AT THE HEART OF
Letters and Diaries

THE WHITE ROSE
of Hans and Sophie Scholl

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SÃO PAULO, SINGAPORE, SYDNEY
know that no one is closer to them than you. However great the turmoil prevailing today—so great that one often has no idea where to turn because of the multitude of things and happenings around me—elemental words of that kind loom up like beacons in a stormy sea. That's my conception of poverty, that one should fearlessly jettison old ballast at such moments and powerfully, freely, head for the One. But how rare such moments are, and how often and repeatedly man subsides into drab uncertainty, into the stream that flows in no direction, and demons are always busy grabbing him by the hair at every opportunity and dragging him down.

Sophie has arrived here\textsuperscript{206} safe and sound. She'll be staying at Professor Muth's for a few days\textsuperscript{207} until the room's ready. She's well off there. Is Liesel coming next Sunday? Please write and tell me soon, so I can make arrangements.

Fondest love and best wishes on your birthday,

Hans and Sophie

\section*{SOPHIE SCHOLL}
\textit{Summer 1942}

\begin{quote}
On May 3 or 4, 1942, shortly before her twenty-first birthday, Sophie Scholl was at last able to join her brother in Munich and begin reading biology and philosophy at Munich University. Later that month Hans Scholl, in collaboration with Alexander Schmorell, wrote and distributed the first White Rose leaflet calling for "every individual, conscious of his responsibility as a member of Christian and Western civilization . . . [to] defend himself as best he can at this late hour . . . [to] work against the scourges of mankind, against fascism and any similar system of totalitarianism. Offer passive resistance—resistance . . ."\textsuperscript{208}
That summer the students began to learn of German atrocities in Poland, and subsequent leaflets published the information that since Poland's conquest, 300,000 Jews had been murdered there.
\end{quote}
After her arrival in Munich Sophie stayed briefly at Solln with Carl Muth, then took lodgings with Frau Berrsche, the widow of a Munich music critic, at No. 1 Mandlstrasse. It is likely that Hans tried to protect her by keeping her ignorant of White Rose activities, but evidence suggests she became acquainted with, and participated in, the distribution of leaflets early on.

[to Lisa Remppis] Munich May 30, 1942

Dear Lisa,

I got your card from Lake Constance yesterday. I now look forward to a more substantial letter. My new address is c/o Fr. Dr. Berrsche, 1 Mandlstr., M. 23.

I've a great favor to ask you. Could you spare me your tent? It would come in so useful here.

Hans and I, plus an occasional companion, often regret having to return to our far-flung lodgings on glorious nights to grab some much-needed sleep. It would be so practical if we could erect our own house on the spot!

There's something new for me to digest here every day. Yesterday I had tea with Professor Muth and Sigismund von Radecki, and in the evening Hans and I visited a friend whom we simply call “the Philosopher.” Three solid hours of tiring conversation ensued. —To be honest, I rather hanker to be on my own, because I've an urge to act on what has so far existed within me merely as an idea—as what I perceive to be right. —I'm glad of the opportunity to absorb things, though, even if I'm still uncertain of my ground.

Perhaps you could pay me a visit sometime? Hans is being a good brother to me. I'm growing fonder and fonder of him.

Don't leave me so long without news.

Affectionate regards,

Sophie

[P.S.] I'd so much like to spend a few days alone with you somewhere.

TO HER PARENTS AND HER SISTERS INGE AND LISL

Munich June 6, 1942

Dear Parents, Inge, and Lisl,

The coats arrived yesterday, also the chop, which we devoured on the spot. Many thanks for them and the accompanying letter. —I've already been to Students' Administration about the munitions work, but there isn't a hope of obtaining exemption. Not even girl students with the best of personal connections, daughters of current bigwigs, can get out of it on any grounds, however pressing. The most I can do is get deferred till September, which I naturally will. I hope Mother's feeling a bit better. It was lovely at Passau last Sunday. We also made a brief excursion into the Bohemian Forest to see a friend of Professor Muth's, a highly original, most impressive parish priest in a little village (where he's been sent for disciplinary reasons). We couldn't bring the Professor back as much stuff as we'd hoped, unfortunately. He isn't very well. Events are taking their toll, and the wartime food isn't improving his general condition. Could you possibly get him a pound or two of white flour—he can't eat black bread—and some trout as soon as they're available again? Trivial though such things may seem, his state of health largely depends on them.

At Hans's request, Sigismund von Radecki read some essays, poems, and translations to a group of around twenty of us the night before last. He reads aloud brilliantly, with sweeping gestures, and acts out everything he reads. How we laughed! He used to be an actor, and not a bad one by any means. Four of us joined him in my room afterward. He's going away for three months, unfortunately, but he'll be game for anything when he gets back.

Have you sent off my bike yet? I miss it terribly here, I waste so much time and money on streetcars. It's nice to be able to go off cycling on Sundays, too.

When is Inge coming? Is Werner still in Ulm? Fondest love to him and all of you from Sophie and Hans.

[P.S] Have a nice Sunday!
I very much hope that your next letter doesn’t go to Ulm, so it won’t reproachfully inform me at first glance that none of my letters has reached you yet. I suppose I can put half the blame on the army post office, which delivers springtime letters at the height of summer.

