

The Burke Library
Union Theological Seminary

Finding Aid for

Dietrich Bonhoeffer Primary Sources



Finding Aid prepared by: Elizabeth Russey, March 2003

Revised with additions by Ruth Tonkiss Cameron, October 2005

Summary Information

Creator:	Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 1906-1945, and various
Title:	Dietrich Bonhoeffer Primary Sources
Inclusive dates:	1929-1998
Bulk dates:	1930-1946
Abstract:	Correspondence, photographs, and administrative material re: Dietrich Bonhoeffer's year as a student at Union Theological Seminary ,1930-1931 and briefly as a visiting lecturer in 1939; translations of Bonhoeffer's sermons; copies of correspondence between Emmi Bonhoeffer and Julia Braun-Vogelstein re: the Bonhoeffer family and the German resistance; papers by or about Bonhoeffer including copies of the Paul Louis Lehmann Collection, the manuscript collections of the National Lutheran Council, the Papers of Samuel S. Grey, Jr. and of Herbert Jehle; correspondence from Dietrich Bonhoeffer to Richard Ern and family, 1930 – 1931.
Size:	1.5 linear feet
Storage:	Onsite storage
Repository:	The Burke Library Union Theological Seminary 3041 Broadway New York, NY 10027 Phone: 212-851-5612 Fax: 212-851-5613 Email: archives@uts.columbia.edu

Administrative Information

Provenance: The Bonhoeffer Primary Sources Collection was artificially created from the collections of Union Theological Seminary and donations from outside sources, in particular via the International Bonhoeffer Society.

Access restrictions: This collection is unrestricted.

Preferred Citation: item, folder title, box number, Dietrich Bonhoeffer Manuscript Collection, Burke Library, Union Theological Seminary

Biography

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, along with his twin sister, Sabine, was born on February 4, 1906, in Breslau, Germany. Later a student in Tübingen, Berlin, and at Union Theological Seminary in New York, as well as a participant in the European ecumenical movement, Bonhoeffer became known as one of the few figures of the 1930s with a comprehensive grasp of both German- and English-language theology.

He wrote his dissertation, *Sanctorum Communio*, at the end of three years at the University of Berlin (1924-1927) and was awarded his doctorate with honors. *Act and Being*, his Habilitationsschrift, or qualifying thesis allowing him to teach at the University of Berlin, was accepted in July 1930. The following year, 1930-1931, Bonhoeffer spent a postgraduate year at Union Theological Seminary in New York. He assumed his post as a lecturer in theology at the University of Berlin in August 1931. In the winter semester 1931-1932 Bonhoeffer presented the lectures that were published as *Creation and Fall*. His final lecture courses at Berlin, published as *Christ the Center*, along with a seminar on the philosopher G. W. F. Hegel, were taught in the summer of 1933. His authorization to teach on the faculty of the University of Berlin was finally withdrawn on August 5, 1936.

Bonhoeffer served as a curate for a German congregation in Barcelona during 1929-1930. Following his ordination at St. Matthias Church, Berlin, in November 1931, he was to help organize the Pastors' Emergency League in September 1933, prior to assuming the pastorate of the German Evangelical Church, Sydenham, and the Reformed Church of St. Paul in London. During his sojourn in England, Bonhoeffer became a close friend and confidant of the influential Anglican Bishop, George Bell. After the Confessing Church was organized in May 1934 at Barmen, Germany, Bonhoeffer returned from England in the spring of 1935 to assume leadership of the Confessing Church's seminary at Zingst by the Baltic Sea, a school relocated later that year to Finkenwalde in Pomerania. Out of the experiences at Finkenwalde emerged his two well-known books, *Discipleship* and *Life Together*, as well as his lesser known writings on pastoral ministry such as *Spiritual Care*. His work to prepare pastors in the Confessing Church continued all the way to 1939.

Bonhoeffer's early travel to Rome and North Africa, his curacy in Barcelona, and his post-doctoral year in New York (including regular work at Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, as well as travel to Cuba and Mexico), opened him to the ecumenical church.

