

THE QUEST FOR FREGE'S *NACHLASS*

Kai F. Wehmeier and Hans-Christoph Schmidt am Busch

Source: Translation of 'Auf der Suche nach Freges Nachlaß', in G. Gabriel and U. Dathe (eds), *Gottlob Frege – Werk und Wirkung*, Paderborn: mentis, 2000, pp. 267–281, translated by Kai F. Wehmeier.

1. Introduction

In the final year of his life, Gottlob Frege penned a testamentary note¹ for his adopted son Alfred, entrusting him with his handwritten *Nachlass*:

Kleinen, 12 January 1925

Dear Alfred,

Do not scorn my handwritten material. Even if all is not gold, there is gold in it nevertheless. I believe that some of it will one day be held in much greater esteem than now. See to it that nothing gets lost.

With love, your father

It is a large part of myself that I here bequeath to you.²

Frege's worry that something might happen to his *Nachlass* has proved to be all too justified. It is widely accepted as a fact today that Frege's *Nachlass*, together with the part of his correspondence that had been collected by Heinrich Scholz (1884–1956), fell prey to the flames in the Münster *Universitätsbibliothek* (university library; henceforth "UB" for short) during an allied bombing raid on 25 March 1945. Or rather, this is the result of the investigations carried out during the course of the Frege editions of 1969 and 1976.³

Only because Heinrich Scholz had had typewritten copies made of some of the documents before the war have parts of Frege's *Nachlass* been preserved at all. These copies, or rather, carbon copies thereof, were not deposited in the university library like the originals, and hence were not lost.

However, the existing pieces from the *Nachlass* and the correspondence⁴ constitute only a fraction of the original material, and Scholz's pre-war notes on the contents of the lost pieces suggest that they contained quite a lot of "gold".⁵ Inquiring after the circumstances of the alleged annihilation of the *Nachlass*, as well as after the reliability of this information, therefore seems worthwhile.

In the present essay, we report the results of our investigations concerning Frege's *Nachlass* from 1996 through 1998. As we have come to harbour substantial doubts concerning the reliability of the received story of the material's destruction, while there do not currently seem to be any new starting points for additional research, the main purpose of this paper is to document – some 20 years after Veraart's report – the state of knowledge in this matter, with an eye to a possible later resumption of similar endeavours.

2. Acquisition of the *Nachlass* by Heinrich Scholz

In 1935 Heinrich Scholz, at the time director of the *Philosophisches Seminar B* in Münster (the precursor of today's Institute for Mathematical Logic), succeeded in locating Frege's heir, the engineer Alfred Frege,⁶ in Braunschweig. He agreed to hand over his father's *Nachlass* to Scholz for academic purposes, with the following provision:⁷

I request that the handwritten *Nachlass* of Prof. Dr. Gottlob Frege, former Prof. at the University of Jena, deceased in the year 1925 in Bad Kleinen i. Mecklbg., which, for academic purposes, I have placed at the disposal of Mr. Professor Dr. Scholz, Münster i.W., be deposited in your library in such a way that this *Nachlass* remains accessible to me for the rest of my life, and that the possibility remains for me to retake it, if need be, into my custody at a later date. In the case of my death, I confer on Mr. Prof. Dr. Scholz the exclusive right to dispose of the handwritten *Nachlass*.

Alfred Frege apparently sent this declaration, intended for the UB Münster, to Scholz, who forwarded it to the library on 15 February 1936. The director of the library at the time, Kindervater, replied on 2 March 1936 as follows:⁸

It is with most sincere thanks that I acknowledge the receipt of your kind letter of 15 February 1936, including attachments, as well as the original letter by Mr. Dipl. Ing. Frege concerning the *Nachlass* of Prof. Dr. Gottlob Frege. It is my pleasant duty to express the library administration's most sincere gratitude to you for succeeding in making these eminently important documents available

to the academic world. I await the transfer of the *Nachlass* and assure the observation of the stipulations made by the donor.

Scholz and his assistant, Friedrich Bachmann, reported on Frege's *Nachlass* in September 1935, at the International Congress for Scientific Philosophy in Paris, and solicited handwritten letters by Frege for the Münster Frege archive.⁹

3. Pre-war work on the *Nachlass*

In March 1936 Scholz applied for both a grant of 600 *Reichsmark* from the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (DFG; at the time also called *Notgemeinschaft der deutschen Wissenschaft*), to be used for a Frege edition in two or three volumes,¹⁰ and a stipend for his student Dr. Hermann Schweitzer.¹¹ The typewritten copies, whose carbon copies were rescued by Scholz and which provided the foundation for the later Frege edition, were presumably prepared during this project, which began in June 1936.