There’s a bird squawking outside in a tree whose golden-green top is lighted by the mellow, slanting rays of the evening sun. I’m reminded of the passage in your nice letter from Russia in which you speak of Nature being “unredeemed.” I’ve always felt, and I still do now, that I can hear the most consummate harmony resounding from field and forest. Last Sunday, as I made my way into a big, peaceful mountain valley bathed in warm evening air that was already obscuring little details and throwing big, clear-cut outlines into relief, all my usual worries seemed to fall away from me like useless leaves, and I began to judge my preoccupations by an entirely different criterion. It seemed to me that man alone had disrupted this wonderful harmony, which I can also detect in a Bach fugue. I felt as if man had set himself apart from this harmony, and that it was lingering on, but without him. That’s why I found it inconceivable that Nature should stand in need of redemption. —Yesterday evening, or rather, after midnight, while I was walking back with someone through the Englischer Garten (a small group of us had been reading Paul Claudel’s *Le soulier de Satin*), it suddenly occurred to me that Nature might have to be redeemed by death, however innocent the death that animals and plants must die. I can recall that, as a child, I felt that living without destroying others was an insoluble and terribly distressing problem. It still seems just as insoluble, but I’d forgotten about it, and how can a harmony still be complete if a note has forgotten its proper place? And the roaring of the offended earth—of things that have been displaced and become demonic, of machines that ought to serve mankind and are destroying it—soon seemed to swamp every vestige of peace. But that I can’t believe, or I’d be done for.
Dear Lisa,

Yesterday I finally received another letter from you, for which many thanks. I think I'll be going to Ulm around the middle of July. Then we can either meet there or fix a rendezvous one Sunday. I look forward to meeting Gust. You presuppose a certain lack of enthusiasm on my part, but I don't think an initial failure to hit it off would be as tragic as all that. It would mean that both parties had been found wanting. I'm not sitting in judgment, after all, and I'd like to feel the same affection for Gust as I do for you. You'd never forgive me if I didn't. That's not the reason, though—you know what I mean.

I still have a vivid recollection of my time at the crèche. I had ten babies to look after, too. It took me no time at all to form a personal relationship with them—a far closer one than I had with the other nurse. Each of the little things was a distinct individual, and I could have predicted what they would be like in twenty or thirty years' time. Not for sure, of course, but even with little creatures between two and ten months old, you feel you can tell how they'll turn out. My affection for them varied, too, even though their universal helplessness aroused the same degree of compassion. The one I like best tried to put all his various emotions into a single "da." A week ago I held another of the tiny creatures in my arms. It fills me with delight every time, quite a different feeling from the one I get with other children. The soft fragrance of their flowerlike flesh, their sweet, toothless mouths, their tiny, ever-fluttering hands, their almost vacant gaze—they really do resemble buds that have just opened: unique, sacred, and sublime, like miracles visited upon our everyday world.

I'm so pleased you're lending the tent. We'll make good use of it. But do me a favor and don't give it back. That would be awful for Hans, I'm sure, however little you mean to each other now. Think it over, and you'll refrain.

I'll write again when I get some more writing paper.

I'm going home today.

Affectionate regards,

Sophie

Robert Scholl, Hans and Sophie's father, a former mayor of the small town of Forchtenberg, had set up offices as a tax and financial consultant in Ulm, where his family regularly pitched in to help with the books. He was a pacifist, who had refused to serve in the military during World War I, and his liberal ideas clearly influenced his children. One early morning in 1942 the Gestapo arrived at the Scholls' door in Ulm, searched the apartment, and arrested Robert Scholl. He had been denounced by an employee for remarks made during a conversation in his office, when he called Hitler a "divine scourge" and added, "If he doesn't end the war soon, the Russians will be in Berlin two years from now" (a prophetic statement only about a year off the mark).

As the summer progressed, the family anxiously awaited Robert Scholl's trial, set for August 3; Sophie continued, with dwindling hope, to try to get a deferral from war service work at the munitions factory, and Hans Scholl's student company received orders for the Eastern front, where Werner was already stationed.

My God, I can only address you falteringly. I can only offer you my heart, which is wrested away from you by a thousand desires. Being so weak that I cannot remain facing you of my own free will, I destroy what distracts me from you and force myself to turn to you, for I know that I'm happy with you alone. Oh, how far from you I am, and the best thing about me is the pain I feel on that account. But I'm often so torpid and apathetic. Help me to be singlehearted and remain with me. If I could only once call you Father, but I can hardly address you as "YOU." I do so [as one that speaks] to a great Unknown. I know that you'll accept me if I'm sincere, and that you'll hear me if I cling to you. Teach me to pray. Better to suffer intolerable pain than to vegetate insensibly. Better to be parched with thirst, better to...
pray for pain, pain, and more pain, than to feel empty, and to feel so without truly feeling at all. That I mean to resist.

[DIARY] July 15, 1942

My soul is like an arid waste when I try to pray to you, conscious of nothing but its own barrenness. My God, transform that ground into good soil so that your seed doesn’t fall on it in vain. At least let it bring forth a yearning for you, its creator, whom it so often declines to see. I beseech you with all my heart. I call aloud to you, I call “you,” even though all I know about you is that my salvation resides in you alone. Do not turn away from me if I fail to hear you knock; open my deaf, deaf heart. Make me restless so that I may find my way to the repose that dwells within you. I am so powerless. Receive me and do with me as you will, I beseech you, I beseech you.

