and never tire of hearing this magnificent music.

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Separate Printing No. 3 (1893) of the "Med.-Chir. Central-Blatt."
Vienna III/1

Motto: What is gone cannot return,
But if it burnt out brightly
the glow will long endure.

"Memory and Hope."
K. Förster.

To the Memory of
Dr. Gerhard von Breuning
and dedicated by faithful friends

Vienna, 1893

Published by J. Koblizek. Vienna I, Bäckerstrasse 12.

Death has stolen one of our noblest friends. Dr. Gerhard von Breuning died on May 6th, 1892.

A model citizen of the State, an honored and established physician, tireless benefactor of the indigent ill, brilliant writer, loving husband and father and true friend to his friends, he remained professionally active in General Practice until a few weeks before his death.

Seldom was a funeral procession made up of so many who were truly mourning as was the case with this doctor, who was as brilliant as he was kind and human. It is no idle statement to say that his memory will long live, not only in his works, but also in the grateful consciousness of everyone who had the good fortune to be near him in life. We who were his close friends carry the imperishable memory of his noble spirit and his good and loving heart, always open to the suffering of others.

Physician and Surgeon Dr. Gerhard von Breuning was born on August 28th, 1813, in Vienna. His father was Stephan von Breuning, well-known as the boyhood friend of Beethoven. Stemming from venerable Rhineland nobility, in its time active in highly-decorated German Orders in Mergentheim, the elder von Breuning, along with other prominent men, was called by Privy Counselor Reiland to Vienna. There he distinguished himself in service of the State, first as Court Secretary, then as Medical Counselor and Privy Counselor in the Imperial Ministry of Defense.

Young Gerhard showed signs of rare intelligence and unusual talent even as a child, as is evident from the famous conversation books of Beethoven in the Berlin Imperial Library as well as from other sources. Intelligence and charm came together in living harmony in this delightful boy, who was the apple of the great composer's eye in the last years of his life. In his *Beethovens Biographie* Anton Schindler is fully justified in calling him "the dying Master's ray of sunshine." Because of the astonishing quickness with which the little one darted around his father when they were out for their strolls, Beethoven teasingly called Gerhard "Ariel" and other occasions "Trouser-button," because the boy so loved his father as to seem inseparable from him.

Soon after Beethoven's death (March 26, 1827) Stephan von Breuning died (June 4, 1827), and from then on Gerhard lived with his uncle and guardian, the physician Dr. Josef Ritter von Vering who, himself childless, then directed the boy's education.

Gerhard remained in constant contact with his mother, a pious, excellent woman. Besides Gerhard, her husband's

death had left her with two little daughters, and rearing the daughters became her life's work.

Breuning graduated from the Gymnasium with honors and then studied medicine at the Military Academy of Josef [*Josephinischen Militär-Akademie*] in Vienna. The stimulating example of his guardian was as decisive in his choice of a life's work as was his love for the sciences.

After he was made Doctor of Medicine (April 13, 1837), to further expand his knowledge he traveled to Berlin and to other German university cities, as well as to France and Great Britain.

When he returned to Vienna he began a fifteen-year career as a military doctor. In 1852, out of consideration for his family and much to the regret of his superiors, he gave this up and devoted himself exclusively to private practice.

During the revolution (1848-49) Dr. von Breuning distinguished himself over and over as an army doctor. At one time, in the winter of 1849, he was the sole supervising physician for four military hospitals in Mödling (near Vienna). Through his personal efforts enough beds were collected to expand the treatment capacity to 300.

In 1849 the Ministry of State appointed a commission to investigate and report on the plague quarantines in the Orient. The group consisted of Dr. von Breuning and two who subsequently became professors: Dlauhy and Sigmund. This six-months-long mission took them through the duchies on the Danube, as well as through Turkey, Egypt and Greece.

Breuning served as a worthy assistant to Dieffenbach, the famous Berlin surgeon, during Dieffenbach's stay in Vienna. This gave him the opportunity to become thoroughly familiar with the Berliner's technique of severing tendons in treating cases of shortened limbs. Dr. Breuning subsequently applied this procedure with brilliant success.

Among the many referrals that came with his growing fame during that time was one that proved decisive in his life. He was called upon to treat the son of the industrialist Franz Ritter von Gossleth, in Trieste. The treatment was successful, and while von Breuning was there he got to know the industrialist's young daughter, whom a few years later, after she had blossomed into a charming and lovely young maiden, he brought home as his bride.

This happy union brought forth two sons and three daughters, one of whom died as a very young child. The parents were inconsolable over death of the younger son, taken from them at his most promising age, just as he was beginning medical school. This favorite son was also a highly promising follower in his father's footsteps, and his death left a wound in his father's heart that never healed.

Out of consideration for his family Dr. von Breuning declined a professorship at the University of Graz, a position for

which his rich store of knowledge and his wide experience would have qualified him above all others, and a decision which he later very much regretted. He continued to follow his medical profession with tireless energy. During wartime he volunteered his services to the State free of charge, and was active in this capacity in 1866, as Chief Physician at Garrison Hospital No. 1. When the wounded arrived he gave special consideration to those who seemed destined for amputation, treating them personally. In his sympathetic efforts to spare them this extreme measure, Breuning brought these patients to the hospitals at Gumperdorf and Margarete (Hartmannsgasse 7) where he directed their treatment, assisted by Baron Dr. Wattmann and the pious nuns. After Wattmann's death von Breuning was Chief Physician, taking care of the wounded alone until February 1867.

