Adventure of Life

Reminiscences of

Pauline Podlashuk

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Preface

A note from the editors

Pauline Podlashuk, our great aunt, wrote these memoirs in the early 1960s when she was in her eighties. She sent them to a grand-niece in London, asking her to arrange for publication. In January 1965 the publishers Cassell and Company wrote back as follows:

> *We have now given serious consideration to Dr. Pauline Podlashuk's memoirs: ADVENTURE OF LIFE, and I am sorry to have to tell you that we shall not be able to accept it for publication. Your Great Aunt certainly had an eventful life, and the manuscript makes for interesting reading. Unfortunately too much work would have to be done on it before the manuscript was publishable – and this we could not undertake. …*

In editing these memoirs, we can endorse the publisher's view that the manuscript was indeed interesting but needed a great deal of work.

We tried to retain our great aunt's voice and use her words and phrases wherever possible. Sometimes we changed sentences and then on a second (or third or fourth) reading, returned to her original. Chances are that when you come across wording that makes you sit up and take extra notice, and expressions that are considered 'politically incorrect' today, it is her original voice.

The work has been a family project with a great niece, a great nephew, and even a great, great niece contributing as readers and with lay-out.

Judy Nasatyr and Effie Schultz

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Childhood

Early days in Shavli

I was born in a town called Shavli[1] in the province of Kovno in Russia. After the First World War the province of Kovno became Lithuania with the city of Kovno[2] as its capital. My parents, Liebe and Zalman Podlashuk, had come from Belarus not long before I was born. They were in the tobacco business and Father opened a small tobacco factory in Shavli. It was not a success so his brother Yudel, who was more enterprising, took over the factory and in no time converted it into a large and growing concern. Uncle Yudel then sent Father to the Ukraine to buy raw tobacco and send it to Shavli.

We saw very little of Father. He would come home twice a year to spend the high religious holidays with us and to talk business with Uncle Yudel. My mother was in rather poor health - always coughing - and in need of care. With Father away my second eldest sister Deborah looked after Mother, the house and us, the younger children. My eldest sister Golda had married at eighteen in 1881, in the same year that I was born. She also lived in Shavli. I had two older brothers, Samuel and Phillip, and one younger brother, Charlie.

1 Shavel in Yiddish and Šiauliai in Lithuanian

2 Kaunas in Lithuanian

We were not well off and lived in a small house in Garden Street. In front of the house were two old chestnut trees. There was also a whole row of chestnut trees behind a tall stone wall, which ran along a high pavement where children used to collect chestnuts in late summer. Behind the wall and the trees were stables belonging to the estate of Count Zoubov. Our house, together with others in a yard at the back of our house, had at one time been part of the Zoubov Estate.

The first Count Zoubov was a favourite of the Empress Katherine the Great of Russia and was given land in this part of the Empire. The Zoubovs built up the estate. There was a large park that was open to everyone, and big grounds with a palace, flower gardens and orchards where the towns-people could buy the choicest fruit. Further down in Garden Street, beyond the big gate that was the entrance to the estate and the palace, were some nice houses with gardens, and a girls' school. At the very furthest end, and it seemed very far away, were soldiers' barracks.

Shavli was a largish garrison town. A regiment of Russian soldiers was stationed there. The soldiers would come marching past our house. They always sang Russian folk or marching songs that we children loved. We learnt to sing many of them. They were most melodious and so different from the mournful wailings of the Lithuanians that we heard every time a Lithuanian funeral procession passed the same way. There were no Lithuanian soldiers in Shavli. The Lithuanians served their three years' military conscription far away from their homes somewhere in central Russia or in the Caucasus

Having a garrison of soldiers with a colonel and a number of officers with their wives and children who all spoke Russian, the town was Russian. There was a Noblemen's Club, an Officers' Club, a Russian Gymnasium (high school) for boys, a private Russian Gymnasium for girls

called The Pension, and a Russian Gymnasium for Jewish boys. There were no Lithuanian schools and I do not know how they maintained their language. In all government offices only Russian was spoken but in the streets one heard many languages, including Polish. The peasants all spoke Lithuanian, which I could not understand.

The main street in town was called Nevsky Prospect after the famous street in St Petersburg. There were many shops on the street. In the late afternoon and evening people would promenade up and down, officers and students mixing with the crowd. In summer the popular promenade was Count Zoubov's park. Once or twice a week a military band played in the wide long avenue of chestnut trees that had stood in the park for the last two centuries.

When I was five years old, I was sent to a small private school that was run by a Miss Raise Asse. As I look back over the years, I realise that this little school laid a very good foundation for my education. I started with the Russian alphabet which has thirty-six letters, there being a letter for every sound. This made it very easy for me to learn to read. A few months later I had to learn the German alphabet and after this, the French. In all three languages I was taught nursery rhymes, some of which I still remember. Having learnt to read, I clamoured for books with fairy tales that absorbed me more than playing with dolls. In my second year at school I was taught arithmetic. This was also quite easy for me.

When I was nine years old, my sister Deborah got married and my eldest brother Sam left for South Africa. He was due to be conscripted into the army. He was not keen on this as it meant that three years of his life would be wasted. Other young men in Shavli had fled to South Africa to avoid military service. They were earning good money and sending some home to help their parents. Sam decided to follow their example. It was

then decided that Mother, Phillip, Charlie and I should go to Mena in the Ukraine to join Father.

Move to Mena

This was my first long journey by train. It took two days and two nights to travel from Shavli in the Baltic provinces to Mena in the Ukraine, where Father lived. Mena was a small town in the province of Chernigov. The train passed through numerous villages and small and large towns such as Vilna, Minsk, Mogilev and Gomel. Between stations we saw grain fields, thick forests and the old swamps of White Russia, now known as Belarus. We crossed a number of rivers.

The carriage in which we were travelling was one assigned to students who were going from the provinces, where there were no universities, to Kiev and Kharkov. Jewish students had a better chance of being admitted to these universities than to those in other large cities in Great Russia, like Moscow and St Petersburg where Jews, with some exceptions, had no right to settle. The students in our compartment, almost all medical students, were very kind to Mother and helped her with us so that she could get some rest.

We must have passed Vilna during the night because I do not remember seeing anything of it on that journey. When we came to Minsk at dusk the following day, the students took us children to see the town. The students knew when to return and told mother not to worry if we were not back soon. We were taken by tram, a vehicle we had never seen before. The town was well lit. We got out and looked at shops in whose windows the most wonderful things were displayed. The people all spoke Yiddish and Russian, languages that we understood. No Lithuanian or Polish was heard. It was all very strange and interesting. We

went back to the train laden with toys and sweets that the students had bought for us. Mother was waiting anxiously and was glad to have us back safe and happy.

After the second night's travelling we reached Mena. This little town lay in tobacco-growing country, not far from the river Desna, the biggest tributary of the Dnieper. It was the middle of summer and very hot.

Father met us and took us to the house he had prepared for the family. It was not far from the station. The road was wide and covered with deep dust. The houses on both sides had thatch roofs, which were a novelty to us. On the way to the house we saw peasants driving and walking alongside their wagons. Some wagons were drawn by bullocks. This was also strange to us. The peasants were different from the Lithuanians. The men wore wide trousers tucked into high-legging boots, sheepskin jackets with the fur on the outside and tall sheepskin hats also with the fur outside. Most of the women were bare-footed though some had high boots on. They wore wide blue or red skirts with white embroidered blouses.

The house was semi-detached and high above the street with many steps to the entrance. It was small and quite cosy. There was a garden at the back with some flowers, but mostly vegetables. Among the vegetables was one very unfamiliar plant. It had a long stalk with long leaves. Inside the leaves was a conical cob with round yellow seeds. It was called *kiki*, short for *kukurusa* - our South African mealie or maize. We later found it very tasty when cooked and eaten with butter.

When we had settled down and rested for a day, Father took us into the little town. The most interesting place was the market. Piles of watermelons and pumpkins were arranged like pyramids. Next to them were all kinds of earthenware pottery. The stalls looked gay and colourful

displaying peasant-made wooden utensils and tastefully painted toys. Strings of coloured beads with ribbons and *bubliki* - baked, fat, doughy rings strung up like beads and much loved by children - hung from narrow rods attached to the corner poles of the stalls. The women and girls tending the stalls wore their national Ukrainian dress with many strings of beads round their necks, and ribbons hanging down their backs. On their heads they wore bright kerchiefs. The peasants spoke Ukrainian. It was only slightly different from Russian and was quite easy to understand. Everything in the market was very cheap. One could buy a fowl for one shilling or a wagonload of pumpkins to feed the cow for another shilling.

Life in Mena

On the whole life in our new home was interesting and cheerful. Our mother also enjoyed the change. The warm climate, and Father's presence with his good humour and cheerfulness, seemed to improve her health. She took more interest in housekeeping and in Father's business. Peasants from outlying villages used to come to see Father, mostly on market days, to tell him what kind of tobacco they had in their fields and to arrange sales. When they came they usually brought presents such as freshly caught fish, honey, eggs and chickens. Mother would invite them into the dining room where the samovar was boiling, and treat them to tea. This they drank in tumblers without milk but with a piece of hard sugar in the mouth.

Father often went out to the villages to inspect the tobacco in the fields. Sometimes he took Charlie and me with him. This was a great treat for us and it was fun to visit the peasant cottages. These were little white-washed houses with thatch roofs surrounded by small gardens in which

the peasants grew vegetables, flowers and fruit trees - predominantly cherry trees.

The cottages were very clean inside with their whitewashed walls. In a typical cottage the floors were covered with fine yellow sand. A few of the cottages had two rooms but most had only one large room. There was always a big built-in *btkele* (stove) to one side of the large room. The top of the oven was flat and served as a bed for the whole family, particularly in winter. In summer the young people would sleep in the hayloft. One or more icons would hang in the further right-hand corner with a small oil-lamp burning in front of the holy images. When the peasants came into the room they would look at the icons and make the sign of the cross over their chests. A big, well scrubbed wooden table would stand in the middle of the room with wooden benches round it to accommodate the family for meals.