Into your hand I give my thoughts of my friend, that little ray of solicitude and warmth, that modicum of strength. Do with me the best you can, for you wish us to call upon you and have also made us responsible in prayer for our fellow creatures. I think likewise of all others. Amen.

[TO LISA REMPPIS] Ulm July 27, 1942

Dear Lisa,

I got your letter just now, at coffee time on Sunday morning, and here I am already, sitting down to answer it and thank you. On August 18, when you aim to get back from your trip to the mountains, I shall be doing factory work at a small town near Ulm. I have to do two months of it. My break should more or less coincide with your fall vacation, I think (October). Still, how things will be with us by then I don’t know, because my father’s case comes up in a week’s time, and there’s little hope that he’ll be allowed home again after that. If he isn’t, I shall give up my university course for the time being.

Hans went off to Russia last week with all the other people I’ve made friends with over the past few weeks and months. I still preserve such a vivid recollection of every little farewell word and gesture. I’d never have believed I could become so attached to them all, especially Hans. Let’s hope we’ll all be reunited soon, safe and sound. Werner’s first letter from Russia also turned up yesterday.

So, Lisa, I’d love it if you felt like coming via Ulm after all... Have a really nice vacation, and affectionate regards to you and Gust Schlehe!

Yours,
Sophie

On August 3, 1942, a special court sentenced Robert Scholl to four months’ imprisonment for “treachery,” and he was later debarred from practicing law.

[DIARY] August 6, 1942

I’m so weak-willed that I can’t even fulfill and act on my own perceptions, nor can I ever renounce my personal volition, which I know to be imprudent and self-seeking, and surrender myself to His. Yet I’d like to, and I’m happy to reflect that he is the ruler of all things. Being unable to relinquish my foolish hold on it voluntarily, I pray every night that he may wrest my will away and subject me to his—if only I didn’t stand in my own way. I pray for a compassionate heart, for how else could I love? I who am so shallow in everything must pray for everything. A child can be compassionate, but I too often forget the sufferings that ought to overwhelm me, the sufferings of mankind. I place my powerless love in your hands, that it may become powerful.
I've just torn a page out of the notebook because it was about Schurik [Alexander Schmorell], but why should I tear him out of my heart? I'll pray to God to assign him his rightful place in it. He shall go back into the notebook with the rest, and I'll include him in my prayers every night like Fritz and the others.

Many people believe that our age is the last. All the omens are terrible enough to make one think so, but isn't that belief of secondary importance? Mustn't we all, no matter what age we live in, be permanently prepared for God to call us to account from one moment to the next? How am I to know if I shall still be alive tomorrow? We could all be wiped out overnight by a bomb, and my guilt would be no less than if I perished in company with the earth and the stars. —I know all that, but don't I heedlessly fritter away my life just the same? O God, I beseech you to take away my frivolity and self-will, which clings to the sweet, ephemeral things of life. I can't do so myself, I'm far too weak.

I don't understand how "devout" people can fear for God's existence today because mankind is dogging his footsteps with the sword and vile atrocities. As if God didn't have the power (I sense that everything rests in his hand)—the power. All we should fear for is the existence of humanity, because it has turned away from him who is its very life.

I must write down a curious dream I had—one of the few that haven't been dominated by a peculiarly oppressive sensation. I was out walking with Hans and Schurik, with them on either side of me and our arms linked. Half walking, half skipping along, I was lifted off the ground by the two of them and soared through the air for a little way. Then Hans began: "I know quite a simple proof of God's existence and intervention in the world of today. Human beings need a certain amount of air to breathe, so the whole sky would eventually become polluted by their stale breath. To prevent them from running out of this nourishment for the blood, God periodically injects our world with a mouthful of his own breath, which permeates the stale air and renews it. That's how he does it." And then Hans raised his face to the very, very gloomy sky. Drawing a deep breath, he expelled the whole of it from his lips. His breath streamed forth in a bright blue jet. It grew progressively bigger and rose high into the sky, driving away the murky clouds until the sky ahead and above us was as flawlessly blue as blue could be. It was beautiful.

With term over and Hans's student company serving in Russia, Sophie Scholl had to qualify for permission to resume her studies during the winter semester of 1942-1943 by devoting the months of August and September to war work at an Ulm munitions factory.

My dear Fritz,

Did you receive my last letter enclosing the snaps of Professor Muth? I'm enclosing another to make sure you get one.

I still have several more weeks' work to do at the factory. It's an awfully soulless, loveless occupation, standing over a machine and going through the same motions all day long. All it requires is concentration, but a trained monkey could do it just as well—if it was stupid enough to be bullied into it. You go home in the evening physically tired and mentally bored. The sight of so many people in front of so many machines is depressing and reminiscent of slavery, except that these slaves have appointed their own slave driver. Working alongside me is a Russian woman with a childishly naive and touching faith in all and sundry, even the German overseers, whose fist-shaking and brutal yelling she merely greets with an uncomprehending, almost merry smile. She probably finds them comical and thinks they're threatening her for fun. I'm glad she works next door to me, and I do my best to correct her picture of the Germans a little. But a lot of the German women are also friendly and helpful to her, surprised to find that even Russians can be human beings, and unsophisticated ones at that, with no mistrust of others. But my judgment is only based on the
Russian men and women working at my factory, numerous though they are. Yours would be more valid. Are you still down by the Black Sea, at the place [Stalingrad] whose name you weren’t allowed to divulge? All my best wishes go with you.