It is, incidentally, hard to assess today whether any further work was done during this project. In April 1936 Scholz wrote to the DFG that Schweitzer had already prepared typewritten copies of Frege's entire correspondence.¹² Schweitzer, however, disputes ever having worked on the *Nachlass*.¹³ Scholz announced several times¹⁴ that he would shortly present a printable manuscript; this never happened, however. The DFG files contain neither a final report nor a final financial settlement of the edition project, even though Scholz had been summoned by the DFG to provide such.¹⁵

It remains unclear whether the project had already been abandoned entirely at this point. After all, Scholz's mail diary records a correspondence with Schweitzer's successor, Marga Titz, at the end of 1941, under the heading "Friedrich Bachmanns Frege-Blätter [Friedrich Bachmann's Frege sheets]". And as late as January 1943 Scholz records a letter to the *Deutsche Bank* in his mail diary with the subject "Vorlesungs- und Frege-Konto 1942 Abrechnungen beglaubigt [lecture- and Frege-account 1942 statements certified]". Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to assume that after Bachmann's departure to Marburg and Schweitzer's enlistment to the military meteorological service – both in 1936 – the resources requisite for a successful completion of the edition project were no longer at Scholz's disposal. In any case, it is a fact that the edition planned by Scholz never appeared.

4. Wartime bombing: depositing the *Nachlass* in the university library

Several times during 1943 Münster came under heavy British bombardment. On 11 June 1943 Scholz wrote the following brief note: "21 Frege

folders secured in the air-raid shelter. Cf. 19-1-1943".¹⁶ On 10 October 1943 a foundational crisis (*Grundlagenkrisis*), as Scholz puts it, occurred: Scholz's institute (*Seminar*) at the *Domplatz* in Münster was destroyed during a bombing raid. Less than three weeks after the event Scholz reports to Max Bense:¹⁷

Münster i./W., 28-10-1943
currently Ev. Hospital

My dear Doctor, several things have collapsed here. First, on bomb Sunday, our workshop, the result of 15 years of construction work. The most astonishing heavenly miracle would have to occur, or else I will *not* never [sic] live to see its reconstruction, if things ever develop in such a way at all that a reconstruction can even be considered. What remained had to be evacuated entirely, at the risk of our lives, under severe losses – first and foremost, our machine,¹⁸ specialized in years of work. The air-raid shelter with the most valuable things, above all the Frege manuscripts, has indeed collapsed to such an extent that it is impossible to say to this day whether anything at all is salvaged or not.

Then I myself followed suit. I have been lying in the hospital for 10 days now, with a most fatal jaundice, which presumably should have been reported eight days earlier; but I could not forsake the rescue work.

In spite of Scholz's pessimism, the Frege archive was apparently retrieved later. But concerns about the safety of the material led Scholz to deposit the Frege *Nachlass* in the university library for safekeeping. According to Alfred Frege's declaration quoted above, he would have been required to do so sooner or later anyway, and further, he did not have at his disposal a suitable location for storing the material, his institute (*Seminar*) having been physically destroyed. We know from several of Scholz's letters that the Frege archive was indeed handed over to the library. The most explicit document in this regard is a petition¹⁹ to the association of sponsors of Münster university (*Förderergesellschaft*) dated 13 March 1947, part of which reads:

The entire original material, which after a first foundational crisis was handed over to the university library for safekeeping in October 1943, must be regarded as lost. After months of efforts, I was told so by the current director of the university library some weeks ago.

This document already touches upon the crucial question: Was the Frege archive in fact destroyed during the war?

5. Destruction? – A new source

Heinrich Scholz was informed about the alleged destruction of the Frege *Nachlass* by the then director of the UB Münster, Dr. Christoph Weber. The pertinent correspondence – if ever there was one²⁰ – could unfortunately be found neither in the university library nor in the Institut für Mathematische Logik Grundlagenforschung (IMLG). The reports of Frege's editors concerning the history of the *Nachlass*²¹ (and in particular, the dating of the alleged destruction to 25 March 1945) are therefore based upon a letter²² dated 15 February 1961 from the director of the UB, Dr. Bauhuis, which was in reply to an inquiry by Hans Hermes:

As no-one here knew anything about the *Nachlass* of the well-known logistician [*Logistiker*] Gottlob Frege,²³ I have had information requested from the former head of the manuscript department, Herr Erster Bibliotheksrat [a rank in the German librarians' hierarchy] emeritus Dr. Heinrich Jansen. His news is devastating, for everything was destroyed in the war.