The tobacco fields, like the grain fields of the peasants, were outside the villages with wide furrows separating one peasant's field from that of his neighbour. When visiting these fields with Father, I watched how tobacco was planted in rows, how the plants grew, and finally how after having been picked the separate leaves were tied into bundles. These bundles were later brought to Father's barns where the leaves were laid out to mature before being sent to the factory.

Neighbour Vera

Next to our house was an old mansion with a beautiful flower garden in front and an orchard at the back. I was attracted by the flowers and used to stand at the fence looking at them. A gardener was always working there. Occasionally an old couple could be seen walking in the garden. Then one day a young girl was with them. She looked older than me,

probably about fifteen years of age. She came up to speak to me. She told me that she was Vera Krasinskaya and had come home for the summer vacation from the Kiev Conservatoire where she was studying music. She invited me to their house and said she would play some music for me.

I had had little chance to hear music before, apart from the military band at the Zoubov Park, and I gladly accepted Vera's invitation. A grand piano stood in the middle of a large drawing room. Vera played for me and I was enchanted. After each piece she told me its name and the name of its composer. For the first time in my young life I heard the names of Chopin, Mendelssohn and Tchaikovsky. Vera and I became friends and I often went to her house to hear her play.

Another attraction for me was their library. This was a long room lined with shelf upon shelf of books. There were a number of books for children. I had already read some of the ones written by Russian authors. There were also others, translations from English or French, by Fennimore Cooper, Main Read and Jules Verne. When Vera returned to Kiev I used to visit her mother who would choose books for me to borrow. From their library I obtained and read translations of Walter Scott, Dickens and others.

Schooling

When we arrived in Mena my brothers were sent to a Hebrew school and they started learning straight away. Charlie later went to the Russian government school for boys. Unfortunately, there was no school in Mena for me. At first I was given a Hebrew teacher but I wanted to study other subjects as well. Then Father heard that a teacher, a Mr Slutzky, had

been invited to come to Mena to teach boys and girls all the subjects necessary for admission to high school.

When he arrived it was arranged that he would give me private lessons as I did not fit into the classes with older girls. He used to come to our house for an hour or more every day. He was a good teacher and I got on well in arithmetic and in Russian reading, grammar and dictation. He knew German and I continued to learn this. He did not teach French so I had to drop that.

New house

Father found another house for us, much larger than the old one. It was half a house belonging to a small landowner, Petro Samoilovitch Mogilo, an old bachelor, who lived in the smaller half of the house with his servant Pankry. Each half had its own entrance. The house was far from the street and was approached through a large yard covered with grass.

At the side and back of the house was a garden with trees, shrubs and flowers. Near the front were acacia trees that were in bloom when we moved in. The scent of the flowers filled the house. Further back were mulberry trees. There was a lawn at the side of the trees and at the back of the house. Small grape hyacinths and lovely single narcissi bordered the lawn. There were lilac bushes in front of the house right outside the dining-room windows. Their sweet-smelling flowers looked into the room when the windows were open.

On the other side of the yard was an orchard which had a hedge of raspberry bushes. It was full of all kinds of fruit trees - apples, pears and tall cherry trees - as well as bushes of gooseberries and red and black currants. On the ground were beds of strawberries. There were beehives

among the strawberry beds. The bees knew their master, so it was safe for Charlie and me to go there with him. They would however attack strangers without mercy. It took a while before they learned to know Charlie and me and we could come to the strawberry beds by ourselves. The stables for a horse and a cow were next to the orchard. At the end furthest from the front yard, was a gate to another yard with the barns where the tobacco was cured.

Phillip goes to South Africa

My sister Deborah's husband, Abraham-Leib Schwartz, decided to give up his business in Shavli, which was not doing well, and go to South Africa to join Sam. Phillip also wanted to get away to earn his own living. Our parents did not stop him and he went to Shavli from where he was to travel with Abraham-Leib to far Africa. Deborah came to live in Mena. She stayed with us for a short while before taking a little house for herself and her baby son Chaim.

Mother

We were now a small family but a very happy one. Mother's health had improved and she enjoyed life in this fine country where she could do much more than she had been able to for years.

She had a good servant whom she supervised. The maid cleaned and tidied the house, cooked and baked, milked the cow and made butter and cottage cheese. In the autumn another woman used to come and help with pickling cucumbers and cabbages for the winter. Mother liked to make jams and to preserve fruit herself. A charcoal-burning brazier

would be brought to the back garden and Mother, sitting on a chair nearby, would watch the cooking of the jam in a copper basin.

We adored our mother. She was a good-looking woman with regular features, brown hair and dark blue eyes. She was rather strict and she instilled in us an understanding of what was right and wrong. She taught us our prayers and would tell us stories about the time when she was a small girl. She told us how, during the reign of Tsar Nicolas I, small Jewish boys were caught by gendarmes and sent away for twenty-five years to be trained as soldiers. She remembered the time when Tsar Alexander II liberated the Russian peasants from serfdom, and when he was assassinated. She also told us about the Russo-Turkish war when many Turkish prisoners were brought to her hometown and the residents brought them food. Thus we learnt Russian history before we ever opened a history book. Mother rarely went out visiting but she always had people coming to see her with their troubles or asking for advice or help.

Winter in the Ukraine

A very rainy autumn followed the summer. It rained for weeks and the roads, covered with deep soft mud, were impassable. The peasants would put willow branches on the roads in many places to make it easier for their wagons to get along. The peasant women, like their men, wore high-legging boots and put pieces of heavy homespun material in front and behind their bodies under their short sheepskin overcoats. We too put on warmer clothing and wore high galoshes over our boots. We would remove them on entering the house.

When the rain was over, a slight frost set in. The dark sky brightened and the sun began to shine again. Now we were waiting for the first snowfall. It usually came during the night and was often very heavy. In

the morning, looking through the double winter-windows, one saw a white world from the ground upwards and over the roofs. The trees looked as if they were covered with dainty white lace and the whole garden was a fairyland. Our maid and Mr. Mogilo's manservant would have to clear a path from the house to the street gate and another to the stables so that they could attend to the cow and the horse. When it stopped snowing and the sun came out again, Charlie and I would run out of the house to tumble in the snow, play with snowballs and make snowmen.

After another heavy snowfall and frost, the ground would harden and the peasants would put away their wheel wagons and get out their sledges. Each horse was in-spanned to a sledge and had a collar with small bells round its neck. The traffic sliding along the soft white roads became musical, with bells ringing from every vehicle. Charlie and I, warmly dressed, enjoyed being out of doors, going for rides in the sleigh, tobogganing and skating wherever we could find a patch of frozen water.

The winter evenings were lovely. Though it was very cold outside, often with a heavy snowstorm raging and the wind whining in the chimneys, our dining room was warm and cosy. This room, like all the others, was heated every morning by stoves built into the walls. After the wood or straw, which was used as fuel, burnt out and the ashes were hot and glowing, the doors of the stoves would be tightly shut. This kept the house warm until the following morning.

The family would sit at the long table drinking tea from glass tumblers and eating all kinds of tasty snacks. The samovar stood on the table humming cheerfully. A large paraffin lamp hung over the table from the ceiling and provided light to the whole room. Often Father’s friends would visit. They would talk about events in Russia and in our province. I remember when they discussed the behaviour of the provincial gover-

nor towards the peasants. They all thought that the governor in office was better than the previous one who had seemed to ignore the fact that the peasants were no longer serfs and had often had them flogged. I always found the stories about the peasants interesting.

Medical care in Kiev

During the second winter in Mena I was ill with severe tonsillitis. It did not clear even in spring. The local doctor advised my parents to take me to Kiev to have my tonsils taken out and Father decided to do this as soon as I had finished the term's lessons and when my teacher would be away on his summer vacation. Father thought that it would be pleasant to travel by steamer along the Desna and the Dnieper instead of going by train. Though I did not fancy an operation, the journey by steamer was a great attraction and I looked forward to it.

We got up at dawn to go to a neighbouring village through which the Desna flowed. Steamers stopped there to take on and disembark passengers and cargo. It was all very exciting and interesting - the steamer, the passengers and the places we passed. The Desna was a wide river flowing gently through grain fields, small forests and villages, and through the provincial capital Chernigov where it joined the Dnieper.

We arrived in Kiev at dusk and went straight to the doctor for whom Father had a letter of introduction from our house doctor. We were met by Dr Shampanier. He was an assistant to a well-known specialist who, he said, was at that time out of town. Dr Shampanier was quite young. He examined me and said that he did not think an operation was necessary. He also said that if I could remain in Kiev for a few weeks he would cure me. Father was a very trusting individual and believed the doctor but he told him he did not know anyone in Kiev with whom he could leave me.

Dr Shampanier called in his wife who invited us to have tea with them. She heard of Father's predicament and said she could give me their spare room and look after me. I, of course, took the matter to be quite in order and asked Father to leave me there - which he did. When I think of it now, however, I find it rather a peculiar way to behave on the part of the doctor and just as strange that Father should have consented to this arrangement without much consideration.

The Shampaniers turned out to be decent people and not rogues. Mrs Shampanier was a young woman and left much alone while her husband was away at the surgery. She was very kind to me and treated me more as a guest and child of good friends than as a casual boarder. Dr Shampanier was also friendly. In the evenings he would paint my throat with medicine. He later taught me to do it myself.

They lived in a fine house in the best part of Kiev, on the Bibikovsky Boulevard, not far from the main street of the city, the Kreshchati, where all the big shops were and from where one could take trams to all parts of the city. They gave me a good time and took me with them wherever they went. Early in the morning I would be awakened to go with them to the swimming baths on the Dnieper where I was taught to swim. Then we would go home to a fine breakfast prepared and served by a maid. After eating, the doctor would hurry off to work and Mrs Shampanier would take me shopping, or she would direct me where to go and what to see. After lunch, if it was hot, we would rest in the cool rooms and read. On a cool day she would take me to see the ancient sites of Kiev - the old monasteries, the churches and the museums. In the evening the doctor would take us to concerts in Merchants Park or to the islands on the Dnieper where there would be Gipsy concerts, variety shows or other performances. Then we would have supper at some good restaurant.