Yours,
Sophie

[to Otl Aicher] Ulm August 14, 1942

Dear Otl,

It’s ages since I sat in the garden at Solln,²¹-nine pad on knee, meaning to write you a birthday letter,²² but I gave it up as a bad job too soon, both then and later. It’s my own fault, but as soon as I pick up a pen I feel more barren than a desert. It isn’t inhibitions that make it hard for me to write, but a genuine emptiness [that afflicts me] the moment I feel like unbosoming myself.

Inge will have written about Muth in the meantime, better than I could have done. I’m glad I can at least send you a photo of him—and don’t think I’ve forgotten who introduced us to Muth, and not to him alone.²²¹

Maybe I’ll manage a letter sometime, but I don’t want to hold up the photo any longer. It comes with affectionate regards from

Yours,
Sophie
battle can throw you off course. Hardship tends to blunt the senses, I’m sure, but remember: Un esprit dûr, du coeur TENDRE! It often makes me unhappy that I’m not a vehicle for universal suffering. That way I could at least remove part of my guilt from those who are undeservedly having to suffer so much more than I. I’m so much with you in spirit these days that I often feel we’re bound to bump into one another, but I keep on worrying and wondering how things are with you. You know the value of a human life, and we have to know what we’re risking it for. What a responsibility you bear! However, you do know a source of strength.

And now, God bless you.

Yours,
Sophie

Upon Hans and Sophie’s return to Munich in January, as German armies were falling prey to stiffening Russian resistance and bitter cold on the Eastern front, the Munich circle drew up its next leaflet, no longer referred to as a leaflet of the White Rose but titled Leaflet of the Resistance.

Hans and his circle had been befriended by the Munich architect Manfred Eickemeyer, who had given them the information about the German atrocities in Poland presented in one of the handbills distributed the previous summer. The White Rose circle held readings and discussions at Eickemeyer’s secluded studio in a garden on Leopoldstrasse, and it was in the studio basement that the students produced the handbills on a hand-cranked duplicating machine, using quantities of paper and supplies the very purchase of which tended to arouse suspicion.

This straightforward leaflet, headed A Call to All Germans!, was briefer than earlier leaflets and included no literary quotations. It said that Hitler could not win the war, that he was “leading the German people into the abyss. . . . The guilt of Hitler and his minions exceeds all bounds. Retribution comes closer and closer. But what are the German people doing? They will not see and will not listen. Blindly they follow their seducers into ruin. . . .”


[TO HER SISTER INGE] Munich January 12, 1943

... I always find the change of climate between home and here a bit of a strain. It always takes me several days to learn to dispense with all the little kindnesses I receive from Mother and you, and your daily concern for me (if only as regards my digestion, which is absolutely fine now), and to reaccustom myself to my independence and, in a certain sense, to being on my own.

Herr Geyer has already moved into Eickemeyer's studio. We'll probably see a lot of him in the evenings. His presence is very reassuring. He genuinely radiates an aura of confidence. . . .

[DIARY] January 12, 1943

Predestination and free will, those apparently irreconcilable opposites, have ceased to trouble me much anymore, even though I find them as inexplicable as ever. I believe in God's omniscience, and the logical inference is that he knows what happens in the afterlife of every individual and of each and every one of us. His status as an eternal God entails this.

I can sense my free will, but who can prove its existence to me? What I don't understand is hell and the refusal of Lazarus in Abraham's bosom to give the rich man in hell a drop of cool water from his endless abundance of it.

I think there's a difference between predestination and foreknowledge. Predestination I find far harder, if not wholly impossible, to reconcile with free will. Foreknowledge I find much easier, even though it remains an unfathomable mystery. Besides, "foreknowledge" is a human term. God isn't tied to our own time, so we ought to delete the syllable "fore" and simply say "knowledge."

[DIARY] January 13, 1943

As soon as I'm alone, melancholy suppresses any desire in me to do anything at all. When I pick up a book, I do so without interest, as if someone else were doing it. There's only one remedy for this awful state of mind.

Extreme pain, even if only physical, would be infinitely preferable to this vacuous inactivity.

[TO OTL AICHER] Munich January 19, 1943

Dear Otl,

Forgive me for not having written, even though this won't be a real letter. I'm just not myself at the moment, and it's an entirely novel sensation. My thoughts flit to and fro without my being able to control them properly. I'm suffering from some pretty bad headaches, which may be to blame, partly at least. If I'm to get over this malaise soon, I'll have to be patient with myself.

When I realize something, it's as if it has had to grow inside me beforehand and is suddenly unfolding, leaf by leaf. I used to balk at the idea of an eternal order of things in which some are superior to others, but now I suddenly find it far less absurd, if not absolutely as it should be. I discovered this within myself, in a characteristic I used to think I lacked, namely, ambition. I utterly reject and condemn ambition because it seeks to overthrow every established order by promoting those obsessed with it into positions they don't deserve. To my consternation, it suddenly dawned on me that all the apparent good I'd done had been done, not for its own sake, but to make me look good in other people's eyes, or to catch up with a good person for my own sake, like one runner overhauling another, instead of acknowledging that person to be the better runner and modestly accepting my second or twentieth place as wholly fair.

