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 **An extraordinary mother and daughter, saved alive: the German refugee classicists Eva Lehmann Fiesel (1891-1937) and Ruth Erika Fiesel (1921-1994)**

 **Cf. Judith P. Hallett, “The endeavours and exempla of the German refugee classicists Eva Lehmann Fiesel and Ruth Fiesel,” *Antike Erzaehl-und Deutungmuster: Zwischen Exemplaritaet und Transformation. Festschrift Fuer Christiane Reitz zum 65. Geburtstag*, eds. Simone Finkmann, Anja Behrendt und Anke Walter. Berlin: De Gruyter (2018) 655-693**

**Part I: “Saving alive the leading scholar of the world in her line”**

**1. Letter written, presumably in 1936, by Franklin Edgerton (1885-1963), Salisbury Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology at Yale University. No addressee is given:**

“Do you know any people who might be interested in helping to save alive a woman who is, in the opinion of competent judges, the leading scholar of the world in her line—and who would have been assured of an honorable scholarly career in Germany if it had not been for the Nazi revolution, and for the fact that one of her ancestors was a Jew?

I shall try to state the facts briefly. Dr. Eva Fiesel is the name. She is about forty years old [*sic*]; has a daughter of fifteen, dependent on her and living with her (husband has long since vanished from the scene, whether by death or separation I don’t know—she never speaks of him).[[1]](#endnote-1) She is a specialist in Etruscan, and had a position in the University of Munich. Her work is recognized over the world. The Rockefeller Foundation granted her a subsidy for a couple of years. For the last two years she has lived on a Research Fellowship given by the Department of Linguistics at Yale. During this period I have got to know her very well (her office is next to mine); and I can positively state of my own definite knowledge that she is a person of very unusual intellectual gifts, and very interesting personality. (Incidentally her political views would be in general sympathetic to you—not that this has any bearing on the situation. She has never taken an active part in politics, and was dismissed by the Hitler government solely because of the Jewish ancestor).

We can’t do anything further for her at Yale, we had to fight hard to get the grant renewed this year. As you know, there are not many places in the country where a woman scholar could hope to get placed. The Rockefeller Foundation is still benevolent to the extent of being willing to make a grant of her salary for two years to any reputable college or university which will harbor her—provided (here is the hitch) that such institution would give virtual assurance that they would then (if her work was satisfactory) give her a permanent place. Bryn Mawr College seemed the predestined place; and we thought until recently that it would be possible to get her in there. There is no doubt of their interest in her. Miss Swindler is very enthusiastic about her and very eager to get her. [Bryn Mawr] President Park also has shown a very favorable attitude. I saw a copy of a letter from Miss Park to the Rockefeller Board, in which she most definitely assured them that Bryn Mawr wished very much to get Mrs. Fiesel. But as to assurance for the future, all Miss Park felt she should say was that if any vacancy in the staff occurred (in the Department of Classics), they would be glad to give the place to Mrs. Fiesel. That didn't satisfy the R.F.: they felt it had to be more definite.

We have tried every other place we could think of, without success; no institution is wiling to give the required assurance, even to get her services free for two years. The fact that Etruscan is very little studied is, of course, also a hindrance: altho [sic] Mrs. Fiesel is thoroly [sic] competent to give work also in Greek, Latin or German.

 Now the only thing any of us can think of is to try the ‘feminist’ field. Here is a woman, unquestionably the leading scholar of the world in her line, threatened with extinction, scholarly if not personal. Bryn Mawr is ready to harbor her, and her salary for the next two years would be paid by the Rockefeller Board, I believe, with some help from a Committee for relief of German refugees. (at least if we act quickly enough—I can’t say how long this offer will remain open.”

[While Yale was under-employing Eva Fiesel as a research assistant to Professor Edgar Howard Sturtevant (1875-1952), New York University’s Institute of Fine Arts had awarded a full professorship to her younger brother Karl Lehmann-Hartleben (1894-1960) the year after she arrived, in 1935. Both of Eva’s and Karl’s parents, Karl Lehmann (1858-1918), Professor of Law and later Rektor at Rostock, and Henriette “Henni” Strassmann Lehmann (1862-1937), a writer and painter, came from Jewish families, although they had converted to Protestantism after their wedding in 1888.