In detail, the letter from Herr Dr. Jansen contains the following information: Frege's *Nachlass* was deposited in the UB by Prof. Scholz at the beginning of World War II, around 1941. Together with most manuscripts of the UB, it burnt during the bombardment of the UB on Palm Sunday, 25 March 1945. This was communicated to Prof. Scholz after the war.

As far as we know, this is the only source known to the Frege editors that actually mentions a date for the destruction of the *Nachlass*.²⁴ It seemed the more important to us to be able to evaluate Jansen's letter ourselves. After the university library had initially informed us that this letter was no longer extant ("nicht mehr vorhanden"),²⁵ our own investigations into Jansen's *Nachlass* gave rise to clues that eventually led to the discovery of this document in the library's manuscript department. We quote (most of) this letter, dated 2 February 1961 and addressed to the then head of the manuscript department, Dr. Steffens, at length.²⁶

In reply to your written inquiry of 30 January of this year, I am happy to inform you of the following – what I still remember about the *Nachlass* of the logistician [*Logistiker*] Gottlob Frege:

1.) His *Nachlass* was neither edited nor catalogued by me as head of the manuscript department, aside from the fact that I have no knowledge of logistic [*Logistik*], though I do know all that is necessary about logic. [A similarly apologetic remark concerning Jansen's lack of competence in logistic can also be found in the passage omitted below.]

2.) Frege's *Nachlass* was deposited in the UB by the local logistician Prof. Heinrich Scholz – died December 1956 – at the beginning of World War II, around 1941.

3.) This happened due to the incipient heavy hostile bombardment of Münster, because Prof. Scholz, rightly so, no longer considered the Frege-*Nachlass* sufficiently safe in his residence, at the time in Melchersstrasse.

4.) Prof. Scholz neither donated nor sold the Frege-*Nachlass* to the UB.

5.) He had no right to do so, legally and lawfully.

6.) For the Frege-*Nachlass* had only been entrusted to Prof. Scholz for the purposes of use, processing, and possible publication, just as to his logistic successor to the local chair of logic, Prof. Hermes, who, for instance, published jointly with Prof. Scholz an article on Frege as early as 1937, titled "Ein neuer Vollständigkeitsbeweis für das reduzierte Fregesche Axiomensystem des Aussagenkalküls [A new completeness proof for the reduced Fregean axiom system for propositional logic]".

7.) The owner of the Frege-*Nachlass* was, if I remember correctly, his heir or heirs, living in Southern Germany at the time, who was related to Frege, but not employed at a university, and who had reserved the right to have the *Nachlass* returned to him from the unmarried Prof. Scholz. I came to know this at the time from a member of the UB, I longer [sic] know who, as I was acquainted with Prof. Scholz only by sight and, for various reasons, never maintained personal relations with him. [. . .]²⁷

8.) The Frege-*Nachlass* was stored in several black cardboard boxes, similar to the cardboard boxes I made ca. 1933 for the UB's manuscript collections, as they are in use intact to this day in your office, because they were brought to a safe place outside around 1943, and could also be retrieved intact to the UB in Autumn 1946.

9.) The Frege-*Nachlass* was stored in the said cardboard boxes in the then manuscript room of the UB.

10.) As it was not evacuated, unfortunately, along with the UB's manuscript collections, it burnt entirely, together with most of the UB's manuscripts, during the total bombardment of the UB on Palm Sunday, 25 March 1945.

11.) Around 1946, Prof. Scholz several times inquired of the UB after the Frege-*Nachlass*. I let him know myself and through Director Dr. Weber that the *Nachlass* was burnt entirely on 25 March 1945 due to enemy bombardment.

This much as far as I remember.

A number of comments on this letter are in order.

In paragraph 2, Jansen suggests a date for the transfer of the *Nachlass* to the UB that differs substantially from Scholz's account. According to Scholz, this event occurred "after a first foundational crisis [*Grundlagenkrisis*] in October 1943", but, according to Jansen, "at the beginning of World War II, around 1941". As Scholz's petition,²⁸ from which this information is taken, dates from 1947, and was thus written only a few years after the event in question, whereas Jansen, in 1961, reports from memory, it is reasonable to assume that Scholz's statement is more reliable. This raises some doubts concerning the credibility of Heinrich Jansen as a source.²⁹

There is no evidence that Scholz ever kept the Frege *Nachlass* in his home, as Jansen suggests in paragraph 3; if at all, this may have been the case in the brief period between its recovery from the air raid shelter (after 28-10-1943) and its transfer to the university library.