Kiev was a beautiful city, built on hills with the majestic Dnieper flowing at its side. Opposite Merchants Park was the hill of St Vladimir with a statue of the saint on the top. I loved to go up this hill and look down on the Dnieper with its islands in the distance and the steamers plying up and down. The river was so wide that from one side you could not see the opposite shore. It looked very inspiring and the poem by Gogol, which I had learnt not long before, would come to mind,

"Wonderful is the Dnieper on a quiet day ..."

It was from Kiev that the Duchess Olga of the Ruric Dynasty went down the Dnieper to Constantinople to embrace the Christian religion. When she came back she had all her people baptised.

High school in Nezhin

When I returned from Kiev my parents told me that it had been decided, on the suggestion of Sam who was in South Africa, that I should go to a high school in Nezhin. I was nearly thirteen years old and my teacher, Mr Slutzky thought that I could easily pass into the third class, which was for girls of my age. An application was sent to the Women's Gymnasium in Nezhin and after receiving a favourable reply, I was taken by Father to the town to sit the necessary examinations.

Nezhin was the largest town in the province of Chernigov. In fact it was a more advanced town than the capital. It was the birthplace of the famous Russian writer Nicolai Vasilyevitch Gogol. There was a fine big statue of him in the town park that bore his name. The main street was also named after him. There were two high schools in Nezhin, one for boys and another for girls. There was also a kind of university college, the Historico-Philologichesky Institute, to which only sons of noblemen

were admitted. There was only one other such college in Russia, at St Petersburg. There were several primary schools for boys and one or two which admitted girls from poor middle class families.

I passed the examinations and was admitted as a pupil to the Women's Gymnasium. As there was no hostel for girls, the headmistress recommended approved accommodation. I was sent to Mr and Mrs Evserov, a family belonging to the Jewish intelligentsia. They had two daughters, the younger of whom, Etya, was also a pupil at the school. Three other girls, older than me, also stayed there. The Evserovs were charming people and we were very happy in their home.

The school was a double-storey building in a large shady garden where the pupils played games between lessons. There were about three hundred girls in the school and thirty in our class. The majority of the girls were Russian and belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church, one was a Polish Catholic, and four were Jews. Most of them were pleasant simple girls from good homes. I was accepted by them without prejudice and soon made a number of friends - the daughter of a professor at the Historico-Phylologichesky Institute, the granddaughter of the headmistress and two Jewish girls, Sonia Gornaya and Rachel Fishelev.

The teaching at the gymnasium was of a very high standard. All the teachers were university graduates and taught only their specialist subjects. Only women taught the first four classes. Beyond class four they taught only languages and needlework while men taught Russian literature, mathematics, history, physics, and other subjects. The women teachers wore blue uniforms and the men, black with gold buttons. The pupils wore brown dresses with white cuffs and collars and a black apron that was replaced on festive occasions by a white one.

When the novelty of my new surroundings wore off I settled down to work. I did not find it difficult. There were no sports programmes after school so I had plenty of free time after I had finished my homework. The pupils used to walk up and down the main street for exercise or visit friends. In summer there was bathing in an enclosure in the river and in winter, skating.

I often visited my friend Rachel. There were two children in her family, Rachel and her brother Leo. An interesting group of boys from the gymnasium boarded at their house. They were well-read and spent a lot of time discussing books by Gogol, Turgenev and Tolstoy as well as other books with political themes. Rachel and I were allowed to listen, but not to talk. We often finished up with dancing or playing some table game like lotto. In the winter we all went skating.

Of all the boys I liked Ilya Schtrum best. He was good-looking with dark eyes and a sallow complexion. He was not as tall as Leo and suited me best for dancing and skating. Also, he impressed me during the discussions. Ilya was then about fifteen or sixteen and I was two years younger. I was a lively girl and Ilya was a serious boy but I was always interested in his conversation. Almost thirty years later, when I was doing postgraduate work in medicine in Berlin, I heard some young Russian doctors talking about a Dr Schtrum. They all agreed that he was a highly respected man even though he was a communist. I later asked one of them what this great man's first name was and was told it was Ilya.

After the summer holiday when I returned to Nezhin, there were new subjects at school, history and mathematics, which I enjoyed - the first because it was interesting and the second because I found it very easy. The second school year slipped by quickly. I passed the examinations and moved to the next class.

Changes in family life

When I came home for my summer holidays I heard that Father intended to immigrate to Palestine. Many Jews from Russian cities like St Petersburg and Moscow felt that government restrictions on their professions and businesses made life difficult for them, and they decided to immigrate to Palestine. Most were wealthy and cultured. They bought land and vineyards on which to work and lead a simple life. It was at the time that Dr Theodore Herzl proposed Palestine as a Jewish homeland.

My brother Sam, who was in South Africa, was carried away by the idea and with the Zionist movement that arose from it. He could not get away himself so he asked Father to go to Palestine and buy land for him. Father, thinking that the warm climate might be good for Mother's health, agreed and got ready to go. I was rather upset by this plan. I did not want to leave school or Russia and hoped that something might happen to prevent my going. The summer was passing and I thought that I would go back to Nezhin in August.

Typhus

In the meantime an epidemic of typhus fever broke out in Mena. The authorities in the little town knew little about sanitation and the victims of the disease were mostly the poor. Mother sent me with some food to a poor cottage where there was a sick person. I stood at the door leaning against some clothes hanging on the door. I probably rubbed off a creeping louse from a coat and became infected with typhus. The following day I complained of a terrible headache and was soon running a high fever. The doctor was called and diagnosed typhus. I was very ill for a long time. There were no nurses to look after me, and Mother together

with my brother-in-law Abraham-Leib who happened to be back from South Africa, had to nurse me. I do not know why he had come but he was a great help to my mother during my illness. No one else in the family caught the disease. My recovery was slow and it was winter before I could walk about the house.

We had news from Father that he had bought two vineyards and was getting a house ready for us. I was heartbroken to have to give up school.

Mother's unexpected death

It was almost spring when the preparations for our departure started. Abraham-Leib was still in Mena. He helped us to settle our affairs and get our passports. Father had sent the necessary papers authorising the issue of these for Mother, Charlie and me. Our furniture was sold to various friends and acquaintances who were to take it when we were gone. Golda, my eldest sister from Shavli, was coming with her youngest child Chaim to say good-bye to us. There was great activity and excitement in the house.

All this, on top of Mother's exhaustion from nursing me for months, was too much for her. She tried to keep up, not taking any rest or any care of herself. The weather was still chilly and she caught a cold that turned into pneumonia. A specialist was brought from Kiev but did not give us any hope. She was very ill and within a few days she was dead. Golda was on the train and only arrived after the funeral.

We were all thunderstruck and heartbroken. What to do? The funeral took place on Easter Sunday, the greatest holy day for Russians, but most of the population of Mena came to the cemetery. Mother was loved by everyone and deeply mourned.

Back to Shavli

Golda, Deborah and Abraham-Leib had to decide what to do with Charlie and me. Abraham-Leib was returning to South Africa, and Deborah and her two children were going to stay with his parents. Golda had to go back to her home and children. In the end it was resolved that until Father replied to the cable sent him, Charlie and I would go with Golda to Shavli and stay with her until Deborah arrived.

It took a long time to communicate by letter with Father in Palestine and with Sam in South Africa. Father wanted Charlie and me to be sent to Palestine but that was not possible, so the plan to go to Shavli remained. Deborah took a house and we all settled down there. Charlie was sent to school. My fate seemed uncertain as there was no full gymnasium for girls in Shavli. One was being established starting with the first four classes and adding another every year. I joined the fourth year class, which was the highest then.

The curriculum in all government schools was uniform throughout Russia. The teachers in Shavli were well-trained university graduates who lectured or taught in their own speciality. From the fifth year onwards, the teachers were all men. All were Russian, except for the teachers of languages who were French and German. This was similar to what I had known in Nezhin so I felt at home in my new school. The composition of the pupils was however different. The majority of the girls were Polish or Lithuanian. There were many Jews and perhaps a dozen Russians, daughters of civil servants or army officers.

I had not much to do that year. I had been through all the subjects in Nezhin. When it came to the end of the year I was transferred to the next class without sitting any examinations and was even given a first class

prize. I was always first in mathematics. This was not always a blessing as my classmates would continually come and say, "Polya, help", or "Polya, explain". Before a geometry class I had to dictate explanations and deductions, which the girls did not understand but learned by rote.

The teacher Mr Yogodizky also expected more of me than of the others. He would call me to the board, dictate a perfectly new theorem and ask me to work it out for the class. It never helped to say I did not know it. I had to go on and with a little help from him, it would suddenly become quite simple and I could explain it easily. Occasionally the history teacher Mr Schpakovsky also called on me to describe a period of Russian or ancient history. As I usually knew about it I could describe it vividly but was never certain of dates. Mr Schpakovsky evidently liked me and would invite me to his house on a Sunday. He had an only daughter who used to look forward to my visits. Her mother had died a few years previously.

The headmistress of the school Mme Hildebrandt was a strict woman of German origin. She paid frequent visits to the different classes to see that the girls took no liberties and that they were tidily dressed. We all wore uniforms and she would not allow anyone to use a different style or colour of dress. The hair of the girls had to be tightly combed back. I was sent to the cloakroom several times for a maid to tidy up my unruly wavy locks.

Despite all my schoolwork I still had time to spare for other things. I was rather hard up for money so I accepted an offer to coach a younger pupil, Genya Kretchin. Genya was the only daughter of a well-known Russian advocate and his charming wife. She was not stupid but lazy and spoiled. She would only work when there was someone sitting with her. My task was not difficult and every month I received a nice bit of pocket money.

The Kretchins had a fine home. They belonged to the intelligentsia and there were always interesting people at their house. They had a large library from which I borrowed books. Mrs Kretchin was an accomplished pianist and I often heard her play. When a famous Russian pianist came to the town to give a concert at the Noblemen's Club, they invited me to come with them. That was the first concert I ever attended and I was thrilled by it.