 After the death of Eva’s father at the end of World War One, moreover, Henni Lehmann moved to Weimar, where she allied herself with the Jewish community in Germany: becoming a Social Democratic party activist, writing novels that advocated social change, and lecturing against anti-Semitism]

**2. Letter from Eduard Prokosch of the Yale Linguistics Department, to Bryn Mawr College President Marion Park, February 12, 1936**

“Permit me to lay before you a very difficult problem that has developed lately in our Linguistics Department. A year ago, cooperating with Mr. Stevens of the General Education Board, Yale University invited Dr. Eva Fiesel, formerly a docent at the University of Munich, to come here as a research assistant to continue her extremely valuable studies in Etruscan. Dr. Stevens had financed her research in Italy and at the British Museum before she came here, and here she received a grant of $2500 for the present academic year from the annual allotment for research that we are getting from the General Education Board. While this award was strictly for one year, we (by “we” I mean the Publication Committee of the William Dwight Whitney Linguistic Series, consisting of Sturtevant, Edgerton, Sapir and myself) had rather hoped that she could stay here at least for another year since Sturtevant, who is closest in touch with her work, is firmly convinced that she is quite close to making important discoveries in the field of Etruscology.

 But we have been definitely informed by the administration that a continuation of her appointment for next year is impossible. I shall not bore you by giving you, as I easily could, the details of the matter, but I assure you that this adverse decision does not in any way imply any criticism of Dr. Fiesel’s scholarship or personality. All of us understand that the administration in a very difficult budget situation is not only right in making such a decision, but undoubtedly compelled to do so. Therefore, our unanimous recommendation to retain her services contained an assurance of our eagerness to help her find a position elsewhere, if the administration’s stand could not be reversed.

 It is entirely certain that Dr. Fiesel knows and has published far more about Etruscan than any other living person. She possesses the most complete collection of Etruscan inscriptions in existence, partly inherited from her teacher Herbig, partly compiled by research of her own in Italy, in the British Museum, and in various American museums. There is indeed a strong probability that she may at last solve the riddle of the Etruscan language. In addition to that, she is a thoroughly trained Indo-European linguist and also has had very good training in the field of German literature as is shown by one of her first publications “Die Sprachphilolosophie der deutschen Romantiker”. During her stay in Munich she was closely associated with Fritz Strich, perhaps the most important man in history of German literature of this day (at present in Berne); she read for him the proofs for his important work Klassik und Romantik.

Dr. Fiesel looks entirely “Aryan”, to use the unpleasant jargon of present-day German politics. She is, however, on one side of her family “non-Aryan”, and this caused her dismissal from the faculty of the University of Munich. Unless it is possible to find for her a position in this country, I feel that she is in a very severe crisis indeed. Last Saturday I had a conversation with Mr. Murrow, Secretary of the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced German Scholars, which made it reasonably certain that for two years an adequate salary for her would be paid by his Committee if an American institutions applied for it, and our group is making every effort to find such an institution. I fully appreciate the compelling reasons why such an application cannot possibly come from Yale University and shall gladly send you complete information on that point, if you so desire. But I earnestly believe that a person of Dr. Fiesel’s splendid scholarship in Indo-European linguistics, in Etruscan linguistics and archaeology, and in German literature would be a very valuable assert for Bryn Mawr College. Will you kindly let me know whether you should find it possible to approach Mr. Murrow’s committee in this matter in an official way, or if local conditions do not make that seem expedient, can you possibly give me some aid in regard to some other institution?”

 **Also relevant is a letter of May 15, 1936 to Marian Park from Yale Linguistics Faculty E.H. Surtevant, Julian T. Oberman, Franklin Edgerton, Albrecht Goetze, Edward Sapir, E. Prokosch as well as G.L. Hendrickson (Classics), C.W. Mendell (Classics), A.M. Harmon (Classics)**

“We desire jointly to assure you of our interest in the plan to make Dr. Eva Fiesel a member of the faculty of Bryn Mawr College, and to assure you of our willingness to do everything in our power to make such action possible.

 For many years the problem of interpreting the Etruscan inscriptions has challenged the attention of linguists. Many dilettanti have attempted by improper methods to solve the “riddle”, and their widely advertised efforts have tended to bring the whole subject into disrepute. Meanwhile a great deal of sound and patient work has been done by a long line of scholars. Mrs. Fiesel is carrying on the latter tradition, and she is, in our opinion the best scholar now engaged in studying the Etruscan language. She has improved upon the method of her predecessors by paying increased attention to archaeology, chronology, and geography, and she has actually done the painstaking work of cataloguing and classifying the material which others also have felt to be necessary.