Bonhoeffer's theologically rooted opposition to National Socialism first made him a leader, along with Martin Niemöller and Karl Barth, in the Confessing Church (Bekennende Kirche), and an advocate on behalf of the Jews. Indeed, his efforts to help a group of Jews escape to Switzerland were what first led to his arrest and imprisonment in the spring 1943. His leadership in the anti-Nazi Confessing Church and his participation in the Abwehr resistance circle (beginning in February 1938) make his works a unique source for understanding the interaction of religion, politics, and culture among those few Christians who actively opposed National Socialism, as is particularly evident in his drafts for a posthumously published *Ethics*. His thought provides not only an example of intellectual preparation for the reconstruction of German society after the war but also a rare insight into the vanishing social and academic world that had preceded it.

He was hanged in the concentration camp at Flossenbürg on April 9, 1945, one of four members of his immediate family to die at the hands of the Nazi regime for their participation in the small Protestant resistance movement.

Collection Scope and Content Note

The Dietrich Bonhoeffer Primary Sources Collection consists of primary source material related to the life and activities of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a Lutheran theologian, professor, and member of the German resistance. Although this collection is not extensive, it contains some unique material related to Bonhoeffer's year-long residence at Union Theological Seminary in 1930-1931, including transcripts, correspondence, and Bonhoeffer's "Deceased Alumnus file," a collection of material maintained by the UTS Alumnae/i Office.

The collection was enriched in 2004 by the donation of a collection of the mostly handwritten correspondence of Dietrich Bonhoeffer with Richard Ern and his family during the years 1930 to 1931.

The bulk of the collection consists of copies of material located at other repositories, including Princeton Theological Seminary and the National Lutheran Council. The collection also includes correspondence, newspaper clippings and other manuscripts from Bonhoeffer's friends and family that eulogizes his life. For a far more extensive listing of the collected and occasional works of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, see the *Bonhoeffer Bibliography: Primary Sources*.

The collection is divided into five series:

- Series 1: Union Theological Seminary, 1929-1976 (0.25 lin.ft.)
This series contains correspondence, administrative files, newspaper clippings, and other material related to Dietrich Bonhoeffer's tenure at Union Theological seminary in 1930-31 as a student and his subsequent visit to New York as a visiting lecturer in 1939. The series includes correspondence with Henry Smith Leiper, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Samuel Cavert; Bonhoeffer's application to Union Theological Seminary; and his transcripts from the university in Tübingen, Berlin and Union Theological Seminary. This series also contains Bonhoeffer's "deceased alumnus file," a collection of clippings, correspondence, and other material maintained by the Union Alumnae/i office. The majority of the material in this series is original and some is written in German. Arrangement is by document type and then chronological.
- Series 2: Writings, 1926 – 1999 (Bulk 1926-1944) (0.25 lin.ft.)
This series contains copies of some of Bonhoeffer's writing, including some translations into English and a photocopy of a portion of the unfinished novel and drama, which he began in prison.
- Series 3: Remembrances, 1944-2004 (0.5 lin. ft.)
Series 3 contains material written after Bonhoeffer's death in 1945. It includes correspondence and other documents that recount the activities of Bonhoeffer and remembrances from his friends and family, including a petition related to Bonhoeffer's inclusion in Yad Vashem. Much of the material is copied from other manuscript collections at Princeton Theological Seminary, and the files of the National Lutheran Council. This series also contains some material related to Samuel S. Grey Junior, post - liberation administrator of the Flossenburg Concentration Camp, where Bonhoeffer was hanged.

Series 3 also contains a series of correspondence (in German) between Emmi Delbrück Bonhoeffer and Julia Braun-Vogelstein between 1965 and 1970. Dietrich Bonhoeffer is only briefly mentioned, and there are only several passing references to the Bonhoeffer family. The significance of this correspondence is in the insight it gives into the lives of these two women, particularly in how they addressed Germany's cultural and political legacy as survivors of the German resistance. Original letters written by Braun-Vogelstein are included in this series. This series also includes typewritten transcripts of both the Braun-Vogelstein and Bonhoeffer letters, along with an overview of the correspondence written by Victoria Barnett. This series also contains photographic copies of letters written by Emmi Bonhoeffer to Julia Braun-Vogelstein.

