



Letter from Max Bredig to Georg Bredig, February 14, 1938

Bredig, Max Albert. "Letter from Max Bredig to Georg Bredig, February 14, 1938," February 14, 1938. Papers of Georg and Max Bredig, Box 1, Folder 22. Science History Institute. Philadelphia.

<https://digital.sciencehistory.org/works/3d74x8l>.

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Translated by Jocelyn R. McDaniel

English Translation

Image 1

Ann Arbor, Michigan, February 14, 1938

1517 Montclair Street

Dear Father,

Thank you very much for your letter, #54, announcing the second shipment of household goods. Many thanks as well for the Materials Handbook, which I guess I hadn't acknowledged receiving (I can see now that I already have). Likewise, I am gratefully confirming receiving of \$3,571 from the proceeds of my emigrant blocked account and the sale of the French stocks. I have already received news from Amexco in Berlin and Hamburg about the departure of the second shipment.

I can only write very briefly again today because I am more in demand. I have already received the first two rejection letters "at this time of bad business" from Dupont and Carborundum Company. Of course, it is still possible that they will reconsider my "application", which they will keep on "file" when they are eventually in a better position to

hire. Up next is the Tennessee Valley Authority, which sent me its personal history record form today at the instigation of Professor A.H. White. Helfmann also encouraged me to contact the Westinghouse Electric Company, which advertised 10 scholarships for postdoctoral work. In the latter case, I am only writing for H.'s sake. My seminar lecture is still imminent! I also wrote a polite letter to Albert R.F., which Fajans helped me a lot with. He now does this often. He is a brilliant diplomat and rightly reprimanded my awkwardness. I hope to learn a lot from him!

The weather here is very crazy, but quite bearable. The severe cold and snow disturbances were limited to northern Michigan. Until about 2-3 weeks ago, we had the most pleasant winter here that I have ever experienced. It was almost never above zero degrees Celsius and rarely very cold. There was little wind and a lot of sun at the same time. Like a real winter, there was also snow and ice and rarely mud. However, there are now enormous fluctuations. The day before yesterday, we had the heaviest thunderstorms during the night. During the day, sweltering temperatures ranged between 18-20° Celsius. It's below zero again today! Yet, I think I've gotten used to these fluctuations. I hope the same for the summer. Everyone is complaining a lot about it! The best remedy is hard work, and for the time being, there is plenty of it. I am now sharing my work on chrome steel with two graduate students, who are going to write their Master's theses on it. Two men are required just to record the heating and cooling curves. These measurements are quite tiring because they last for hours, but they will only last for a few weeks. I certainly learn a lot from it, but whether the university gets its money's worth is another question! Moreover, the metallurgists, who are very limited in their expertise, are not very kind either. The chemists are more human! However, that is not very important at the moment.

Image 2

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Once a week, I'm always invited somewhere with nice people, most recently with Lore M. at the home of Erich's old acquaintance. A member of the large Karlsruhe Fuchs family, originally from Strasbourg, was also there. I think her parents were the Homburger's neighbors on Beethoven Strasse. I will visit her in Detroit.

Yesterday, I wrote to the consulate in Cleveland about my residence certificate.

Tomorrow, Ipatieff is speaking here at the Chemical Society. Fajans wants to do everything he can to arrange a conversation between me and Ipatieff. Unfortunately, the best relationships are probably useless right now. Hans Dannenberg wrote to me from San Francisco that McBain remembers you fondly. Would it perhaps be proper for you to write

him a letter first, and then I could write him my own? I don't think it's suitable to write to White, Thomassen or Helfmann. I understand very clearly that I owe my favoritism in many affairs to the privilege of being your son! However, I shouldn't always emphasize that too much, because otherwise it comes down to the fact that I'm just your son! Moreover, you wouldn't personally want that! I mentioned it once in my letters of application and then left it out at other times because I still haven't figured out the psychology of Americans in this respect, which is different than in Germany, where I would of course emphasize it!

Today, I received a paper on the lead accumulator from Cohen's student. Did you encourage him to send this? I am not working here on the subject initially envisaged. I don't think Thomassen has published anything about it yet.

This letter turned out to be longer than I thought it would be, and I must postpone my application letters until tomorrow. Warm regards to all of you for today.

Max

In the near future, maybe I'll ask you to send me the Ullmann volume and the encyclopedia if you don't want to continue using them! Apparently, you need something like these here! However, it is by no means urgent!

*/in the future, I will probably always mention it. It probably just depends on the important form.