 For some years she has been at work on a book to be entitled “Materials for a Grammar of the Etruscan Language,” which we confidently expect to usher in a new epoch in Etruscan studies. Little now remains to be done on this work but the task of actual composition.

 To interrupt Dr. Fiesel’s career at this point would be a calamity to scholarship, On the other hand, to insure the continuance of it would give a great impetus to linguistic science in this country. It is peculiarly fitting that a woman who is the leader in her branch of scholarship should hold a professorship at Bryn Mawr.

 You are of course aware of Dr. Fiesel’s abilities as a teacher of linguistic science and of various literatures. We have not rehearsed these matters here, since we desire chiefly to explain our own point of view.

 Consequently we respectfully urge you to take what measures may be necessary to secure Dr. Fiesel’s services temporarily. We are confident that means can be found to make the appointment permanent, and we desire to cooperate with you as energetically as possible during the next two years, in order to assure Dr. Fiesel’s future as a scholar.

 Bryn Mawr College has one of the strongest—perhaps the strongest—department of archaeology in the United States, and it concentrates its attention largely upon Mediterranean archaeology. There is no longer any doubt that the early pre-Hellenic monuments of Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy show clear marks of relationship. Many such monuments are accompanied by inscriptions that are still uninterpreted or only partly interpreted, and a complete understanding of the monuments themselves is scarcely possible without an understanding of the inscriptions upon them.

 One of the most important of the early Mediterranean languages is Etruscan, in which are composed about nine thousand inscriptions. It is now certain that Etruscan is nearly identical with the pre-Hellenic language of Lemnos, and it is altogether likely that the relationships of the archaeological record will prove to be paralleled by linguistic relationships. In any case ability to read one or more of the old Mediterranean languages should bring a very dramatic addition to our knowledge of Mediterranean origins.

 Thanks to the labors of a long line of excellent scholars, of whom the most recent are Danielsson, Herbig, and Hammarstrom, many of the short Etruscan inscriptions can be read in large part, and the lines on which further study should proceed are clear. This sound and fruitful tradition is now being carried on chiefly by Dr. Eva Fiesel, a pupil of Herbig’s, who lectured on Etruscan at Munich until her dismissal (on account of Jewish ancestry) in 1933.

Dr. Fiesel’s most important publications are the following:

[four books, all in German; 10 articles, six in German, one in French, and three in English; fourteen articles in collaboration with archaeologists, two in German and two in English]…”

**Part II**: **“A very ordinary person lucky in her chosen career”**

**3. Baldwin School *Echos*, Fall 93, “1993 Alumnae Award Winner Ruth Fiesel ’38: A former Middle School director inspires a ‘life commitment for the greater good’**”

“A child refugee from Nazi Germany, she has transformed an early consciousness of the world into a life commitment for the greater good. By example, she challenges all to be the best that we can be

Speech excerpts: “The special gratitude that I feel in accepting this award is that I am representative of so many of the members of this community. I am a very ordinary person who has been lucky in her chosen career. When I suggested that I was fairly ordinary to a friend of mine, she wrote, ‘You are right. You haven’t written a best-seller, you haven’t been elected to high office or become a distinguished judge, you haven’t been the first woman to fly somewhere, to drive some place or even been the first woman goalie for a major hockey team. So what do I share with you.?...Baldwin’s story and your story and my story are part of all of our interdependence, and yet the uniqueness of all of stories can created insights and understanding and tolerance.

Before I left Germany, an adult friend took me shopping. It was April 1, 1933, and as we approached our favorite stores we were met by bayonetted soldiers saying ‘Do not enter this store; it is owned by Jews,” Frightening, yes to a 10-year old [sic], and filled with a sense of evil. Today when I encounter prejudice in myself (and I do) or in the world, those soldiers appear.

My first national election was in 1936. Alf Landon against Franklin Roosevelt. Baldwin numbered 400 Republicans, 20 Democrats and three young Communists. The night before the election we had a rally with cider and doughnuts and speeches.