Arrangement is alphabetical by creating institution/creator. A listing of the exact locations of original material held by other institutions is located in

the accession file. For more information, see a member of the archival staff.

- Series 4: Photographs, undated (0.25 lin. ft.)
This series contains photographs of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Flossenburg Concentration Camp. Arrangement is alphabetical.
- Series 5: Richard Ern's papers, 1930 – 1977 (bulk 1930-1931) (0.25 lin.ft.)
This series contains a collection of correspondence donated to the Bonhoeffer Archive by Richard Ern through Roger L Shinn. It consists mainly of letters and cards from Dietrich Bonhoeffer to Richard Ern as a child and covers the period of Bonhoeffer's car journey to Mexico in 1931. The series also contains photographs of Bonhoeffer, Richard and his sister from c1930-31. The arrangement is chronological.

Processing

The Dietrich Bonhoeffer Primary Sources Collection was artificially created, meaning that no original order could be maintained. The collection is arranged, therefore, loosely by creating body.

Folded materials were flattened. Newspaper clippings were photocopied on acid free paper. Staples, rubber bands, and metal clips were removed and replaced with plastic clips. All materials were placed in acid-free folders and boxes.

Contents List

Series Box Folder Description

Note: Box 1 contains both Series 1 and Series 2

Series 1: Union Theological Seminary

1	1	1	Correspondence [1929-1931, 1939]
1	1	2	Copies of items from Series 1
1	1	3	Alumni Deceased file [1930-1964]
1	1	4	Union Theological Seminary Records: Dietrich Bonhoeffer [1930-1936]

Series 2: Writings

2	1	1	"Review of Old Protestant Eschatology", 1926, translated by D.H. Manrodt
2	1	2	"The Church and Eschatology" 1926, translated by D.H. Manrodt
2	1	3	"The Psalms: Prayer book of the Bible" translated by Sister Isobel Mary SLG, 1999
2	1	4	"The Finkenwalde Sermons", translated by M. Corcoran for Ulrike Lieder, 1976
2	1	5	Unpublished portion of a <i>Romanversuch</i> , Tegel, 1943 - 1944, pp14, 23 – 34, 37 – 40, 44 – 47, 84 copied from originals in the possession of Bonhoeffer's sister, Susanne Dress-Bonhoeffer, with ms annotations by Larry Rasmussen.
2	1	6	Unpublished portion of a <i>Dramafragment</i> , Tegel, 1943, pp 10 – 12, 15 – 18 [same provenance as f5]

Series 3: Remembrances

Emmi Bonhoeffer:

3	1	1	46 Photographic copies of correspondence from Emmi Bonhoeffer to Julie Braun-Vogelstein, 1965 – 70
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Julia Braun-Vogelstein

3	1	2	Correspondence from J. B-V to Emmi Bonhoeffer, 1965-1970
3	1	3	Transcriptions by Victoria Barnet, [199?]

Samuel S. Grey, Jr.

3	1	4	"Dear Martha": correspondence and photographs, April – Oct/Dec 1945 collected and transcribed by Samuel S. Grey, Jr., 1999
3	1	5	"Dissent, Protective Custody, and Concentration Camps" by Samuel S. Grey, Jr., [199?]