In a great many cases he successfully avoided an amputation which had been feared inevitable, and his own inner satisfaction and the heartfelt gratitude of those he healed were rich rewards for his untiring efforts.

For these accomplishments he was awarded the Golden Cross for Special Services [*goldenes Verdienstkreuz*].

His "Method of Treating Gunshot Wounds Without Operating: a Bulletin sent to Armies on Duty and their Doctors" aroused well-deserved attention in military and medical circles. Unbeknownst to him this brochure was printed and distributed in German camps during the Franco-Prussian war (1870).

As early as 1852 his first independent article appeared: "On the Eye Inflammations of New-born Children and those with Tubercular Skin Eruptions."

In 1859, with his popular "Observations on Hospital-building and Equipping," he tried to make his experience and judgment accessible to a larger public.

The consistently positive outcome in Vering's treatment of Asiatic cholera, which von Breuning saw demonstrated at his guardian's side in hundreds of cases, led him to choose this method of treatment as the subject of his inaugural dissertation in 1857 (*De cholerae asiaticae diagnosi et cura*). Further experience encouraged him to publish this in 1865, under the title, "Method of Curing Asiatic Cholera, Proven in Several Cholera Epidemics."

In 1865 he wrote a widely recognized work that cannot be sufficiently praised: "Healing Bone-Abscesses with Medications." This treatise came to rich fruition in his article, "Treatment of Tubercular Inflammation of Bones and Joints, 1882."

Following these were shorter essays on diphtheria, influenza, etc., and various articles in medical journals.

His multi-faceted activities and the recognition gained through them are demonstrated by universally favorable critical

comment on his work, in his being appointed to scholarly societies and finally, to add to his earlier decorations, his being awarded the Papal Knight's Cross, Order of Sylvester [*das Ritter-kreuz des päpstlichen Sylvesterordens*], among other such honors.

He had the stamina of youth in keeping abreast of every advancement in the field of medicine, and in appropriate situations eagerly applied any well-tested new technique.

For all the spirit and liveliness that characterized Breuning throughout his life, he was always able to maintain the utmost calm during medical procedures, and for all his willingness to accept currently emerging ideas, inventions and advice, he never frivolously abandoned tried and true methods before his own critical appraisal had convinced him that the new development was better than the old.

His fundamental guideline was to spare no effort to keep an incipient illness from developing further, thus getting a head start on the treatment. He practiced his art with an inborn gift for diagnosis, a firm belief in the special healing powers of various medicaments, and well-chosen, well-proven, and highly successful therapeutic techniques. When one remembers that his treatment of the sick combined all these rare attributes with his characteristically encouraging, friendly bedside manner, it is no wonder that his death caused such deep and widespread sadness--the more so because Breuning's intellectual and physical freshness made his demise so unexpected.

For more than thirty years he conscientiously provided care to the Dominican Monastery in Vienna, and for just as long was physician to the Turkish Embassy, which kept him in continual contact with the Orient.

Together with the most devoted practice of his profession, Dr. von Breuning was always an enthusiastic friend of literature and fine arts, and he took great satisfaction in the general interest and appreciation afforded his essays on Grillparzer ("From Grillparzer's Apartment," pub. *Neue Freie Presse*) and on Beethoven ("Two Unpublished Letters of Beethoven, Excerpts from the Conversation Books, etc.").

The best evidence of how intellect and a sense of beauty were cultivated in his home is the education of his children, who now provide the sole comfort (though it is a great comfort) of the grief-stricken mother. In spite of his extensive knowledge he was always delightfully modest, and without knowing it was a constant model to all who had the good fortune to be near him.

His love of music manifested itself in his work at the Vienna Conservatory for a period of more than thirty years, when he belonged to the Board of Directors of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*. In concert with excellent colleagues he looked after

the interests of this artistic institution with deep understanding and tireless zeal.

Over and over one saw him taking his customary place in the Director's Loge in the *Musikvereinssaal*, and many a concert-goer has an indelible memory of his handsome head bent forward in an attitude of attentive listening. Every performance of a work of his great friend became a true festival for him, and in the last days of his life, shortly before his death, his enthusiasm for the creations of Beethoven gave him the strength to attend a performance of the great D-Major Mass, which for him was always the most perfect work in all of music.

Dr. von Breuning immortalized his relationship with the exalted master by writing "Aus dem Schwarzspanierhause," published twenty years ago. His well-known love of truth and the accuracy of his memory attest to the genuineness of this work, which has been of inestimable value to countless admirers of Beethoven. With death approaching, his suffering intensified by his anguish over the incurable illness of his only grandson, he found comfort in preparing the second edition of this work which now, a holy legacy, his children are publishing.

Breuning's association with Grillparzer and the intelligent and witty Fröhlich sisters is one of the most interesting reminiscences of his life. He was with each of them until their last breath, as both doctor and friend. His hand guided that of the aged poet when, a few hours before his death, he affixed the famous signature to the Burgtheater's royalty receipt. At the express wish of the Fröhlich sisters the pen associated with this sad memory remained in the possession of "their friend, Dr. von Breuning."

The Choral Society of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde* provided a moving conclusion to the funeral on May 9 of this year, when Kapellmeister Wilhelm Gericke conducted a chorus by Schubert. At the Central Cemetery Engineer Ludwig Koch, whom the deceased called the "Benjamin" of the Board of Directors of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*, gave the "Nestor" of the Board a respectful farewell.

The departed now slumbers, according to his wish, not far from the great Beethoven, and is united with his son and his only grandson, just twelve years old, who preceded him in death by four days: an angel to lead him into paradise!

May his noble soul rest in peace!