I carried a sign saying: ‘Landon Knox [the name of the vice presidential candidate] but Roosevelt walks in.’ It was all glorious, and the next morning with an overwhelming Democratic victory, the Republicans all wore black arm bands to breakfast. I am still a democrat. I am still usually in the minority in my ward where I serve as minority inspector, and I have no respect for anyone who does not vote.”

For Hiddensee and the death of Henni Lehmann, see Lehmann, Henni Hiddensee <http://www.hiddensee-kultur.de/1880_lehm.php> ;Lehmann, Henni. Wikipedia <http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henni_Lehmann> ; and Strassmann, W. Paul. 2008. *The Strassmans: Science, Politics and Migration in Turbulent Times*. New York and London. Berghahn Books: 154.

**4. Ruth Fiesel, “What Forty-Five Years of Teaching Taught Me,” Baldwin School Bulletin (1986) 6:** “The Baldwin School, which stood by me during an incredible period of loneliness when I was a student in my junior and senior years…will always play a great part in my life.”

Cf. also Ruth Fiesel’s biography in, “It is Important to Me,” Undated Baldwin School publication from her years as head of the Middle School: “Ruth Fiesel entered the junior class at Baldwin when her mother, an eminent authority on the Etruscan language, came to Bryn Mawr College as a visiting professor of linguistics. After graduating from Baldwin, Ruth majored in Latin at Bryn Mawr College and for several years taught classics at the Bryn Mawr School in Baltimore. She did graduate work at Johns Hopkins University and was a Fulbright Fellow at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens. She has a master’s degree in education from Temple University. Prior to her appointment last summer as Director of the Middle School, Ruth was Chairman of the Language Department at Friends Central and acting Dean of Girls; she was also Director of the Summer Session.” [She says nothing about her mother’s death at the end of her junior year, nor her experience as a refugee from Nazi Germany]

**Part III: Gender and the “fortune” of Eva Lehmann Fiesel**

For a biography of Eva Lehmann Fiesel, see,for example, Haentzschel, Hiltrud. 1994. “Die Philologin Eva Fiesel (1891-1937): *Portraet einer Wissenschaftskarriere* in *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Schillergesellschaft* (1994)38: 339-363as well as “*Amerika gab ihr, was ihr ihr Heimatland immer verwehrt* *hatte*”. Die Philologin Eva Fiesel,” in Hiltrud Haentzschel and Hadumod Bussmann, eds., *Bedrohlich gescheit. Ein Jahrhundert Frauen und Wissenschaft in Bayern*. Munich(1994): 242-248.

**For women classics graduate students at Yale, see Judith P. Hallett, “Eli’s Daughters: Female Classics Graduate Students at Yale: 1892-1941,” in Rosie Wyles and Edith Hall, eds. *Women Classical Scholars. Unsealing the Fountain from the Renaissance to Jacqueline de Romilly*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (2016): 260-274.**

**5. Letter from Marion Park to Eduard Prokosch, March 8, 1936** reports that both the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced German Scholars and the Rockefeller Foundation ha already given Bryn Mawr a total of $4000 to pay the salary of another German-Jewish female refugee, the mathematician Emmy Noether, formerly of the University of Goettingen.

**6. Letter from Rhys Carpenter to Park, May 26, 1936:**

“As one of those most directly concerned, I should like to emphasize our interest in seeing Mrs. Fiesel added to the teaching staff here at Bryn Mawr.

Our instruction in Greek and Latin has never been in a position to emphasize sufficiently the common linguistic base of these languages nor to stress the philological equally with the literary, historical, and philosophical aspects. I have long felt that the equipment of our candidates for the PhD has been inadequate precisely through lack of instruction in comparative grammar and phonology—a phrase which the German universities have always stressed and demanded of their candidates. In the past it has been possible for occasional rare students at Bryn Mawr to add Sanskrit to their Greek and Latin by utilizing the facilities of the University of Pennsylvania; but I am not thinking so much of the unusual as of all our graduate students in classics when I say that Mrs. Fiesel would be able to remedy for us the only serious weakness in our graduate instruction in this field.

 Speaking also for the archaeological department, I wish to emphasize our very particular interest in Mrs. Fiesel. As you know, the three members of this department have been tending to specialize in the broader environment out of which the classical civilization was produced—Prf. Swindler through her pre-Hellenic and myself through my Homeric investigations. All our interests could be brought to a single focus in the Etruscan Problem—but this is not capable of rational solution without some comprehension of the Etruscan language. Mrs. Fiesel, as the leading Etruscan philologist of the world, could assist us here as no one else could.