Or do you think these scribblings of mine are wrong? I'm
very preoccupied with the subject just now, because I keep on having little tiffs with myself. It’s beyond me that some people have moments of temptation only. I have moments of greater lucidity, and I’m very grateful for them, but the rest of the time I’m paddling around in the dark.

I feel I’ve rattled on too long already. That’s why I’m so averse to writing these days, because I produce too little that’s rounded off and fit for others to read.

I hope you aren’t having a bad time. I look forward to your getting some leave, so we can spend at least some time together.

Affectionate regards for now,

Sophie

HANS SCHOLL
Winter 1942–1943

[NOTES SCRIBBLED ON AN ENVELOPE] undated, probably winter 1942–1943

I’m not speaking of the masses, but a national elite responsible for the spiritual substance and orientation of the entire nation: [an elite] which has failed so badly in this century, and doubtless in previous ones, that the spiritual plane has been deprived of its supports and plunged into chaos. Today, having a presentiment of impending doom, this elite is capable of making an even bigger mistake: of shutting itself and its blunders away from the real world and leading an existence of its own—of pursuing l’art pour art in the widest sense. But nothing could be more dangerous to it than fleeing into the realm of aesthetics. [remainder indecipherable]
SOPHIE SCHOLL
February 17

[TO LISA REMPPIS] Munich February 17, 1943

Dear Lisa,

I’ve just been playing the Trout Quintet on the phonograph. Listening to the andantino makes me want to be a trout myself. You can’t help rejoicing and laughing, however moved or sad at heart you feel, when you see the springtime clouds in the sky and the budding branches sway, stirred by the wind, in the bright young sunlight. I’m so much looking forward to the spring again. In that piece of Schubert’s you can positively feel and smell the breezes and scents and hear the birds and the whole of creation cry out for joy. And when the piano repeats the theme like cool, clear, sparkling water—oh, it’s sheer enchantment.

Let me hear from you soon.

Lots of love,
Sophie

February 18

On February 18, 1943, Hans and Sophie Scholl were arrested at Munich University. They had left the bulk of the handbills printed on February 16 outside the university lecture halls, and when they sent the last few copies fluttering down over the balustrade of the atrium into the courtyard below, they were spotted by a university janitor.

On February 22 the so-called People’s Court presided over by Roland Freisler sentenced them to death. Late that same afternoon, Hans Scholl, Sophie Scholl, and their friend Christoph Probst, who had helped draft the last handbill, were sent to the guillotine at Stadelheim Prison, Munich.

Before leaving his cell in the Palais Wittelsbach, Hans Scholl penciled on the wall the quotation “Allen Gewalten zum Trutz sich erhalten.” His last words were: “Es lebe die Freiheit.” [Long live freedom.]

At the end of February Fritz Hartnagel, still in the hospital at L’vov, received a letter from his mother informing him that Hans and Sophie Scholl had been sentenced to death. He discharged himself from the hospital and went at once to Berlin to petition the People’s Court for clemency. Reaching Berlin on the evening of February 28, he telephoned Werner Scholl in Ulm, only to be told that the sentence had already been carried out.

Alexander Schmorell, Kurt Huber, and Willi Graf were arrested soon after Hans and Sophie and were sentenced to death on April 19. Schmorell and Huber were beheaded on July 13. Graf was held until October as Gestapo interrogators attempted to induce him to reveal the names of friends and accomplices. Staunchly silent to the last, he was guillotined at Stadelheim Prison on October 12. Eleven others implicated in the activities of the White Rose, including eight from the Hamburg group, were killed or forced to commit suicide, or died in prisons and concentration camps, and many others were arrested and served prison terms.

The rest of the Scholl family, excluding Werner who, being a serviceman, was not under civil jurisdiction, were taken into “kinship detention” and served prison terms of varying lengths before being released. Werner Scholl was killed in Russia.
Otl Aicher: “Let us hope that the conflict in which he [Hans Scholl] is presently embroiled will turn out all right—a conflict that has worried me deeply and is still a source of concern.” (See also Hans’s letter of February 12, 1942, page 196.)

191. In the course of the winter semester 1941–1942, Hans Scholl and Alexander Schmorell had built up a loose-knit circle of friends—not confined to fellow students—who periodically met for communal readings and debates. (See also Hans’s letter of February 28, 1942, page 197.)

192. A Russo-German cultural philosopher and author, he held a chair of sociology at Breslau from 1926 but was debarred from teaching in 1937. (See note 153.)

193. See note 179.

194. Because of Hans’s confinement to barracks. (See note 190.)

195. Oberkommando der Wehrmacht [Armed Forces High Command].

196. Probably Alexander Schmorell, whom the authorities considered a rebel because of his individualistic and brazenly civilian attitude. (See also Krebs, op. cit., p. 78.)

197. See Hellmut Hartert’s letter to Inge Aicher-Scholl in note 49. It is likely that Hans applied to work at the hospital there because he had friends at the local monastery.