At about the same time as I started teaching Genya, I joined a small circle of girls and boys from the gymnasium. We read books by famous Russian literary critics with a revolutionary bias, like Bellinsky and Tchernishevsky. Occasionally someone would bring to a meeting an illegal or prohibited book like Tolstoy's What is my Belief? or a copy of the revolutionary journal *Iskra* (The Spark) which was published in Switzerland. There must have been a guiding hand behind this circle. Who it was, I never knew. Our minds were being trained, despite the vigilance

of the school authorities, to become liberal and ready to fight for a free Russia.

To Father in Palestine

At the end of May and before the school examinations in June, my sisters received a letter from Sam saying he was coming to Europe and wanted to fetch Charlie and me and take us to Palestine. He could not come to Russia to fetch us as he had not served his three years' military service. He therefore asked our brother-in-law Hirsch to bring us to Germany.

I was both pleased and perturbed. Life was just becoming interesting in Shavli and I did not feel like giving it up. Well, I thought, I would go and come back again in the autumn to continue with my schooling. I had an interview with the headmistress. I told her that a brother of mine was coming from South Africa on a visit to Europe and that he wanted my younger brother and me to be brought to Germany to meet him. I asked her permission to be away during the examinations and to sit them on my return in the autumn. She said she would have to put the matter to the school committee but thought it would be all right for me to go as soon as I liked.

The anticipation of seeing Sam and Father and the exciting prospect of travel overcame my doubts. I started looking forward to the journey. Hirsch was making all the arrangements. He could not get passports for Charlie and me without Father's authority. He thought it would take a long time to get in touch with Father and there was also a lot of the red tape. Lithuania is on the German border and Shavli was not far from the border towns where local people had passes to cross from one country to the other on business. They often smuggled people across the border.

Hirsch, knowing of such practices, thought it would be easy for us to go that way. In the end however matters turned out to be not as simple as we had anticipated.

We went by cart to a small place on the Russian side of the border. When it was dark we were taken to a cottage. Later we had to go to a building very near the border where we were to wait for a signal indicating that a particular guard was on duty. When the guard walked away from us, a peasant was to take us across. Something must have gone wrong because when the signal was given for us to cross we were told to run. It was a most terrifying experience. We had to run and jump over a ditch. I was out of breath and fell twice. Somehow I was helped to the other side.

By train to Trieste

No passports were needed in Germany. We went from Tilsit[3] to Memel[4] and then by boat to Koenigsberg.[5] I was exhausted after the border-crossing experience and must have fallen asleep because I do not remember the journey on the Baltic Sea. I also do not remember the actual reunion with Sam. It was only the following morning that I realised where I was and what was happening.

Although it was the end of May and spring, it was still rather chilly. The cold together with my fatigue gave me a sore throat and fever. A doctor was called and he evidently advised Sam to take me to a specialist to have my tonsils removed. This was done as soon as my temperature was

3 Now called Sovetsk

4 Now called Klaipeda

5 Now called Kaliningrad

down. I was annoyed that I was wasting my time in bed while my brothers were sightseeing.

A few days after the operation, the specialist said that it would be all right for me to travel. We set out for Trieste from where we were to travel by boat to Palestine. We were to cross the whole of central Europe from the Baltic Sea in the north to the Adriatic Sea in the south. We travelled by train, passing many towns in Germany and then through Vienna to Trieste. Before coming to meet us at Koenigsberg, Sam had stayed for some time in London and Berlin. He now wanted to see other places in Europe. He had heard of the Great Fair in Breslau in Germany and decided to go there.

The fair was an important one as the Kaiser was to open it. We saw the Kaiser driving through the streets in an open carriage accompanied by regiments of soldiers, and important people. This was something to see! Breslau was a beautiful town. The streets were wide and clean with trees on both sides. There were white and black swans swimming gracefully along the canals that ran through the town. On the banks were lawns with flowerbeds. Here and there were benches where we could sit and watch what was going on and listen to the military bands. The fair, decorated with flags and lights, was on the top of a high hill. In the evenings there were fireworks that took our breath away.

The few hectic days in Breslau tired me out and I hardly remember how we reached Vienna or what we saw there. Years later when I was in Vienna doing post-graduate medical work I did not find any place familiar to me.

At last we were on the last lap of our train journey from Vienna to Trieste. We crossed the Austrian Alps. The scenery was glorious - the high mountains with snow-covered peaks, the streams and rivers coming

down like waterfalls and the big lovely Danube itself. Now and again we came to a valley with unfamiliar-looking houses and lovely gardens. There were flowerbeds on the platforms at the stations where we stopped. Charlie and I were thrilled with this part of our journey and remembered it for the rest of our lives.

We arrived in Trieste late in the evening. We were tired from the journey and the excitement and went to bed early. I was awakened by chanting and for a while I could not understand where I was. I rushed to the window and there, below in a large square, I saw what seemed like hundreds of girls, big and small, all chanting and marching towards a large church or cathedral on the other side of the square. They were dressed in white like little brides with veils falling from their heads, which were covered with wreaths of flowers. In their hands they carried baskets of flowers. It was a very pretty scene.

We went out early to see the town. Trieste proved to be an enchanting city. We saw the Alps to the north and the Adriatic Sea at the other end. The streets were wide with beautiful shops. Most houses were in shady gardens. On the wide pavements stood tables where people sat eating and drinking. They were waited on by beautiful Italian girls.

Charlie and I were having a good time. Sam was a most wonderful brother. He spoiled us in every way and let us have whatever we wanted. I think he was happy to have us with him.

Sailing on the Adriatic Sea

At Trieste we boarded a small steamer from the Austrian Lloyd Line, the *Vorwaertz* (Forwards). The crew consisted of Austrians and Italians but there was also one young Serbian officer.

Our first stop was at Brindisi in Italy. We went ashore and Sam did some shopping, mainly for fruit. From the western shore of the Adriatic the steamer moved over to the eastern side along the Balkan Peninsula. Sam had found out in Trieste that the usual route from Trieste to Palestine via Alexandria in Egypt was closed because of cholera or plague, so we had to travel in a round about way and change boats to get to Jaffa in Palestine.

Our boat went to several small ports along the Balkan shore where it stopped to take on and disembark passengers and cargo. The people were from different Balkan nations. There were Greeks dressed in their national costumes of tight trousers with longish coats and small caps embroidered with beads, in various shades of blue. Then there were the Albanians: striking looking men, tall and handsome with long noses. They wore baggy pantaloons, reaching to mid calf, long white stockings and patent leather pumps, white shirts, a red sash round the waist and a red fez on the head.

We did not go ashore along the Balkan coast. From here the boat swung to the island of Corfu where we stopped for two days. It was a charming place with attractive villas and gardens. We visited the estate of the late Empress Louise of Austria but were not allowed to see the palace. The Empress was the unhappy wife of Emperor Franz Josef and she often retired to this palace to escape from the court in Vienna.

From Corfu the boat sailed to Patras in Greece. Some passengers got off here to go by train to Athens. They were mostly English, Sam said. He had been quite friendly with them. The only person I was friendly with on that boat was the Serbian officer who often came to talk to Charlie and me. His language was similar to Russian so we could understand each other. He told us about life in Serbia and sang songs that were similar to Russian folk songs.

After Patras the boat docked at Piraeus. Sam had promised to take Charlie and me to see Athens but unfortunately we had eaten too much ice cream at Corfu and were both suffering from diarrhoea, so we had to remain on the boat. We could see the ruins of the Acropolis through field glasses. Sadly I never had a chance of visiting Athens again. We were now in the Aegean Sea heading for our last port of call, Smyrna in Asia Minor[6], where we were to change ships. I had got used to the Vorwaertz and was sorry to part from her. While sailing on her the weather was fine and it was pleasant to sit on deck and look at everything there was to be seen in the ports. The Aegean Sea with its islands of Samos, Kos and Rhodes and the cities of Patras, Athens and Piraeus brought to mind ancient Greek history and mythology. All the Greek gods and goddesses and the ancient heroes seemed to come before my eyes as we sailed through the seas and around the places where they were supposed to have lived.

Asia Minor was little known to me from history and when we reached Smyrna I did not know what to expect. It was an Asian town and belonged to Turkey. Some of the people in the streets were dressed in long white robes with turbans on their heads. These were Arabs, I was told. Others, wearing European dress and red fezzes, were Turks, and a third group looked like the Albanians I had seen on the Balkan shores.

The business streets were very narrow and full of men, children and donkeys. When the donkeys appeared carrying luggage, pedestrians had to flatten themselves against the wall to let them pass. The shops looked like stalls at a fair. Carpets hung from doors and windows. All kinds of curios and jewellery were laid out on tables inside and outside the stores. Little tables with low seats round them stood in the wider streets and open spaces. Men in all kinds of dress sat drinking coffee from very

6 Now in Turkey and called Izmir

small cups or smoking long narghile pipes (hookahs). No women were to be seen in the cafes. Occasionally one saw some women, covered from head to foot in black with black veils over their faces, darting across a street.

We were glad to hear that our new small ship had come into port and we could resume our travels. From Smyrna we went to Beirut where we did not get off the boat at all and then we sailed on to Jaffa.

Palestine

At Jaffa the ship anchored quite a long way from the shore. A number of Arabs came out in small rowing boats. They came up to the deck to fetch the passengers and their luggage. We were taken down to one of the boats. They did not go right to the shore but stopped some way from the land so that we had to be carried ashore. I found this a rather unpleasant way of landing.

Father was there to meet us and he took us to an hotel where we had lunch. Soon after lunch we left by cart for Father's house in Rehovot. We did not see much of Jaffa and all I remember are dusty white streets and flat-roofed white square houses that stood right on the street. They were without gardens and everything looked dirty, hot, and dry.