 I trust that the foregoing account will have succeeded in showing that Mrs. Fiesel is not for us merely one more scholar in a world of scholars, but someone who would fit with singular appropriateness into Bryn Mwr conditions and would make us more than ever conscious of the outstanding place that a small college may strive to attain (and maintain) in American education.”

**7. Letter from Park to David H. Stevens, Director of the Humanities at the Rockefeller Foundation, May 30, 1936,** requesting “an invitation to Dr. Eva Fiesel for service at Bryn Mawr College.”

**8. Letter from Stevens to Park, June 3, 1936**, “This will report favorable action by the Rockefeller Foundation on the request stated in your letter of May 30 in regard to the proposed invitation to Dr. Eva Fiesel for service at Bryn Mawr College. The Foundation has had an interest in the work of Dr. Fiesel since 1932. During the past two years it has cooperated with Yale University in support of her research work in Etruscan. These eariier grants and the immediate assurance from Professor Sturtevant and his friends of such participation as may be necessary in the appointment of Dr. Fiesel for work at Bryn Mawr have led to a grant of $3,000 over the two-year period beginning approximately October 1, 1936, for the same purpose. The statements in your letter of May 30 were also taken into account in making a grant that is expected to result in permanent placement of this scholar, as was the intention of Professor Sturtevant to do what is possible in aiding the College in raising a permanent fund for endowment of her work….Copies to Prof. Sturtevant and Professor Whyte. P.S. I am enclosing the letters to you from Professor Carpenter and the members of the Department of Linguistics at Yale, which you left with me the day of your call. You will doubtless need these again.”

The letter from Carpenter reads: “ Bryn Mawr College has one of the strongest-perhaps the strongest-department [sic] of archaeology in the United Stats, and it concentrates its attention largely upon Mediterranean archaeology. There is no longer any doubt that the early (pre-Hellenic) monuments of Asia Minor, Greece and Italy show clear marks of relationship. Many such monuments are accompanied by inscriptions that are still uninterpreted or only partly interpreted, and a complete understanding of the monuments themselves is scarcely possible without an understanding of the inscriptions upon them.

 One of the most important of the early Mediterranean languages is Etruscan, in which are composed about nine thousand inscriptions. It is now certain that Etruscan is nearly identical with the pre-Hellenic language of Lemnos, and it is altogether likely that the relationships of the archaeological record will prove to be paralleled by linguistic relationships.. In any case ability to read one or more of the old Mediterranean languages should bring a very dramatic addition to our knowledge of Mediterranean origins.

 Thanks to the labors of a long line of excellent scholars, of whom the most recent are Danielsson, Herbig and Hammarstrom, many of the short Etruscan inscriptions can be read in large part, and the lines on which further study should proceed are very clear. This sound and fruitful tradition is now being carried on chiefly by Dr. Eva Fiesel, a pupil of Herbig’s, who lectures [sic] on Etruscan at Munich until her dismissal (on account of Jewish ancestry) in 1933. She has improved upon the method of her predecessors by paying constant attention to chronology, geography, and the monumental context of the inscriptions; in short, she has brought the study of the Etruscan language into its proper connection with archaeology. She has made a virtually complete collection of the linguistic material, including unpublished material in the Museums of Italy and America, and has classified it from the new points of view. For some years she has been at work on a book to be entitled “Materials for a Grammar of the Etruscan Language,” which may be expected to usher in a new epoch in Etruscan studies. A few months’ labor should see the completion of this work.

 It is clear, then, that Bryn Mawr College has a very peculiar need of Dr. Fiesel’s help, in order to round out its present archaeological work, and it is no les clear that Bryn Mawr furnishes ideal facilities for the continuance of Dr. Fiesel’s investigation of Etruscan.

 Furthermore the College’s work in language needs to be supplemented and coordinated by work in linguistic science and in the comparative grammar of the Indo-European languages. This is a field in which Dr. Fiesel is eminently fitted to give instructions and to conduct research. She has studied Hittite with two of leading [sic] specialists in that field, and she is particularly interested in Armenian as well as in Greek and Latin. Her linguistic equipment seems to be precisely what the College needs.”