198. According to information received from the Carl-Muth-Archiv, this manuscript has not survived. In this connection, however, see note 199 below.

199. Carl Muth’s active participation in the debates of the Windlicht circle is attested by the following extracts from two of his letters to Otl Aicher:

“Last week I handed him [Hans Scholl] the copy of Windlicht you were kind enough to send me. I was already acquainted with much of the contents. I’m amazed, my dear young friend, that you manage to accomplish so much in such a thoroughly unintellectual environment. You’ll have stirred up a hornet’s nest by raising the question of poverty, so you mustn’t be surprised to find complementary and contradictory replies buzzing around your ears before long. Arguments like these are a good thing, particularly if they benefit all concerned by prompting them to view the question increasingly, and even exclusively, in the light of the Gospel” (February 18, 1942).

“The latest issue of Windlicht is fine, but I’ve yet to study the contributions in detail. It’s proposed to include some of Gustav Thibon’s aphorisms in the next, translated by myself” (July 18, 1942).

200. A Hamburg medical student (b. 1919) and member of a reading circle run by Erna Stahl of the Lichtwark School, she later became a friend of Hans Scholl’s at Munich.

Traute Lafrenz had met Alexander Schmorell back in 1939, while he was studying at Hamburg during the summer semester. In May 1941, having belonged during her time at Hamburg to a circle of dissidents centered on the pediatrician Rudolf Degkwitz, she transferred to Munich University. There Schmorell introduced her to Christoph Probst and Hans Scholl. By the end of 1942 she formed the liaison between the Munich and Hamburg resistance groups. Contrary to Judge Freisler’s belief, it was she who managed to smuggle a White Rose handbill (the third, appealing for passive resistance) to Hamburg. Convicted of being an accessory at the second People’s Court hearing on April 19, 1943, she was sentenced to twelve months’ imprisonment.

201. An order devoted to the education of girls, founded in 1609 by the Englishwoman Maria Ward. The nuns were employed as teachers in the order’s boarding schools until the National Socialists closed them down. They were then conscripted for hospital duty.

202. By 1942 there were many in Germany who hoped that the war would end in the foreseeable future. This frame of mind is conveyed by some of Carl Muth’s letters to Otl Aicher:

“We all cherish the hope that the war will end as we must wish in the not too far distant future” (July 18, 1942).

“Everything will turn out as we must wish, if we love our native land and our people. The final decision is approaching with giant strides” (October 18, 1942).

“All manner of things are happening which permit one to hope that the end of this war is not far off” (November 12, 1942).

203. Traute Lafrenz. (See note 200.)

204. Sausages.

205. Unascertaint.

206. All previous publications give the date of Sophie’s arrival in Munich as May 9, 1942, her birthday, citing Inge Aicher-Scholl’s account in Die Weiße Rose. Frau Aicher-Scholl has amended this date in the latest (4th) edition of her book. The university semester started at the beginning of the month, a further indication that Sophie arrived on or around May 1.

207. Describing the young Scholls’ relations with Muth and Haecker, Inge Aicher-Scholl records that Muth was extremely hospitable and “kept open house. My sister spent her first few days at university at his home until a suitable room could be found for her.”

209. Sophie had been officially enrolled at Munich University (registration number 83/28570) since May 18, 1942.

210. Essayist, feature writer, cultural commentator, and Roman Catholic convert, Sigismund von Radecki (1891–1970) was then resident in Munich and a member of Carl Muth’s circle. His checkered career would have provided food enough for conversation in itself. Born at Riga and educated at St. Petersburg, he had worked by turns as a mining engineer at Freiburg, an irrigation engineer in Turkestan, and an electrical engineer with Siemens in Berlin. At the age of thirty-two he suddenly turned his hand to drawing and acting (he was a longtime friend of the Austrian playwright Karl Kraus), and ended by becoming a free-lance writer. In view of all this, one call well understand why Sophie found the conversation so “tiring,” even though she makes no allusion to the political topics that almost certainly formed part of it.

211. Probably Josef Furtmeier. (See note 235.)

212. During vacations, all girl students had to do a minimum of two months’ work in a munitions factory or forfeit their university places.

213. It is clear from a letter to her parents, dated June 17, 1942, that Sophie failed in her aim: “I'm going to write to the director of studies requesting that I be allowed to do my service at Ulm and start it a month later. Frau Kley [of Geislingen, wife of the painter Berl Kley] has also put in a request [for me] because her one-year-service girl has left, but she'll doubtless have as little luck as a local woman doctor who asked to be assigned me as a receptionist.”

214. Father Schwarz. (See note 234.)

215. Her request appears to have been promptly fulfilled. Ten days later, on June 17, 1942, she wrote to her parents to thank them: “Professor Muth was absolutely delighted with the trout. We'll pay another visit to Passau for him—it's a great pleasure from our point of view. Haecker will probably be staying with him while Inge's here. When is she coming?”

It is clear that the Scholl family often supplemented Carl Muth’s rations, as witness a letter of thanks from Muth to Inge Scholl dated December 3, 1942: “Hans was here a few days ago, and yesterday Sophie dropped in—not that I saw her in person—to deliver a fine joint of roast mutton on her dear mother's behalf. If I weren't able to invite Hans and Sophie to share it, I would find it hard to accept with an easy mind, because I'm sure it represents a sacrifice on your part. Please convey my most heartfelt thanks to your mother and tell me privately what I owe [her] for it.”