It is hard to make sense of Jansen's paragraph 6, for it hardly seems possible that the *Nachlass* was entrusted to Hans Hermes as Scholz's successor. In 1935, Hermes was not yet Scholz's successor, and when Hermes finally succeeded Scholz (in 1952), the *Nachlass* supposedly did not exist anymore. Incidentally, the publication that Jansen mentions is obviously not on Frege (Jansen's remark thus being, perhaps, an indication of his ignorance of logistic).

As far as we know, there is no evidence that Alfred Frege ever lived in southern Germany, as Jansen suggests in paragraph 7; only Braunschweig and Berlin are known to have been cities of residence of Alfred's.³⁰ Thus Jansen's remark is either untrue or reveals a hitherto unknown biographical fact about Alfred Frege. More interesting, perhaps, is Jansen's remark, in the same paragraph, that Scholz was unmarried. As a matter of fact, Scholz had been married to his second wife, Erna, since 1928; so Jansen's claim is simply false.

It is curious that Jansen does not provide one word of explanation, in paragraphs 8 and 10, for the alleged fact that the Frege-*Nachlass*, of all things, had not been evacuated. This is also remarkable in that the university library claimed, when we began our investigations in 1996, that not a single *Nachlass* had been lost due to the war.

Finally, paragraph 11 makes it clear that Jansen is indeed the sole source of the information (including the dating) of the destruction of the *Nachlass*. Even the information that Scholz received from the library's director, to which he refers in the petition quoted above, goes back to Jansen.

The internal curiosities of Jansen's letter, however, are matched by the external circumstances. At least from early November 1944 until presumably 15 March 1945, Jansen was off duty due to illness, and in fact not even physically present in Münster over extended periods of time. This can be inferred from two documents in Jansen's own *Nachlass* (in the possession of the UB Münster), which we quote in part below.³¹

First, a letter from the library's director at the time, Dr. Kindervater, to Jansen, dated 30 November 1944:

Your letter of 8 Nov. reached me on the 28th (!). (. . .) By now you will have been released from hospital, if you are not in need of care again already. As I heard from Dr. Kreyenborg, you were in Münster some 14 days ago and were knocked over and injured by a car.

On this letter there is a handwritten note by Jansen himself, reproducing the wording of a medical report of 8 December 1944: "Medical report said: Herr Bibl.-Rat Dr. Jansen, Münster i.W., still needs several weeks of recovery (nervous fatigue, heart trouble)".

Second, Kindervater wrote a letter to Jansen on 20 February 1945, which begins as follows:

Dear colleague Jansen.

I returned Sunday (18-2) morning around 1.30 from a three-week stay in Salzuflen³² and found your charming letter of 28-1, which I have so far been unable to reply to, as permanent alarms render any kind of activity impossible. Your letter of 16-2 arrived here after surprisingly little time on 19-2. Many thanks for both letters.

It was the fact of your ever progressing recovery that pleased me most. Should you be fit for work by the beginning of March, you could travel directly to Salzuflen. However, you would have to sleep in a room that cannot be heated. Therefore, it seems preferable to me that you should treat yourself to sick leave until 15-3, and start your journey then. (. . .)

In order to secure permission to travel by the Reichsbahn [the nationalized German railway company], I will send you an authorization by the curator [roughly, the university's chancellor], as soon as you have informed me of your place of residence after your release from hospital.

So Jansen was off duty between November 1944 and mid-March 1945; in particular, he did not participate in the UB's migration from Münster to Salzuflen, in the course of which a substantial part of the library's holdings was evacuated (over and above the earlier evacuations that began around 1942). What is more, it is almost certain that on the day of the notorious air raid, 25 March 1945, Jansen was not an eye witness, because he was living and working in Salzuflen by that time. Jansen mentions none of these facts in his letter of 2 February 1961, even though it seems clear that he could not possibly know for sure what happened to the Frege-*Nachlass* during the almost five months of his sick leave, and could not possibly have detailed

knowledge of the damages and results of possible emergency measures during the air raid.

Given all this, it seems reasonable to consider the destruction of Frege's *Nachlass* a mere hypothesis rather than an established and well-confirmed fact. In fact, alternative scenarios are conceivable that have a certain degree of plausibility.