**9. Letter from Park to Stevens, June 5, 1936:** “With the pledges now amounting to $3300 which have been sent me by Professor Sturtevant of Yale it is possible for me to write today to Dr. Fiesel herself inviting her on the basis on these funds to take up her work at Bryn Mawr for at least a two year period. I bear in mind my agreement to give her a permanent place in the department if during the two years that is possible, and a group of alumnae are to talk with Dr. Sturtevant within the next few days about the possibility of raising a permanent fund for the endowment of her work….The pledges sent me by Professor Sturtevant are in each case for $300, payable $100 a year in December 1936-, 1937, and 1938. I suggest that the Foundation pays $2000 of the $3000 which you name as the final amount during the college year 1936-37 and $1000 in the year 1937-1938…I have not up to this time renewed my request to the Emergency Committee in Aid of German Scholars. I am writing Mr. Whyte this morning our present situation [sic] [cf. letter to Whyte on July 21, expressing her delight that they have given a grant of $2000, allowing her to offer Dr. Fiesel a three-year appointment] “I hope Dr. Fiesel’s residence may be as profitable to us and to research work in this country as Dr. Noether’s was and may have no tragic end.”

**Part IV: Gender and the “fortune” of Ruth Fiesel**

**10. Obituary of Ruth Fiesel from the Philadelphia Inquirer, July 6, 1994 by Shankar Vedantem (now of National Public Radio). The photocopy on file in the Bryn Mawr College Archives seems to have been deposited by Ann Merriam, who lists her home address—Ruth’s own address, 534 Valley View Road, Merion, PA—in the page’s margin:**  “She was an unflagging worker on many social issues, including gender, race, sexual orientation and Jewish-Christian dialogue;” he then quotes Ann S. Merriam, identified as “a longtime friend”, on her “extremely giving” nature. [As was the practice at that time, the obituary merely lists her cousins, Walter and Ernest Lehmann, as Ruth’s survivors, and does not acknowledge that she and Ann shared their days and deepest feelings. The reference to Ruth’s activism on gender and sexual orientation, along with that to Ann, however, subtly signals that they were a couple].

**11. “Appreciation of Ann Merriam: Physicist, Biblical Scholar and Master Wood Carver,” January-February 2017 issue of *The Chronicle*, a bulletin published by St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church in Yardley, Pennsylvania, reporting that Merriam died on November 26, 2016, at the age of 94; it goes on to celebrate “some aspects of Ann’s life of courage, intellect, art, and faith.” “**Ann and her companion Ruth Fiesel resigned their faculty positions at a private school in Baltimore because the school refused to desegregate… “Ann and Ruth relocated to Bryn Mawr, where Ann, a physicist, worked for [the Radio Corporation of America] and earned two patents. One was for figuring out the circuitry needed to remove ‘snow’ from our TV screens”; and finally relates that Ann moved to a residential community, Pennswood Village, [from the home they shared in Merion] after Ruth’s death.”

**Part V: Eva and Ruth Fiesel: A generational perspective on female classicists**

For Mitchell Levensohn, the first Jew hired (and speedily fired) by the Yale Classics Department, see Hallett, “Eli’s Daughters,” 270.

For Gabriele Schoepflich and Henry Hoenigswald, see Hallett, Judith P. et al. (Michael Alexander, Julia Haig Gaisser, Henry M. Hoenigswald, Donald G. Lateiner, Helen F. North, Eleanor Roach) 2002. “Remembering Gabriele Schoepflich Hoenigswald”. *Cloelia* 30 (2002) 21–24.

**12. Letter from Sturtevant to Park, May 27, 1937**: “You are of course as distressed as we are here at the not unexpected news of Mrs. Fiesel’s death. I have heard from her cousin, Dr. Fritz Lehmann of Yonkers, about some tentative plans for a commemorative service some day next week. No doubt he has communicated with you also.

 Of course one’s thoughts turn at once to Ruth, and her needs for schooling—needs that her uncle can scarcely afford to supply, since his salary is pitifully small and he has three children of his own to educate. Is there a possibility that the money contributed toward Mrs. Fiesel’s salary can be applied toward a scholarship for Ruth? I refer to the money actually paid to the college last winter by personal friends of Mrs. Fiesel, amounting, I think to $1200. I do not know the legal status of this money. Evidently it cannot be used for the purpose for which it was specifically given, and it may be that the law requires that it be returned to the donors. If this is so I shall try to persuade them to give it to the college again, and this time to provide a scholarship for Ruth. Will you let me know how the matter stands?