The road from Jaffa wound along sand dunes with no trees or vegetation. The sand was deep and the one-horse cart just crawled along. After some miles of travelling, we came to the show colony or settlement called Rishon Le-Zion. It was the first permanent Zionist settlement in Palestine. It was established by immigrants from Russia and soon afterwards Baron Edmund de Rothschild from Paris helped them with funds and teachers to cultivate grapes and make good wine after the French style. The place

was green and looked cool after the glaring sun and the sand dunes. Further on, a few miles from Rehovot, was another settlement, much smaller than Rishon Le-Zion, but also green and cool-looking. It was called Vad-el-Chaneen.

Father seemed somewhat different from his old jolly self. I thought it was because we had come without Mother. It was over two years since her death. Father had prepared a house for her and when she died, he had taken a housekeeper who looked after him and the house. Not long before our arrival, he had married her. I was very upset and sulked a great deal. However, being young and there being so many new things to see and so many new interests, I recovered sufficiently to enjoy myself.

In Rehovot there were a number of friendly young people who all spoke Hebrew. Before Mother died she had engaged a teacher to teach me Hebrew as a language, but the Hebrew they spoke in Palestine sounded different. They spoke Sephardic Hebrew and we had learned Ashkenazi Hebrew. Charlie who had a good Hebrew schooling could soon chatter away in the new style but I could just about make myself understood. Some of the young people who came from Russia also spoke Russian so I was not without friends.

Rehovot was a large settlement. The inhabitants or colonists were not subsidised by anyone. They were mostly *galutzim* (pioneers) from Russia and Rumania. The majority were well educated. They had their own vineyards outside the settlement. The vineyards were adjacent to each other like the fields outside Russian villages. In the residential part of Rehovot were attractive houses with gardens and orchards.

The first month of our sojourn in Rehovot was pleasant. The weather was warm but not yet hot and we visited the different settlements. We travelled in the one-horse cart. We also had a donkey that Father bought

for Charlie and me and we took it in turns to ride it. The two largest settlements we visited were Rishon Le-Zion and Petach Tikva. At Rishon Le-Zion we were taken to the lovely big park with many tropical plants unknown to us and then to the cellars where wine was made and stored. We were invited to taste it. In Petach Tikva we were told how they farmed and lived. They seemed very satisfied with their new life.

On the way to Petach Tikva we passed the ancient town of Ramalla. It looked just like an Arab village. There we saw an Arab school where classes were being held out of doors. A number of boys sat at the side of the road repeating a lesson after their teacher in a singsong way. The pupils had no books. We stopped under a huge olive tree to have some refreshments and were told that the shade of this tree could cover a whole Bedouin caravan.

July and August were very hot months and it was impossible to leave the house in the daytime. All the windows had Venetian blinds that were tightly shut to keep out light and heat. The evenings, however, were cool and pleasant. The young people would gather and go for walks to the vineyards or sit in the open and chat. Interesting stories would be told of the adventures of the early settlers and even of the present ones. It was not unusual for Arabs to come at night to attack the settlers or to steal from them. The young people would get on their horses or donkeys to fight the Arabs and drive them away. Although the Turkish government and rich Arabs had sold the land to the Jews, there was no guarantee that they would be allowed to live in peace.

The nights were very beautiful. When the moon was shining, it seemed so very big and low in the sky and when there was no moon, the black sky was covered with millions of bright golden stars. One did not want to go inside where the rooms were full of buzzing mosquitoes that would not let one go to sleep.

At the end of August the grapes started to ripen. One could eat as much as one wanted in the vineyards. It was interesting to watch how they were picked. A caravan of Bedouin would come with their camels, wives, and children as well as their goats. They would put up their tents outside the settlement. The women in their long blue dresses with open sleeves, carrying large jars on their heads, would come to Rehovot to fetch water from the main well. They did not wear veils but had something like masks from which hung coins over their faces. They were tall and walked gracefully. They made a pretty picture. The men would come on their camels to the vineyards and pick the grapes. They would then load the grapes into large baskets, hang these on both sides of the saddle and go off in their caravans to the wine cellars in Rishon Le-Zion. No wine was made in Rehovot.

Once or twice towards the end of the day when it was not so hot, I ventured out of the settlement to the Bedouin camp. They lived in small tents – men, women, children, and goats, all in the same tent. They made fires from wood or straw between two bricks outside the tents. It was fascinating to watch the women making bread. They mixed flour with water to make a dough that they flattened into small cakes and baked in the hot ashes. The children clamoured round waiting to be given a newly-baked cake, which with some water from a tin, was evidently their supper. When I told some friends that I had gone to the Bedouin camp, they advised me not to do so again as I might not come back at all one day.

Return to Russia

As time went on, I became anxious to go back to Russia and to school. Father enquired about people with whom I could travel. In the meantime he arranged for a visit to Jerusalem, which, of course, I was very anxious

to see. But before the visit could take place, he heard of a Dr Malkin and his wife who were leaving Jaffa almost at once to return to Odessa. They had brought a young girl to Palestine to rejoin her parents. I could travel with them using her passport. I decided to go with them though I was sorry not to see Jerusalem. Father and Sam asked me to remain in Palestine but my mind was made up to return to school in Russia. Charlie stayed a few months longer and then he too left, going with Sam to South Africa and to school in Cape Town. Father and my brothers came to Jaffa to see me off. It was a very sad parting and I cried for days afterwards.

Dr and Mrs Malkin were a young recently-married couple and much wrapped up in each other. They paid little attention to me. I should have been put in the charge of the captain who was much more concerned about me than they. The steamer was a small Russian cargo boat plying the coast of Asia Minor from Odessa through Constantinople and the Dardanelles to Palestine and back. Its name was *Cesarevitch* (Crown Prince). To my delight the captain, the officers, and the crew were all Russian and I could speak to them.

There were very few European passengers, if any, apart from the Malkins and me. In those days the whole of Asia Minor belonged to Turkey and all the officials were Turks. A number of Turkish families embarked or disembarked at various ports. They pitched their tents on the top deck. It was interesting to watch them and to make up stories about them. A young good-looking Turk in European clothes with a red fez would at certain times of the day go to one of the furthest tents and whistle. A young woman would lift the flap of the tent. They would talk to each other for a while. Then the flap would suddenly come down and the young man would hastily return to the other side of the deck. It could have been a romance.

Food was not officially provided but passengers could order from the kitchen. I had a small cabin to myself and a sailor brought me food. There was no stewardess on board but I was well looked after and the captain had a word with me every day.

After leaving Jaffa, we stopped at Beirut and then at Smyrna, places I had seen on my way to Palestine. The beaches around Smyrna were all flat and sandy but further north the scenery was different. There were cedar trees, villages nestling in the hills, and single villas surrounded by gardens. When we were passing through the Dardanelles, the boat almost touched Europe and Asia at the same time. I was as excited as I had been when travelling through the Austrian Alps on the way to Trieste. Only Charlie was not there to share the experience with me.

One fine morning we reached Constantinople. The boat anchored in the middle of the Bosphorus. Small boats took passengers to the town. The Malkins left early without telling me. The captain was sorry for me but he could not let me go with any of the officers nor could he take me himself. So for three days I was aboard a ship in Constantinople[7] without seeing this great ancient capital of Eastern Europe. In the distance I could see the golden cupolas and domes of the ancient church of Sancta Sofia. In front of the boat were marble palaces that I was told housed the Sultan's harems.

I was very miserable and wondered why fate was punishing me. It was the third famous city which was so near but I could not visit - first Vienna, then Athens and now Constantinople. At last on the third day, the *Cesarevitch* was on its way. We passed through the Bosphorus into the Black Sea. The passage through this narrow strip of water between Europe and Asia was again very exciting. A high brick or stone wall en-

7 Now called Istanbul

closed Scutari[8] on the Asian side. On the top of the wall were large tubs of colourful flowering plants. Behind the wall were villas surrounded by gardens.

The weather had been good all the way from Jaffa but now it suddenly turned bleak and stormy. We were in the Black Sea, which got its name from these storms. The boat was tossed up and down and from side to side. At times it seemed that the deck was touching the sea. Though sick, I sat there holding on to the rails and not wanting to go down to the cabin. At last I did go down. The night seemed endless. I fell asleep eventually and was wakened in the morning by a knock on the cabin door. A sailor brought me some tea and said we had docked at Odessa.

I dressed quickly and went up on deck. The Malkins took me through customs and then to the station where they booked my passage to Shavli and left me. The train for the north did not leave until the evening so I asked a porter to take care of my luggage and went into the city. I did not see much of Odessa but I have a hazy recollection of the famous Richelieu stairs leading from the sea to the town. Recently, when reading the life of the Russian poet Alexander Pushkin who was in exile in Odessa in 1823, I learned that the Duc de Richelieu laid the foundation of the city of Odessa in 1793.

The train I boarded was going to Kiev but I had to change trains at Bachmatch. I knew this station well. It was where I used to change trains on my way to school from Mena to Nezhin. The train passed through Mena during the night. Memories of the happy days there when Mother was alive rushed to my mind. Her grave was there. I could not stop but had a good cry instead.

8 Scutari was an ancient city on the Bosphorus shore. As Istanbul its larger neighbour grew, Scutari became a suburb and then a part of metropolitan Istanbul.

Back in Shavli

My sisters, Golda and Deborah, my brother-in-law Hirsch, a couple of nephews and my niece Leah-Gittel (also known as Lena) met me at Shavli station. Lena was at the same school as I but in a lower class. She was a few years younger than I.

At school I was given a great reception by my schoolmates as well as by my teachers. I was called "the traveller" and was asked innumerable questions about my travels and about the places I had visited. When the headmistress interviewed me, she told me that the school committee had decided that I did not need to sit any examinations as my marks during the previous year had been good. I would only have to catch up in the subjects that the class had studied while I was away. Some subjects like physics and botany were new to me. In mathematics they had also done a lot of new work. I had to set to and work hard so that by the end of the quarter, I was ready for the quarterly tests. When these were over, I could breathe more easily and resume a more leisurely life. My old pupil Genya Kretchin was waiting for me to resume her coaching and I was glad to be going to her home again. Now I was also invited on some of the evenings when they had interesting visitors.