6. An hypothesis

We would like to mention a scenario that was developed in the course of our investigations, even though it can, at this time, be neither decisively proved nor refuted. Its main advantage is the explanation it offers of the substantial divergence between Scholz and Jansen in the dating of the transfer of the *Nachlass* to the UB.

The starting point for this scenario is the observation that Scholz's own formulations, when writing about transferring the material to the library, are only in retrospect unequivocally about Frege's *original Nachlass*. Indeed, it seems at least possible that Scholz speaks instead about the typewritten copies, as well as the editorial annotations and introductions, that were produced for the envisaged Frege edition. In what follows, we shall quote Scholz's pertinent letters and comment on them.

First, the petition³³ to the *Förderergesellschaft* that was already quoted above, now in its wider context (emphases added by us):

After years of labour I succeeded not only in gathering together the often almost inaccessible building blocks of his [i.e. Frege's] writing in gapless completeness, but also in rescuing Frege's whole scholarly *Nachlass* for us. An edition of his "short writings", including the scholarly *Nachlass*, has been ready for years. The Notgemeinschaft der deutschen Wissenschaft [a.k.a. DFG] has made *this work* possible by providing the requisite funding. *The impending edition* was obstructed by the outbreak of the war. *It* was intended to comprise two volumes of 300 pages each.

The work that had been done was hit most severely by the wartime bombing. *The entire original material*, which after a first foundational crisis in October 1943 has been handed over to the university library for safekeeping, must be regarded as lost. After months of efforts, I was informed of this several weeks ago by the current director of the university library. Only *the carbon copies* still exist, which I have kept with my own papers. They have been rescued together with these papers.

If one reads this text with the conviction that the original *Nachlass* was destroyed, it is more than natural to suppose that Scholz speaks about just

this material. But literally, Scholz mentions only the results of his former editorial project: the “edition of his ‘short writings’”, “this work”, “the impending edition”, “the work that had been done”, “the carbon copies”. At most the phrase, “original material”, seems to refer to the original *Nachlass*; but this interpretation does not seem viable, as Scholz subsequently refers back to the “original material” in mentioning the “carbon copies” and there obviously were no carbon copies of *Frege's original* writing.

The next source, somewhat more problematic for our tentative interpretation, is a petition by Scholz to the rector of Münster University, dated 23 May 1947 (italics added by us):³⁴

I have to edit *the “short writings”* of Gottlob Frege, including the extensive scholarly *Nachlass* (that I have discovered) of this groundbreaking German master of mathematical foundational research, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his death [should read: birth] in July of next year. This task had been supported, until the outbreak of the war, by the Notgemeinschaft der deutschen Wissenschaft [a.k.a. DFG]. The *material, spread over three volumes of roughly 300 pages each*, existed at the outbreak of the war completely in *carefully prepared copies*. The *edition* was obstructed by the outbreak of the war. I handed over *the precious material*, except for a sequence of *carbon copies* [,] together with the *originals* to the university library for safekeeping.³⁵ It nevertheless perished completely.

Only in the penultimate sentence does Scholz seem to refer to the manuscripts from Frege's own hand by the phrase “with the originals”. It is conceivable, if not particularly plausible, that Scholz here means *carbon copies* of the *originals*, so that “originals” would in fact pertain here, too, to the material typewritten by Scholz's collaborators. Another reading that does not appear especially plausible would parse the penultimate sentence as follows: “I handed over the precious material – except for a sequence of carbon copies together with the originals – to the university library for safekeeping”, which would mean that Frege's originals were never deposited in the university library in the first place. The most natural interpretation appears to be that Scholz did indeed deposit both Frege's originals and his own typewritten copies in the library; whether these two batches of documents were given to the library at the same time is not entirely clear from Scholz's formulation (more about this shortly). It may finally be remarked that, strictly speaking, the anaphoric pronoun “it” in the last sentence refers back only to “the precious material”, which presumably excludes the originals – so that, under a very literal reading, the text does not say anything about the destruction of Frege's originals at all.

Our next source is a letter³⁶ from Scholz to Bertrand Russell, dated 24 May 1947 (again, italics added by us):

A misfortune, in which you will sympathize with me, has befallen us with *our work* on Frege. *The edition of his short writings*, including the entire *Nachlass*, which I had prepared over several years, was prevented by the outbreak of the war. I handed *the precious material* over to our university library for safekeeping. *It burnt* without any remains.