 I take it for granted that the unpaid balance of these pledges is no longer payable. Is that your understanding also? If so, I shall try to persuade the donors to give $100 each toward Ruth’s school expenses for next year. I understand that she has still one year of her preparatory course to complete…. “

**13. Letter from Sturtevant to Park, June 2, 1937**, supplying a list of persons “interested in Mrs. Fiesel’s appointment at Bryn Mawr.” He states that he will write all of the individuals on that list to “leave this money with Bryn Mawr College to be applied toward a scholarship for Ruth Fiesel”. And he asks if “in view of her excellent record and her obvious need for financial assistance the [Baldwin] School can be induced to give her a scholarship for next year liberal enough to take care of all her expenses?” He then remarks, “ it seems to me that we do not need to wait for any word from Professor Lehmann-Hartleben before asking the School to do whatever it can in this connection”; he promises that “we can raise whatever sum is needed from personal contributions “ “if it should turn out that the School cannot be as generous as I have suggested.”

**14. Letter from Park to Stevens of the Rockefeller Foundation to notify him of Eva Fiesel’s death, June 10, 1937**. Park first attests to the value of Eva’s accomplishments during her short stay at Bryn Mawr as well as the wisdom of the Rockefeller Foundation’s investment in her career (noting, for example, that “one of her seminaries was attended by five members of our own faculty and faculty members from the University of Pennsylvania, Haverford College and a member of the staff of the University of Pennsylvania Museum”; and that the College had accepted a graduate student to do a PhD under her supervision). She then states, “Dr. Fiesel became unwell during February, and in early March went to her brother’s home in White Plains [sic], and from there to the Post Graduate Hospital. It was, I believe, impossible while she lived to make a final diagnosis, but I think there can be little doubt that she suffered from cancer of the liver, which showed itself in jaundice and anaemia. Dr. Fiesel leaves a daughter sixteen years old, whose guardian will be her uncle, Dr. Lehmann-Hartleben. The sum of $1100 was already in the hands of the college as a contribution from a number of private sources…Dr. Sturtevant hopes that those who have made this contribution will allow it to be retained and used for Ruth Fiesel’s education.” Her letter ends by reporting that the project to raise a permanent fund for a the Chair of Linguistics at Bryn Mawr for Eva Fiesel—the responsibility of a working committee under the chairmanship of Mrs. Learned Hand of New York—is to be given up, and by thanking the Rockefeller Foundation for their $1500 contribution that year.

**15. Letter from Park to John Whyte of the Emergency Committee, October 8, 1937 :** “You may be interested to know that Bryn Mawr which is administering the fund has already in cash and pledges toward the expenses of Ruth Fiesel’s education about $1900 which the gift of the Committee brings to $2400. The Baldwin School which she entered last year is giving her its maximum scholarship (half the expenses of the year) and the college will remit the tuition charge when she enters. She is an able girl, plucky and with a directness and simplicity which everyone responds to. I think we can see her through four years of college without question.”

**16. Letter from Sturtevant, June 27, 1942, “to Contributors for the education of Miss Ruth Fiesel”**. Written immediately after Ruth had received her BA degree from Bryn Mawr, and only a few months after the United States entered World War II, he reports that “Professor Karl Lehmann-Hartleben of New York University has just requested me to forward to you his hearty thanks for your generosity in making it possible for his niece, Ruth Fiesel, to complete her courses at Bryn Mawr College. He is asking me to do this for the reason that he does not know your names. The first paragraph of his letter is a composite of thanks to you and personal messages to me and it does not seem appropriate to repeat it.” His letter ends with the following words from Lehmann-Hartleben. ‘Ruth has had a great privilege of fundamental value due to this arrangement. I think that she has, within the limits of her intellectual abilities, made the best of it and that, from the point of view of human personality at least, your confidence has been justified by her. These four years in Bryn Mawr have made all the difference and she has emerged from college with a fine personal attitude toward men and matter and with a great enthusiasm for education and its values. I may say that, in my opinion, in a very surprising way, these years have strengthened all the good sides of her personality and that is the best anybody can say about any educational experience.’”

1. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)