216. Hans Scholl had met Radecki at Carl Muth’s on April 24. See letter from Carl Muth to Otl Aicher dated April 23, 1942: “I expected Hans for supper, but he didn’t turn up. He’ll be here tomorrow, however, so he’ll meet Sigismund von Radecki, whose books he admires. . . .”

217. After completing her Fröbel course and being drafted into the RAD in March 1941.

218. Dreams and dreamlike experiences figure repeatedly in Sophie’s letters and notes. See her letters dated February 26, 1938, October 6, 1939, and August 9, 1942, likewise the following account of a dream she had the night before she was executed, as recalled by Else Gebel, a cellmate who had been detailed to keep an eye on her:

“You . . . told me your dream. It was a fine, sunny day, and you were taking a child in a long, white robe to be christened. The road to the church climbed steeply up a mountainside, but you held the child firmly and securely. All at once a crevasse yawned ahead. You just had time to deposit the child safely on the other side. Then you plunged into the abyss.

“You interpreted the dream as follows: the child in the white robe is our ideal, which will surmount every obstacle. We are privileged to be its pioneers, but we must die for it beforehand.”

219. At Carl Muth’s.

220. Otl Aicher had celebrated his birthday on May 13, so Sophie is here recalling her first few days in Munich as a guest of Carl Muth’s.

221. Hans and Sophie Scholl owed their personal connection with Carl Muth to Otl Aicher. While still in school during the fall of 1940, Aicher had submitted a piece on Michelangelo’s sonnets to Hochland. Though never published, this essay prompted the periodical’s septuagenarian editor, Carl Muth, to invite its eighteen-year-old author to Munich. Their first encounter in March 1941 was a prelude to further meetings and discussions, some of them fiercely combative. By the time Aicher was compelled to join the army in the fall of 1941, Muth loomed large in his life. Anxious not to lose touch with the old man, he introduced Hans Scholl to him, and the resulting acquaintanceship blossomed into a friendship that embraced the entire Scholl family. Whenever friends of the Scholls’ visited Munich, they would stay at Muth’s house. In return, the Scholls strove to make his life easier by supplying him with scarce foodstuffs and doing him little favors.

222. Willi Graf, Hans Scholl’s friend and fellow conspirator-to-be, recorded the various stages of the journey in his diary:

“7/23/42. Entrained at the Ostbahnhof 7 A.M., didn’t pull out till 11. Our section is fine. I feel at home there. We’ve got enough room and can talk. That’s worth a lot.”

“7/26/42. Noon in Warsaw, sweltering hot. Late this afternoon we went for a walk in the city, which looked wretched.”

“7/27/42. We went into town again, walked around, ate, then sat..."
dark, faithful, steadfast wall. They demand nothing, they ask nothing. They are there purely so that I shall know they are there. So that my house shall not be hemmed in by alien territory, solitude, or bitter desolation . . . not a wall [built] of power or authority . . . , but a wall of love. And could anyone perish of whom love has partaken?"

245. Sophie obviously changed her plans shortly afterward. Writing to a friend on October 4, 1942, she said: "Our trip to the Bohemian forest has been postponed. At present we're in Munich helping Professor Muth, whose house was damaged in the latest air raid. I'll probably be spending next week here as well."


248. See notes 57 and 63.

249. At Blumberg.

250. See note 245.

251. Romans 8:2.

252. Romans 8:2.

253. The German boxer Max Schmeling (b. 1905), world heavyweight champion 1930–1932. Schmeling is best known to Americans as the only opponent to win a match from Joe Louis in his prime, June 19, 1936. Two years later, Louis won the rematch by a knockout in the first round.

254. It is apparent from Willi Graf's diary that he and his friends arrived in Munich on the evening of November 6 and traveled home the following day.

255. At the rear of 13 Franz-Joseph-Strasse, where Hans and Sophie had rented two rooms from Frau Dr. Schmidt, effective December 1, 1942.

256. Sophie had already been to Stuttgart on December 3 and fixed a meeting with Susanne Hirzel: "Dear Suse, I'm coming to Stgt. Thursday Dec. 3. Can we meet? It would be so nice. I don't know my time of arrival yet. I'll call you when I get there" (Munich, December 1, 1942).

257. Music was one of Sophie's staple needs in life, as her letters and her friends' recollections of her confirm. She played the piano well and devoted great attention to her progress in the field of music. The young Scholls often played together, and the family held musical soirées at home and regularly attended concerts. Sophie's appreciation of music is attested not only by this letter to Fritz Hartnagel but also by her draft essay for *Windlicht* (see pages 189–191) and her letters to Otl Aicher (September 5, 1942) and Lisa Remppis (January 14, 1942). To assess her musical predilections correctly, the reader should bear in mind that "modern" composers such as Mahler, Schönberg, Hindemith, and Webern were not allowed to be performed in the Third Reich.


259. Wilhelm Geyer had come to Munich (through the good offices of Hans Scholl) to paint a portrait of Carl Muth.


261. Hans Scholl had made the acquaintance of the novelist Werner Bergengruen (1892–1964) at Carl Muth's home in the late summer or fall of 1941.