Series 3: Remembrances (Cont'd)

Series Box Folder Description

Samuel S. Grey, Jr. (cont'd)

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| 3 | 1 | 6 | "Das Konzentrationslager Flossenbürg, gegründet für sogenannte Asoziale und Kriminelle", by Toni Siegert, in <i>Bayern in der N-S Zeit</i> , edited by M. Broszat and E. Fröhlich, 1979 |
| 3 | 1 | 7 | "Concentration Camp Flossenburg" by T. Siegert, translated A. M. Shantz for S. S. Grey, 1982 |

Hitler Plot

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| 3 | 1 | 8 | Articles and typescript reports, press releases from the World Council of Churches re the Hitler Plot, 1944-45 |
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Israel, Commission for the Designation of the Righteous at Yad Vashem

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| 3 | 1 | 9 | Copy of petition for the Recognition of Dietrich Bonhoeffer at Yad Vashem: Exhibits and correspondence, 1997-2004 |
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Herbert Jehle

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| 3 | 1 | 10 | Copies of H. Jehle papers, 1930 - 34:
Notes on the Herbert Jehle papers by Clifford Green and Victoria Barnett, March 2004;
Bonhoeffer, D. "Concerning the Christian idea of God", [1930/31], carbon of typescript;
Correspondence, 1932-3 ;
Title page and inscription to Jehle by Bonhoeffer of "Gebete für das Jahr der Kirche", Christmas 1933;
Bonhoeffer, D. "The Church and the World of Missions" with "Kirche und Volkerwelt", copy of paper delivered at Oekumenische Konzil der Christlichen Kirchen, Fanø, Denmark, Aug 1934;
Bonhoeffer, D. "Die Kirche und die Welt der Nationen (Zur Theolog. Grundlegg. Der Arbeit des Weltbundes.) copy of German Thesenpapier [1934?] |
| 3 | 1 | 11 | Copies of H. Jehle papers cont'd, 1936:
Announcement of the death of Julie Bonhoeffer and funeral address by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 15 January 1936;
"Studienreise des Predigerseminars der Bekennenden Kirche zu Finkelwalde in Pommern nach Dänemark und Schweden vom 29.2 – 11.3.1936";
"Memorandum zu einem Austausch von Kandidaten und Studenten der Theologie zwischen der Bekennenden Kirche und Ausländischen Kirchen: [Before Feb, 1937];
Finkelwalde Rundbrief, 8; Anleitung zur täglichen Meditation; Meditation über Jes. 6: 1-8; Meditation zur Pfingstpredigt über Eph.2: 19 – 22; |

Series 3: Remembrances (Cont'd)

Series Box Folder Description

Herbert Jehle (cont'd)

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| 3 | 1 | 11 | Copies of H. Jehle papers cont'd, 1936:
"Andacht: Amen" by P. Rott; "Liebe Brüder" letter from Finkenwalde by Otto-Karl Lerche; Abschrift eines Briefes von Bruder Brandenburg an Bruder Bonhoeffer; [Meditation über Matt. 5:5]; Meditation über Mc. 4: 26-29; "Predigerseminar Finkelwalde", report by Bonhoeffer to W. Rott; [Finkelwalde] Jahresbericht by Bonhoeffer, Dec 1936;
Finkelwalde Rundbrief 13, 26 Oct 1936; Predigt-Meditationen; Finkelwalde Rundbrief 14, 30 Nov 1936; Meditation; Finkelwalde Rundbrief 15, 18 Dec 1936; Meditationen |
| 3 | 1 | 12 | Copies of H. Jehle papers cont'd, 1941 -68 :
Burns-Chalmers, A. "Caring is the Christian Thing" in <i>Fellowship</i> 7(8), Aug 1941;
Letter, Franz Hildebrandt to H. Jehle on death of Bonhoeffer, 5 Jun 1945;
Letter, Maria von Wedermeyer to H. Jehle, 5 Feb, 1952;
Letter, Eberhard Bethge to H. Jehle, 9 Apr, 1954;
Letter, Eberhard Bethge to H. Jehle, 14 Aug 1968;
"It was in the mid-thirties..." signed [circular] letter re peace and ecumenical movement by H. Jehle, [after 1978?] |

Jean Lassere

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| 3 | 1 | 13 | "Remembrances of Dietrich Bonhoeffer [at Union]" by Jean Lassere, typescript, 1981 |
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Paul Louis Lehmann Collection, Princeton Theological Seminary Libraries [1931-1967]