It seems quite clear that, in this passage, Scholz speaks exclusively about the manuscripts that he (or rather, his collaborators) had prepared; in particular, he claims only that his editorial material was destroyed, but does not, under any natural reading, mention Frege's originals.

Let us finally quote from a letter³⁷ that Scholz sent to Max Bense on 22 June 1948 (italics again added by us):

Frege's entire *handwritten Nachlass* has perished here in an irreparable way, although I have not failed to undertake anything that could have served to retrieve it in such a way as to conserve it for us. Together with *the invaluable originals*, the *originals of all copies* have also been lost. With utmost efforts I have been able to finally compile an almost *complete carbon copy of these copies*. But all the *preparatory work* that I had undertaken *for the edition* has perished.

This passage shows that Scholz does indeed use the term "original" for both Frege's originals and the original typescripts prepared by the Münster group. But it also becomes clear that Scholz takes both Frege's and his own originals to have been destroyed. Let us record, in any case, that Scholz clearly distinguishes the Frege originals from the Scholz originals, even if he discusses the loss of both at the same time.

The sources quoted support the notion that Scholz's Frege archive consisted of two batches of material that were at least conceptually kept apart, namely, Frege's originals on the one hand, and Scholz's group's typescripts for the Frege edition on the other. We believe that it is not unreasonable to assume that these two batches were deposited in the university library *at different times*. This would explain the substantial divergence between Scholz and Jansen in dating the transfer of the *Nachlass* (1943 vs. 1941) without having to discount Jansen's information entirely. Indeed, it is not clear what should have prevented Scholz from handing Frege's originals over to the library as early as 1941. After all, by this time all the typewritten copies for the envisaged edition had been made and Scholz had an obligation to Alfred Frege to eventually deposit this material in the university library. If this is the case, then it seems entirely possible that Frege's original *Nachlass* became subject to the large scale evacuations carried out by the Münster university library from 1942 onward, and actually survived the war intact. According to this line of thought, Scholz would have deposited his own

typescripts in the library after the “foundational crisis” of 1943 because he believed them to be safe there, so that he would be able to take up the edition plans again at a later date. And it would only have been natural for Scholz to assume that the two batches of Frege related documents that he handed over to the library (if at different times) should have been kept together by the librarians, which in turn makes it natural for him to interpret the information supplied by Jansen and library director Weber as implying the destruction of the entire material. If, however, the Frege originals had indeed been evacuated, the probability that the two batches were kept in the same place is rather low. So even if Jansen’s claim that the Frege material was destroyed is correct, this would under the present hypothesis only pertain to one of the two batches, presumably to Scholz’s typescripts, and hence the fate of the other batch would still be unsettled.³⁸ Admittedly, this hypothesis presupposes an astonishing degree of confusion on the part of Heinrich Jansen, as well as an amazing lack of tenacity on the part of Heinrich Scholz; on the other hand, it explains the divergence between Scholz and Jansen in the dating of the transfer of the *Nachlass* reasonably well.

7. Conclusion

The results of our almost criminological research over a period of two years which are reported here do not allow any unequivocal conclusion concerning the actual fate of Frege’s *Nachlass*. We believe that we have made it plausible that the received story of the destruction of the *Nachlass* during World War II lacks an unquestionable foundation. As we have as yet no new starting points for further investigations, so that our own quest for Frege’s *Nachlass* has come to a (temporary?) halt, we would like to express our hope that Frege scholars will keep the possibility in mind that the *Nachlass* might still be discovered some day. Indeed, we take Frege’s own words, addressed to his son, Alfred, to constitute an obligation for all of us: “See to it that nothing gets lost”.³⁹

Acknowledgement

The results reported here were obtained during the course of a research project, funded by the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (DFG), concerning the academic estate [*wissenschaftlicher Nachlass*] of Heinrich Scholz. It was carried out at the *Institut für Mathematische Logik und Grundlagenforschung* of Münster University (“IMLG” for short), under the supervision of Professors Justus Diller and Wolfram Pohlers. We would like to express our thanks to the *Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek* Münster, specifically to its director, Dr. Roswitha Poll, and to the supervisor of the manuscript department, Ms. Irmgard Kießling, for their support of our investigations.