I had two more years of schooling before the final examinations. The girls in the class started talking about what they were going to do after leaving school. I would have liked to study with a famous Russian woman Sofia Kovalevskaya who was Professor of Mathematics but I was a Jewess and would not be accepted in a Russian university. Even if I was accepted I would never be given any post afterwards.

The only work in those days open to women with a university education, apart from teaching, was medicine. Several of the girls thought they

would go abroad to Switzerland or Germany to study. I felt that I should do likewise. But Deborah was against this. I did not know what was really going to happen to me. I was hoping that when the time came and I wrote to my brothers in Africa, they would understand me better and would agree to support me. In the meantime there was another two years at the gymnasium.

Recuperating in Riga

When the next long summer vacation started, I was tired and did not feel well. My sister's doctor, an elderly woman called Dr Sammit, recommended that I be sent to the seaside. There was a sea resort near Riga where we had relations. My sister got in touch with a first cousin Rosa-Lea Michelson who arranged for me to stay with people who had a dacha at Karlsbad, a holiday resort on the coast, and wanted a paying guest.

The Michelsons lived in Riga where they had a big business. Riga was the capital of old Latvia but at the time of my first visit it was one of the largest cities in Russia. Although Russianised, Riga was a German city, just as Kiev was Russian. It was an old city, dating from the Middle Ages, when it was built by the Livonian Knights. Old castles still stood on some of the hills inside and outside the modern city. The river Daugava passes through the city but I thought it was not as beautiful as the Dnieper in Kiev. Apart from the old castles there were not as many reminders of antiquity as there were in Kiev. There was an Opera House where operatic performances in German were given during the winter season, and a big theatre where plays were staged in Russian and German. The majority of the population spoke German or Latvian. The younger generation had to speak Russian because all the subjects at

school were taught in Russian by Russian teachers. In the shops all three languages were spoken.

I stayed with the Michelsons for a few days. One morning Rosa-Lea took me to the town market. It was all so orderly and organized. Fish swam about in large glass tubs and were taken out for each customer. There were large barrels of red and black caviar standing next to stalls on which all kinds of fish, including sturgeon from the Volga and flounder from the Gulf of Riga, were laid out. Then there were the vegetable sections and the dairy stalls with cream and butter and many kinds of cheese. I had never seen such a market before, or indeed since.

Rosa-Lea then took me to Karlsbad. It was one of three little towns that formed the Gulf of Riga summer resort. The other two were Dubeln and Majorenhof. They all had pretty dachas. The beach along the shore was covered in soft white sand. The sea was never rough and the bathing was very safe. We used to bathe twice a day - before breakfast and late in the afternoon. There was a thick forest beyond the dachas. Visitors would spend the mornings there in hammocks. The ground was covered with wild strawberries and blueberries, which I had not seen in Ukraine. We picked and ate them. We met old friends there and made new friends. Twice a week, there were evening concerts in one of the little towns at which the Riga Philharmonic Orchestra performed. Music lovers came from Riga. It was thrilling to listen to good music and I never missed a concert. I was accompanied by a medical student who was the son of the people with whom I stayed. The days passed most pleasantly and quickly. The holiday at the coast did me a lot of good and my health improved.

I came back to Shavli invigorated. I worked hard at my studies and the winter went by quickly. In the spring I passed my examinations with

very high marks except in composition which was only satisfactory and therefore spoiled my prospects of a gold medal.

South Africa

The family decides my future

I had always dreamed of going to university to study medicine. Before I had time to collect my thoughts and to approach Deborah or to write to my brothers about my plans to go to Switzerland to study, Deborah informed me that she was getting ready to go with her two children to join Abraham-Leib in South Africa, and that Sam had written to her that she was to bring me with her. It was a terrible blow. I was stunned. What would I do in South Africa? It was all very well to consider the Boers as heroes in their fight against the English in the war that had just ended, but to go and live there! People went there because they had to get out of Russia to make a living or for political reasons but never to pursue idealistic motives. I wrote to Sam and protested but it took nearly five weeks for a letter to reach South Africa and I never got a reply. In the meantime they kept on writing that I should come with my sister. I wanted to run away but I had no money and, not being of age, could not get a passport.

My brother Charlie was at school in Cape Town and liked being there. He was very happy. He had joined the cadets and sent me a snap of himself in cadet uniform. He wrote that his group of cadets were in the guard of honour for the Duke and Duchess of York who were in Cape Town soon after the Boer War ended.

When Deborah finished her preparations for the trip, she visited relatives in various towns to say good-bye, leaving me with Golda. I was miserable and went to visit my old history teacher Mr Shpakovsky to tell him my troubles. He viewed the matter from a different angle. To him, a Russian, the Boers were heroes. He was sure they were idealistic and that there would be work for intellectuals to help restore the land after the cruel war. This chat helped reconcile me to the idea of going to Africa. I promised to write to him. Our correspondence continued for years, almost to the beginning of the Russian revolution when he sent me a copy of Professor Milukov's last speech to the Russian Duma. Mr Shpakovsky gave a small party for me, to which he invited my teachers. Those who had not yet gone away for their summer vacation came and brought me their photographs with flattering inscriptions to me. I still have them.

When Deborah came back, she took it for granted that I was ready to go with her. What else could I do? I was not excited about this journey and kept on sulking.

Journey to South Africa

It was the beginning of autumn 1902 when Deborah with her two small boys Chaim and Alec and I set out for South Africa. Mark, one of Golda's sons, went with us. We travelled through Berlin and Holland. We arrived in London on a foggy, rainy day. What impressed me most about

London was the great number of people in the streets. We must have been going along Cheapside when I imagined that, if I jumped off the bus, I could walk on the heads of the crowd below. After a short stay, we left London for Southampton where we boarded the Caledonian Castle.

The boat was full - mostly with women and children who were going to join husbands and fathers who had served with the British Forces in the Boer War. They seemed a jolly crowd but I could not understand a word they said. They sang a lot and I later learned that the songs were those popular during the war. There were also quite a few immigrants from Latvia and Lithuania. Years later I met a man who told me that he had travelled on the same boat when he was a young man. In South Africa he became a well-known financier. He said he remembered me as a pretty, young girl, rather sulky, who would not talk to anybody but sat reading Russian books.

We stopped at Madeira and went ashore. We went by train to the top of a hill and came down in a bullock-drawn sledge along shiny pebble-paved streets. Along the road we saw women sitting on verandahs doing needlework. I think that after Madeira we had another two weeks at sea. I enjoyed the sea journey. The weather was fine and warm and I loved sitting near the rails watching the flying fish and the changing colours of the water and sky. The sunsets were magnificent.

Cape Town

One evening we were told that we would be in Cape Town the following morning. We got up early to watch the entry into Table Bay. Table Mountain was in front of us and the whole view was most delightful. My brothers Sam and Charlie were there to meet us. Abraham-Leib Schwartz was not there as he could not come from Bloemfontein where he had

established a business during the war. I was glad the long journey had come to an end and was pleased to see my brothers. They took us to a small hotel for a few days and then Deborah and her two boys left by train for Bloemfontein.

Sam told me that he had arranged for me to stay with an English family where I would be taught English and the English way of life. I do not think that I was impressed by my brother's anxiety to change my personality from Russian to English but I wanted to do the right thing so I did not argue. However, the family where I was to be anglicised, had no room for me just then. Several girls were staying there and we were told that, when one of them left in a few months' time, I could have her room. In the meantime I was placed in a private house belonging to a Dutch couple, Mr and Mrs Davids, who took paying guests.

The Davids

Mr and Mrs Davids could speak German and that made it easy for me to talk to them. They had about ten children, aged from five to twenty-five. They all spoke English. The eldest son had been in the war, fighting on the Boer side. The eldest daughter was a dressmaker with a fashionable clientele. As I did not have many dresses, Sam asked her to make me a few suitable frocks. When these were ready, I put on one made of white spotted muslin, let down my long golden brown hair and fastened it with a broad black ribbon. I really looked quite attractive. Sam was pleased with my appearance and said he would take me to meet his friends.

I spent three months in that house and thoroughly enjoyed myself. I do not think that anyone there found my manners too Russian and I was not conscious that I did not use a knife and fork correctly. There were

four other boarders staying with Mr and Mrs Davids. One was a middle-aged lady Miss Lena Lowenstark who was a teacher. She agreed to give me English lessons. I must confess I was a very difficult pupil always questioning the rules. I could not, or would not, understand that one had to learn the spelling of almost every single word and then pronounce it differently. Hearing the children speak English, however, and having learnt German, French and Latin at school, I found that I could understand some words and tried to pronounce them, often quite wrongly. This made the children shriek with laughter. The adults, on the other hand, were kind and corrected me tactfully.

Three young men were also staying in the house. One was a young Dutch Jew called Nathan Levi who had lived in the Transvaal[9] before the war. He was a journalist and pro-Boer. After the war he was exiled by the British and lived for a while in Spain. He was a great help to me in learning English. He also helped me by translating what other people said into German, which he spoke well. He told me about life in Johannesburg where his parents lived and where he was going in a few months' time. Later he was the editor of a Dutch newspaper in Pretoria. He was the first man to write a life of General Jan Smuts.[10] The second man was a young cultured Greek who had come to South Africa as a representative of a big Greek business concern. He spoke French and also used Nathan Levi as a translator. The third was a pompous young English Jew. He was the editor of a small journal, *The South African Jewish Chronicle*. His name was Lionel Goldsmith. Of the three I liked him least and it took a lot of effort to discourage his attentions.

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9 The Transvaal was one of the Boer republics defeated in the Anglo-Boer war. It was incorporated into the new Union of South Africa after the war, together with the Orange Free State, the other defeated Boer republic, and the two former British colonies the Cape Province and Natal.

10 Jan Smuts (1870 – 1950) was Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa 1919-1924 and 1939-1948

The house was in a small street in Gardens, a suburb of Cape Town. It was a large double-storey house with a verandah on the first floor. There was a lovely view from this verandah - the sea in the distance in front, with the mountains to the side and houses with gardens in the immediate neighbourhood. I liked sitting there, working at my lessons or just dreaming. As a rule there was nobody else on the verandah in the morning or early afternoon but sometimes Lionel Goldsmith would suddenly appear and try to entertain me. I did not understand what he was talking about and to get him out of my way, I pieced together with the help of a dictionary the following sentence, "I like you there on the far side of the verandah." He was very offended but I was free of him for a day or two. The Greek was also annoyed that I did not want to go for walks with him but preferred talking to Nathan Levi about books, politics, and his life in Spain.