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| 3 | 1 | 14 | Correspondence, 1931 - 39 |
| 3 | 1 | 15 | Correspondence, 1939 - 46 |
| 3 | 1 | 16 | Correspondence and clipping, 1931 - 1969 |
| 3 | 1 | 17 | Correspondence, 1932 - 49, 1987 |

Sabine Leibholz

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| 3 | 1 | 18 | Sabine Leibholz: Copies and typewritten transcripts of correspondence, 1932 - 67 |
| 3 | 1 | 19 | National Lutheran Council, Lutheran World Action Collection:
Copies of correspondence files re Bonhoeffer film project, "No Greater Love", 1939-78, 1980:
Box 4, folder "No Greater Love": Documents, 1946
Box 4, folder "No Greater Love": General, 1946 |

Series 3: Remembrances (Cont'd)Series Box Folder DescriptionTafel Family

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| 3 | 1 | 20 | Copy of Tafel family tree linked to Bonhoeffer's grandmother;
copies of biographical articles for Johann Friedrich
Immanuel Tafel, Louis Herman Tafel and Johann
Friedrich Leonhard Tafel |
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Series 4: Photographs

Dietrich Bonhoeffer [n.d.] (2f)

Dietrich Bonhoeffer statue [n.d.]

Emmi Bonhoeffer [n.d.]

Correspondence [1965-1970]

Flossenburg concentration camp [1945]

Series 5: Richard Ern's papers

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| 1 | 1 | Letter from Roger L Shinn, to Sara Myers, Burke Library, tls,
January 6, 2004, re donation.
Letter from Clifford Green, to Ruth Cameron Burke Library, tls,
Jan 29, 2005 re dating of Bonhoeffer/ Ern correspondence. |
| 1 | 2 | Photographs of Dietrich Bonhoeffer with Richard Ern, Scarsdale,
[c.1930]; photograph of Richard and his sister, [c.1927?] |
| 1 | 3 | Correspondence from Bonhoeffer to Richard and to Richard's
parents, ms, 1930 –1931: |
| | | 1. DB to Richard Ern letter from UTS, ms Oct 14, 1930 |
| | | 2. DB to Richard Ern letter from UTS, ms [Oct 15?] 1930 |
| | | 3. DB to Richard Ern letter, ms Nov 6, 1930 |
| | | 4. DB to Richard Ern card from NY, ms Jan 15, 1931 |
| | | 5. DB to Richard Ern card from NY, ms Jan 22, 1931 |
| | | 6. DB to Richard Ern card from NY, ms Feb 11, 1931 |
| | | 7. DB to Richard Ern card from NY, ms Mar 5, 1931 |
| | | 8. DB to Richard Ern card from NY, ms Mar 18, 1931 |
| | | 9. DB to Richard Ern card from NY, ms Mar 26, 1931 |
| | | 10. DB to Ern Family card from Fort Worth May 14, 1931 |
| | | 11. Color photocopy of 8 and 10 |
| | | 12. DB to Ern Family card from Portland, PA, Mt Tammany,
additional signed comment from Paul Lehmann, May 7 1931 |
| | | 13. DB to August Ern card from Laredo,ms May 18 1931 |
| | | 14. DB to Richard Ern card from Piramide de Teopanzolco, ms
Jun 5 1931 |
| | | 15. DB to Ern Family card from Wytheville, Va.,ms,
Jun 12 1931 |
| | | 16. DB to Richard Ern letter from Berlin, tls Dec 13 1931 |
| | | 17. DB to Mrs L Ern Western Union telegram from NY
Jun 17 [1931] |

- 1 4 Miscellaneous
Correspondence from Eberhard Bethge to Richard and Frances
Ern, tls, 1976-77.
Invitation and announcement of opening of the Bonhoeffer Archives
at Union Theological Seminary, March 4, 1977
Photocopy of a panel of post-war German commemorative postage
stamps "Dem Deutschen Widerstand zum Jahrestag des 20.
Juli. 1944/1964. One stamp commemorating the death of
Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 9.IV.1945
2 Newspaper clippings related to Bonhoeffer and Bethge.