See Werner Bergengruen, "Erinnerungen an Carl Muth," op. cit., p. 79: "I had no idea that Hans Scholl, the student whom I met at Carl Muth's house on Dittlerstrasse [in Munich-Solln, where Muth and Bergengruen had been neighbors since 1936], . . . was the author of the White Rose handbills which my wife and I typed out at night, and which I then, after carefully selecting their addresses, cycled into town with and mailed in as many different postal districts as possible."

262. Hans Scholl appears to have expressed similar sentiments during his Christmas vacation at Ulm. Looking back on that period, Inge Aicher-Scholl recalls: "Hans said he found it deeply satisfying to tend the sick. He loved the profession, he said, but if, after the war, nobody took the trouble to write a proper history of the National Socialist era, he would change horses in midstream and devote himself to setting the historical picture straight."

263. In 1968 Otl Aicher gave the following account of his visit to Munich:

"I went to Munich in the middle of February and stayed with Professor Muth. Before I could get in touch with Hans and Sophie, I received a call from Ulm asking me to let Hans know that the book *Machtstaat and Utopie* was out of print. [This message from Ulm was, Aicher realized, a coded warning from Hans Hirzel, but it almost certainly did not imply that the Gestapo had connected Hans Scholl with the handbill campaign.] We arranged to meet at eleven the following day at his lodgings at 13 Franz-Joseph-Strasse. At eleven I found the place locked up. When I returned half an hour later, I was greeted by the Gestapo. It was February 18, 1943."

Before Aicher came to Munich, he and Sophie had spent several days together at Ulm. He was visiting his parents after being discharged from the hospital; she had gone home to help her ailing mother.
265. Theodor Haecker (1879–1945), author, philosopher, and scholar, initially on the editorial staff of various periodicals. He made something of a name for himself as a writer and authority on the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, whose principal works he translated into German. Influenced by the writings of Cardinal J. H. Newman (1801–1890), he adopted the Roman Catholic faith in 1921.

It was Otl Aicher who introduced the Scholls to Haecker’s chief works, *Vergil, Vater des Abendlandes* (1931), *Was ist der Mensch?* (1933), and *Schöpfer und Schöpfung* (1934). They became personally acquainted with him through Carl Muth, with whom Haecker had worked on *Hochland*. Although he had been forbidden to speak in public since 1935 and debarred from publishing works of his own since 1938, Haecker gave several readings to the White Rose circle in 1942, notably from the diaries he kept from 1939 on. These were published posthumously in 1947 under the title *Tag- und Nachtbücher*. Only his daughter’s presence of mind saved the manuscript from discovery when his home was searched after the Scholls’ arrest. Inge Aicher-Scholl has described how she copied this out during July and August 1944 at Bruderhof, a remote farm above the Wutachschlucht in the south of the Black Forest, which the family had employed as a refuge from the Gestapo and their threats since May of that year:

“Otl’s father then made two watertight, damp-proof metal cylinders in which we planned to stow and hide two copies of the manuscript. I recall that my mother buried them under an oak tree in the garden while the rest of us were still debating the safest place to put them. Immediately after the war Otl cycled to Ulsterbach, near Augsburg, where Haecker had been evacuated, to deliver the cylinders to him. Haecker was already dead.”

266. On the afternoon of February 4, 1943, Theodor Haecker read extracts from *Schöpfer und Schöpfung* and his unpublished diaries to an audience of around thirty-five people at Eickemeyer’s studio. Several of those present have described the occasion. Willi Graf noted in his diary: “We met at four o’clock. Haecker read the first part of his *Schöpfer und Schöpfung*. He spoke for over two hours. Much of what I heard and understood was exceptionally interesting.” Elisabeth Hartnagel-Scholl, who stayed at her brother and sister’s Munich lodgings from the end of January to February 5, recalled: “On February 4, 1943, Theodor Haecker read to an invited audience of friends and acquaintances at Eickemeyer’s studio.” It was the day after the German surrender at Stalingrad had been announced.

267. Sophie was due to do some more war work during the university vacation.

268. Of the hospital at L’vov.
but he had been transferred to a students' company at Innsbruck in December 1942 and could pay only sporadic visits to Munich thereafter. It is nonetheless probable that he contributed to the drafting and wording of some of the handbills. "Christl undoubtedly played a major part in drafting and formulating the texts," writes Inge Aicher-Scholl, op. cit., p. 34.

What is documented is that, when Hans Scholl was arrested and searched, the Gestapo found a sheet of paper torn into innumerable fragments. When reconstructed, they proved to be a handwritten draft by Christoph Probst. In sentencing him to death, Roland Freisler stated that this document had used "the heroic struggle at Stalingrad as an occasion for branding the Führer a military confidence trickster, indulging in craven defeatism, and then, adopting a proclamatory tone, calling for action in the form of honorable surrender, as he [Probst] styles it, coupled with opposition to National Socialism."

This draft proclamation cost Christoph Probst his life. He was arrested on February 19, 1943, when he went to pick up a leave pass to visit his wife, who was confined to bed with puerperal fever. His recent letters had testified to the steady growth of his Christian faith. Now, on the verge of death, he was baptized a Roman Catholic. Like Hans and Sophie Scholl, he was executed at Munich's Stadelheim Prison on February 22, 1943.

273. See note 72.