With the help of a dictionary I started reading books. It was a slow process but I was interested and found that I understood what I was reading. Charlie gave me my first English book - it was *Sturdy and Strong* by G A Henty.

It was the middle of the summer and very hot in Cape Town. I never went out in the afternoons but I liked to stroll about in the mornings and watch the life on the streets. I could not help seeing that the majority of the pedestrians and workers were black or coloured[11] and very poorly dressed, worse than the peasants and workers in Russia. The servants who cleaned the house were black and there was a black man helping in my brother's shop. It made me think that even in a democratic country there was poverty and inequality.

11 Word used to denote a person of mixed race

Sometimes I walked to Sam's business in Sir Lowry Road, which was a long way from Gardens. I had a good sense of direction and found my way easily. It was intriguing to change the route and see different parts of the city.

I always seemed to be busy with something, and time passed quickly. Sam came most evenings to see me and took me to meet his friends. Charlie was studying for his matriculation examinations and could only come on Sundays. There were no cinemas in those days, but there were plays at the theatre to which I was sometimes taken. The first English play that I saw was a Gilbert & Sullivan musical. Though I did not understand much of it, I enjoyed the music. On Sundays, Sam and Charlie, together with our nephew Mark, would come to see me and we would go by tram or train to scenic places in and around Cape Town. Occasionally we went as far as Muizenberg where we bathed and spent the day on the beach. At first I did not realise how hot the sun was and was terribly burnt and sore for days after.

The Orensteins

At the beginning of February, Sam heard that his friends the Orensteins could let me have a room in their home where they had boarders - some girls attending school in Cape Town and a couple of young business men related to the family. The Orensteins were an English Jewish family who would teach me English and the English way of life. Their daughter Rose, who was in charge of the house, was to be my teacher.

Miss Rose was not a sympathetic person. She, like many other English Jews, was prejudiced against people coming from Russia, which she thought was an uncivilised country. I did not have an inferiority complex and thought that she, together with the other English-speaking peo-

ple in the house, lacked education, so we always clashed. I was not rude but often took no notice of what she said, pretending that I did not understand even when I did. The two young Orenstein men did not seem to have any time for me. Only a friend of theirs, Frank Nelson, who often came to see them, was friendly. He called me "Polly" and made me smile the moment he came into the house. I was not happy in that house.

It was better when old Mrs Orenstein and her younger daughter Grace returned from Johannesburg where they had visited Mrs Orenstein's eldest daughter Mrs Vogel. Mrs Orenstein was a dignified old woman who dressed in black with a little white cap and a small apron. I was told that she dressed like the late Queen Victoria. The stories she told of her youth were very interesting. She was born in England and spent some time in Paris where she saw Emperor Louis Napoleon. Later she went to Australia where her husband was a rabbi. Their children were born there. He had accepted a call from Cape Town where he became a famous rabbi in the Gardens Synagogue. One of their daughters Mrs Brooke told me that she remembered the voyage by sea from Australia; it took over two months.

Episode *Djiggit*

My brothers introduced me to the Ginsberg family who lived not far from the Orensteins. They had come from Russia and spoke Russian. The elder daughter Lena and I became friends. Whenever I could, I used to go to their house. Lena and I went for walks or to town to look at the shops or to have tea in a tearoom where we met some of her friends.

One day Lena came to me and said she had read in the newspaper that a Russian man-of-war had arrived at the Cape Town docks on the way to the Far East. She suggested that we go and visit the ship. We did so the

following day. When we arrived at the docks, we were shown where the ship was. The Russian flag was flying from the high mast and the name *Djiggit* was painted on the side. As we came near, we saw sailors scrubbing the deck and heard them singing familiar Russian folk songs. I greeted them with a Russian *Zravsvute* (literally, Be well with you – a greeting like Good day. They looked up in surprise, and beaming, responded with "*Zravsvute Barishnya*" ("Good morning, young Miss").

I told them that we wanted to see their ship. They consulted each other and then one ran off and returned with two officers. After mutual greetings, I explained the object of our visit. They readily consented to show us round. We were shown the decks with the guns, the engine room and some of the officers' cabins. One of our guides was a tall fair officer with a small beard but very young-looking. He could not get over the fact that he was meeting two young ladies in Cape Town who spoke to him in his mother tongue and seemed in every way Russian. He showed us his cabin, which looked cosy and neat. There were pictures and photographs on the walls and a whole collection of silver Caucasian daggers hanging over a small writing desk. Each dagger had a name engraved on it. In the middle was a tiny dagger with the name *Djiggit* on it. "What a lovely thing", I said. "I would like to have it." Of course, he did not hurry to take it down for me nor did I expect him to.

We were invited to the mess room where we were given a real treat of Russian tea. Other officers joined the party and it was a jolly affair. The tall fair officer attached himself to me and told me that they came from Kronstadt, the naval port near St. Petersburg. They were going to Vladivostok where they would be stationed in case, or in anticipation, of war with Japan, which did break out less than a year later. I, in turn, told him how I came to be in South Africa and that I was hoping that I would not stay there long but would return to Europe to study medicine. He hoped we would meet again during his stay in Cape Town.

A few days later, Lena told me that a Russian officer had paid them a visit at their home and invited her parents and her to a dinner party in Cape Town's leading hotel. He asked them to bring me along. I went to Miss Rose and told her. She said it would not be the right thing to do and that my brother would not like it. It meant that she did not like it and I had to refuse the invitation. I was very upset. Sam was very good to me and I did not want to put him out. After the dinner party, Lena told me what a good time they all had and that the Russian officer Mr Pell was upset that I had not come. He asked her to give me a small parcel. It contained the lovely dagger and his photograph with a touching inscription. I still have both. The inscription read "To dear Miss Podlashuk as a sign of eternal friendship from a loving sailor." The *Djiggit* episode was the most pleasant thing that happened to me in Cape Town.

The rest of my stay in Cape Town was rather drab - reading and having English dictation in the mornings, going for walks in the afternoons, visiting my brother in his shop or visiting friends with my brothers at weekends. All this was not to my taste. At the Orensteins they spoke only English, which was good for me and I could now understand what was going on around me but it was still not interesting. Then after the very hot trying summer, the rainy season set in and at times it was miserably cold. I started to nag my brother, saying it was time for me to go to Bloemfontein to join my sister. It was nearly a year since I had arrived and I felt it was time to make a move, to see more of South Africa and then to try and get away. I had also not yet seen my brother Phillip who was in Johannesburg in the Transvaal. Charlie had matriculated and had also gone to the Transvaal.

I was told that I would find it terribly cold in Bloemfontein and in the Transvaal during the winter and that it would be cold and dry even on the journey. This did not dismay me and without waiting for warmer weather, I set off for Bloemfontein. The train left Cape Town in the eve-

ning so I did not see the scenic Hex River Mountains, which we passed at night. When I woke in the morning, we were in the Karoo, a dry empty wilderness with no fields of grain or meadows, no forests or rivers as I had seen in Russia on my train journeys from the Ukraine to the Baltic. There were no towns either, only a siding at long intervals and, at shorter intervals, block houses left over from the recent war. The country looked monotonous and depressing. After two nights and two days I arrived in Bloemfontein.

Bloemfontein

My sister Deborah with her husband Abraham-Leib and their two small boys Chaim and Alec met me at the station. On the way to the small house in Henry Street where they lived, we passed the main business street. The buildings were almost all single storey and the shops looked uninteresting. The whole place looked like a continuation of the dry dusty Karoo.

Deborah seemed to have settled down happily. She had made friends, sent the elder boy to school and engaged a teacher to give her English lessons. The teacher Miss Mosely was a fine intelligent woman and I too availed myself of her teaching. She came from London where she had been a pupil teacher in a big school and certainly knew better how to impart her knowledge than my two previous teachers. She lent me books, helped me read them, and discussed English literature with me. With Miss Mosely I went for walks and saw the few redeeming features of the town such as the old Raadsaal, the Residency, and the monument to President Brandt.[12] She was the first English-speaking person that I really appreciated. I did not stay more than about four months in Bloem-

12 Sir Jan Hendrik Brand - President of the Orange Free State Republic 1864 - 1888

fontein as my brother Phillip was anxious to see me and could not leave his business to come to Bloemfontein. He wrote that I should come to Johannesburg.

Johannesburg

I travelled from Bloemfontein during the night. When I woke up in the morning, there was not much to be seen and only when the train was approaching Johannesburg, did the mountains of sand attract my attention. I could not make out what these were and was told by a fellow passenger that they were sand deposits that remained after gold had been washed out of the crushed gold-bearing ore. Between the mine dumps, as the sand hills were called, and the railway lines were small ugly houses built of wood and iron – not an impressive entrance to the "Golden City".

At the station I was met by Phillip. I did not recognise him. He was just a boy when he left home and now he was a man, though a rather short one. He recognised me and in his friendly genuine way greeted me, welcoming me to Johannesburg. He had arranged for me to stay with Mr and Mrs Abrahams, an English Jewish family. They had not long before come from London. Mr Abrahams was the headmaster of the Jewish Government School in Johannesburg.

The Abrahams

The Abrahams lived in Kerk Street opposite the Catholic Cathedral. It was considered to be quite a good neighbourhood, just a little out of the town centre and not far from Doornfontein, a fashionable residential suburb where mining magnates lived. End Street, along which a horse-

drawn tram ran from Doornfontein to Commissioner Street in the heart of town, was a few streets away. The streets in those days were unpaved and covered in dust that stuck to one's clothing. Today only the cathedral is still there and the row of red brick houses has been replaced by big business premises.