Notes

- 1 A photographic copy of this document is contained in the Frege archive of the IMLG. The fate of the original is unknown.
- 2 Frege *NS*, p. XXXIV.
- 3 See Hermes *et al.* 1969, p. XXXVI, as well as Veraart 1976, p. 69.
- 4 See Frege *NS* and *WB*.
- 5 Consider, for instance, the *Nachlass* item N47, in which, according to Scholz, Frege attempted to provide a foundation for arithmetic without using extensions of concepts, or the correspondence with Löwenheim, totalling 20 letters, in which the possibility of a formal arithmetic was discussed. Cf. Veraart 1976, p. 95, as well as Frege *WB*, pp. 157–61. On the significance of the lost material, see also Hill 1995.
- 6 Concerning Alfred Frege, see Kreiser 1997.
- 7 A typewritten copy of this note, made by Scholz, can be found in the files of the DFG at the *Bundesarchiv* (federal archive) in Koblenz, Germany, under the call number R73/11094. The fate of the original is unknown. Scholz indicates that the note is dated 26 July 1935; it is thus reasonable to believe that this is the declaration mentioned in Scholz and Bachmann 1936, p. 25. Cf. also Veraart 1976, p. 63n.
- 8 The original of this letter is in the Frege archive of the IMLG. Cf. also Veraart 1976, p. 69n.
- 9 Scholz and Bachmann 1936, p. 25. For details on the acquisition of such letters, see Veraart 1976.
- 10 The proposal (in the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, call number R73/11094 – DFG) specifies that, for budgetary reasons, two volumes were to be published in a first round, to be completed, if possible, by a later supplementary volume. This clears up the contradictory remarks by Scholz concerning the edition noted by Veraart 1976, p. 68.
- 11 See Scholz's proposal to the DFG, dated 21 March 1936 (cf. note 10).
- 12 Scholz's letter to Dr. Wildhagen (R73/11094, Bundesarchiv Koblenz) at the DFG literally reads: "Ich habe zunächst den ganzen wissenschaftlichen Briefwechsel Freges durch Herrn Dr. Schweitzer abschreiben lassen" ["To begin with, I have had Frege's entire academic correspondence copied by Dr. Schweitzer"].
- 13 Private communication from Dr. Hermann Schweitzer in telephone conversation with the first author, 4 June 1998.
- 14 In a letter to the DFG dated 14 December 1936 (R73/11094, Bundesarchiv Koblenz), Scholz announces a printable manuscript for 1 April 1937; on 27 March 1937 he writes to the DFG (R73/11094) that a printable manuscript would be presented in the first half of July. On 28 June 1938 Scholz announces (letter to the DFG, R73/11094) that the work on Frege would be completed in the autumn. No further evidence of the Frege project is contained in the DFG files. Cf. also the postscript to Scholz and Bachmann 1936, p. 30.
- 15 The DFG wrote to Scholz on 9 April 1937 (R73/11094) that a final financial report was expected by 31 July 1937; but none is to be found in the files at Koblenz. On 24 December 1937 Scholz announces a report concerning the state of the Frege work for a date immediately after Christmas, which also could not be found in the DFG files.
- 16 The note is stored in the Frege archive of the IMLG. Nothing is known about the events of 19 January 1943.
- 17 A photocopy of this letter is archived in Scholz's *Nachlass* at the IMLG. The fate of the original is unknown.

- 18 The machine referred to here was a typewriter modified in such a way as to allow simultaneous typing of all ordinary characters as well as all logical symbols. (Note added by authors.)
- 19 A carbon copy of this petition is stored in the Frege archive at the IMLG. Cf. also Veraart 1976, pp. 69 and 71.
- 20 Positive evidence is provided by an entry in Scholz's mail diary of 12 December 1946, recording a letter to "BibDir [*Bibliotheksdirektor*, i.e. library director] Weber" with the subject "Frege-Nachlaß". The university library informed us in writing on 27 March 1997 that no such letter, nor a copy of a reply, could be found there.
- 21 That is, Hermes *et al.* 1969, and Veraart 1976.
- 22 This letter is stored in the Frege archive of the IMLG.
- 23 This had, incidentally, not changed some 35 years later, when we began our research in the university library.
- 24 If that is so, the formulation in Hermes *et al.* 1969, p. XXXVI, according to which Jansen's communication *confirmed* the date of the destruction, must be regarded as slightly misleading.
- 25 Thus the head of the manuscript department, Dr. Haller, in a letter to us dated 27 March 1997.
- 26 Quotation with kind permission granted by the university library on 1 January 1999.
- 27 At the request of the university library (letter dated 20 January 1999), the passage that follows in the original, comprising almost one page, is omitted here, because Jansen there expresses "subjective [*subjektiv*]" and "somewhat irresponsible [*etwas leichtfertig*]" opinions concerning the person Heinrich Scholz.
- 28 Cf. n. 19.
- 29 However, another interpretation also seems viable. See section 6.
- 30 Cf. Kreiser 1997, pp. 68 and 83. Alfred's declaration of 26-7-1935, quoted above, reveals two further addresses of his (in addition to those that Kreiser gives); it lists the address "Berlin-Charlottenburg, Eosanderstr. 2 – jetzt [now] Braunschweig, Leonhardstr. 2". The address mentioned in Scholz and Bachmann 1936, p. 24, *viz.* "Braunschweig, Bruchtorwall 14" is confirmed by a further declaration by Alfred's dated 20-3-1936, a copy of which (certified by Scholz) can be found at the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, call number R73/11094 (DFG).
- 31 Quoted with kind permission granted by the UB Münster on 20 January 1999.
- 32 During the winter semester of 1944/45, the library, the university's administration and the medical school were transferred to Salzuflen, approximately 70 miles from Münster.
- 33 Cf. n. 19.
- 34 A carbon copy of this petition is stored in the Frege archive of the IMLG.
- 35 In the original German, this sentence reads: "Ich habe das kostbare Material bis auf eine Folge von Durchschlägen mit den Originalen der Universitätsbibliothek zur Sicherstellung übergeben."
- 36 A carbon copy of this letter can be found in the Scholz archive at the IMLG.
- 37 The Scholz *Nachlass* at the IMLG contains a photocopy of this letter; the fate of the original is unknown.
- 38 It has as yet been impossible to confirm or refute our conjecture that the original *Nachlass* might still be in the Münster university library, unbeknownst to the librarians. To be sure, the library staff have devoted considerable attention to this idea and the first author has, together with Ms. Kießling, the supervisor of the manuscript department, sampled the library's manuscript storeroom for two afternoons in September 1997, but to no avail. It is worth recalling that a lack of evidence is not exactly the same thing as a refutation. In this vein, it may be of

interest to note that the university library informed us in a letter dated 27 March 1997 that no documents containing any information about the *Nachlass* of Ernst Schröder existed in the library. A cursory inspection of the accession diaries of the university library by the authors revealed, quite to the contrary, that Schröder's *Nachlass* is catalogued as an acquisition by the library in February/March 1939.

39 A number of individuals have strongly supported our research, provided valuable hints and answered many questions with great patience. Special thanks are due to Hermann Schweitzer, Robert Giesler (university archive Münster), Michael Dummett, Gisbert Hasenjaeger and the Frege editors, Gottfried Gabriel, Friedrich Kambartel, Christian Thiel and Heinz-Albert Veraart. Finally, we are grateful to Michael Beaney and Erich Reck for inviting us to publish this English translation of our original German paper in the present volume.

References

- Frege, Gottlob (1969) *Nachgelassene Schriften*, Hans Hermes, Friedrich Kambartel and Friedrich Kaulbach (eds), Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 2nd edn 1983. *NS*
- (1976) *Wissenschaftlicher Briefwechsel*, Gottfried Gabriel, Hans Hermes, Friedrich Kambartel, Christian Thiel and Albert Veraart (eds), Hamburg: Felix Meiner. *WB*
- Hermes, Hans, Kambartel Friedrich, and Kaulbach, Friedrich (1969) 'Geschichte des Frege-Nachlasses und Grundsätze für seine Edition', in Frege *NS*, pp. XXXIV–XLI.
- Hill, Claire Ortiz (1995) 'Frege's Letters', in Jaakko Hintikka (ed.), *From Dedekind to Gödel*, Dordrecht: Kluwer, pp. 97–118.
- Kreiser, Lothar (1997) 'Alfred', in Gottfried Gabriel and Wolfgang Kienzler (eds), *Frege in Jena: Beiträge zur Spurensicherung*, Würzburg: Königshausen and Neumann, pp. 68–83.
- Scholz, Heinrich and Friedrich Bachmann (1936) 'Der wissenschaftliche Nachlaß von Gottlob Frege', in *Actes du Congrès International de Philosophie Scientifique VIII (Sorbonne – Paris 1935): Histoire de la Logique et de la Philosophie Scientifique*, Paris, pp. 24–30.
- Veraart, Albert (1976) 'Geschichte des wissenschaftlichen Nachlasses Gottlob Freges und seiner Edition', in Matthias Schirn (ed.) *Studien zu Frege I*, Stuttgart – Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, pp. 49–106.