Mr and Mrs Abrahams were fine genuine people. They had come to Johannesburg with a number of other English teachers. It was during Lord Milner's administration when the schools in the newly conquered Boer republics were to be managed by English teachers, and all subjects were to be taught in English. As I lived in an English-speaking circle, I took it all for granted and never gave a thought to the children of the Boers. Living with the Abrahams, I naturally heard the English view of the Anglo-Boer War and as I liked them, I was ready to accept their version. From them I also learned more of the English way of life. Mrs Abrahams' family had lived in England for generations. Mr Abrahams' parents had come from Poland. He went to school in London and was at the same school as the great writer Israel Zangwill who was his friend. I often heard stories of Israel Zangwill and that made me read his books. Under Mr Abrahams' guidance and with his wife's help, I also started reading other English authors. My English quickly improved and I began to take part in general conversation.

Mr and Mrs Abrahams had only one child, a small boy called Herbert. He was at school during the morning and I spent most of that time with Mrs. Abrahams, shopping with her or watching her do her housework. Of course they had a native[13] servant, a tall, big, black man called John, who seemed to be able to do most of the work under his mistress' guidance.

13 Word used then to denote any black person in South Africa

Mr Abrahams was a very busy man. Apart from his schoolwork, he was involved in communal affairs. With some friends he formed a social club where lectures were given and debates held. I liked going with them to the club where I met a number of interesting people. The club was sometimes visited by people from the "upper strata" who liked to show their interest in the ordinary man in the street. Among these visitors were Mr Max Langerman, a mining magnate, Mr Jack Andrew Cohen and his brother Lionel who became Wing Commander Lionel Cohen during the Second World War.

My brother Phillip

Phillip came to visit me several times a week. He was a short young man with regular features, a small moustache, and blue eyes - a feature of all members of our family although the blue differed in shade. Phillip, like Sam, owned a men's outfitting business. Neither of them had been trained in any profession or trade and they found that they could manage this kind of business. Phillip had a partner and as they did quite well and he had no one to support except himself, he could look after me. He was not interested in literature or lectures. He liked to enjoy himself. He was a good dancer and naturally liked to go to balls and parties. He had a nice circle of friends in the Russian-Lithuanian community and took me to meet them. They were all very hospitable and made me feel welcome.

Like Sam, Phillip wanted me to look smart and be well dressed. His friends recommended a firm in Pritchard Street that had a dressmaking section so I had some dresses made there. Pritchard Street was the main shopping street. Here there were big shops like Stuttafords, which sold expensive clothes for women. It ran from von Brandis Square to Rissik Street where the post office stood. Market Square was opposite the post

office. It was busy in the mornings when farmers came in their ox-wagons laden with produce to sell to the towns-people. The town hall was later built on the square. The municipal offices were housed in a wood and iron structure in Eloff Street near the station at the far end. There were a few small shops and empty spaces in the rest of Eloff Street. At the corner with Pritchard Street stood a produce store which was later replaced by a music shop called Polliacks. There were no law courts on von Brandis Square then.

It all sounds rather primitive but in those days we did not think of it as such. We liked going to town and looking at shops. Then we would have tea at Quinn's which was the meeting place of the young people as well as the older ones. Actually there were as yet few old people to be seen in Johannesburg. I went to town often while my dresses were being made and so got to know the town well.

Soon there was an occasion when I could wear my first new evening dress. A big ball was held at the Wanderers Club to raise funds for the victims of the Kishinev pogrom in Russia.[14] This was a terrible tragedy. I could hardly believe that such a thing could happen. The peasants were so friendly to us when we lived in the Ukraine. To think that they could turn into such beasts and slaughter innocent people, even if organised to do so by the "black police", horrified me. It was a sad occasion but the people giving contributions were going to enjoy themselves just the same. I must admit that I too forgot about the poor victims of the pogrom; this was my first ball. Many young men were introduced to me

14 Kishinev pogrom was an anti-Jewish riot in Kishinev (currently Chişin□u and capital of Moldova). It started in April 1903 after an incident in February on the Orthodox Christian Easter. A Christian Russian boy was found murdered in a nearby town. Jews were alleged to have killed him and to have used his blood in the preparation of matzo. Forty-seven Jews were killed, ninety-two severely wounded, five hundred slightly wounded, and over seven hundred houses looted and destroyed. No attempt was made by the police or military to intervene to stop the riots until the third day.

and my programme was soon filled. I was not a good dancer but I got through all right even in the Lancers,[15] which I had never danced before.

The outing with Phillip that I liked best was going to the theatre. Johannesburg then had three main places of entertainment: His Majesty's, the Standard and the Empire. Good musical comedy companies were brought out from England for His Majesty's. I saw *The Country Girl*, *The Dollar Princess*, and *The Quaker Girl* there. All had good actors and actresses with fine voices. Leonard Rayne[16] and his company played at the Standard. Variety shows with people like Ada Reeve[17] played at the Empire.

Time passed quickly and I did not realise I was wasting it or think that I ought to be doing something else. In those days girls did not work to earn a living. I was one of those parasites too and what's more, I enjoyed the life I led. Once, when I broached the subject with Phillip of returning to Europe to study medicine, he was very surprised that I was still thinking about it. He said that it did not depend on him in any case but he knew that Sam was against it.

Bloemfontein again

Deborah wrote that she was expecting a baby and wanted me to come and help look after the two boys and the house while she was not able to do so. Thanking Phillip for all he had done for me, I went off to Bloem-

15 Abbreviated from the "Quadrille of the Lancers" - an energetic dance of open couples

16 Leonard Rayne (William Watts Cowie): theatrical entrepreneur, producer and actor-manager with a predilection for Shakespeare. He dominated professional theatre in South Africa

17 Adelaide Mary Reeve (1874 – 1966): daughter of the actor Charles Reeve, child and musical comedy star who later became a character actor in film and on stage

fontein. After the gay life in Johannesburg, Bloemfontein appeared even more dull and monotonous than on my first visit but as I had come to help my sister, I made up my mind to do my best. I helped the two small boys with their lessons and took an interest in the house. The baby arrived - a lovely little girl, fair with blue eyes. People thought she looked like me. She was given the name of Theodora Carmel but was called Dolly, a more appropriate name for a baby. In later years, however, she insisted on being called Carmel.

Many friends called to see my sister and the baby. Some I knew from my previous visit but there were also new and more interesting friends such as the Ehrlichs and the Leviseurs. They were old residents of the town, their forefathers having come out with the 1820 settlers. Mr Ehrlich was the Mayor of Bloemfontein. His eldest daughter Rose befriended me and through her I met many young people. She is still a friend of mine.

Soon after we met, she told me she was organising a farewell ball for British officers who were returning to Britain with their regiments. They had come out for the war and after peace was declared, had stayed on at Tempe, a military base not far from Bloemfontein. The officers made friends with the townspeople who accepted them into their homes. Now a Scottish Regiment was leaving and the young people of the town were giving them a farewell ball. Rose Ehrlich was the convenor of the committee that was making the arrangements. She asked me to come to their meetings at her house. It was interesting to watch how they organised the programmes. When arranging the music for the dances, a Miss Botha who had just come back from Brussels where she had been at school, asked that a waltz, *Kissing is Not a Sin*, be played. There was great consternation among the committee members as to whether their parents would consider this proper.

The ball was at the Ramblers' Hall. It was and still is the sports club of Bloemfontein. Most of the local young people and the officers for whom the ball was given were there and I was introduced to several young men. Three of the men I was told were on vacation from the foremost English universities, Cambridge and Oxford. I became interested at once. They were George Brebner whom I met years later in Pretoria when he was the Government Law Adviser, and Mr Maarsdorp the son of Judge Maarsdorp; the third was a son of Sir John Fraser. All three seemed to be interested in me as I had come from Russia and was quite an intelligent young woman. They asked me a lot of questions and in turn told me about their universities. I thoroughly enjoyed the evening and was sorry that the young men's vacation was nearly at an end.

I stayed in Bloemfontein for a considerable time. With all the new friends and a good supply of books from the town library, I did not fret. My relatives, however, did not see any prospects for me in Bloemfontein. They, of course, thought in terms of my getting married to some suitable man. If I myself ever thought of marriage, it was to be only if I were in love and this I certainly was not. My idea of love was that it should be for a man of a much higher status than those I had so far met and that marriage was certainly not something that could be arranged by others.

Back to Johannesburg

Sam was now also in Johannesburg where he had opened a shop. Phillip had his own business and was doing well. Charlie was in Pretoria. So I went back to Johannesburg. Phillip had arranged for me to stay in a German house where they had paying guests. The house was in Koch Street on the east side of Joubert Park. The lady of the house came from Germany and was an educated woman. The boarders were mostly engineers working for German mining machinery business houses. There

was only one Englishman, a Mr Goldsmith, who was working in one of Lord Milner's offices. He chose to lodge there as he wanted to learn to speak German. He had come to South Africa during the war as an officer in one of the English regiments. When the regiment returned to England, he decided to stay behind. He evidently wanted to keep up a style of life

better than that of an office clerk so he bought a trap - a high vehicle on two wheels with seats facing back and front - and a horse and engaged a native driver for whom he had a green uniform made. He used to go out driving. At times he was amusing but mostly rather a bore, repeating the same stories ad nauseum.

The other young men, the Germans, were full of their own importance. They gave one to understand that as Germans they were a cut above all other immigrants. Their arrogance often put my back up. I soon realised that there were many Germans in Johannesburg and I made friends with

some of them. A couple I particularly liked and admired was Mr and Mrs Paul Neuman. He was an engineer on the new gold mines where he designed equipment. Unfortunately, his designs never became practical propositions. They had two daughters who went to the German school. As he did not manage to make a living, Mrs Neuman had to take in paying guests. Two, Mr Hans Merensky and Mr Dessauer, were mining prospectors. They were both interesting and charming young men and I enjoyed being invited to the Neumans for dinner. I spent many delightful evenings there. Hans Merensky later discovered the Namaqualand diamond fields and became a very rich man. When he died after the Second World War, he left his estate as a holiday centre for school children. He also left a lot of money to educational institutions in the Transvaal.

Another boarder at the Neumans was a German teacher Miss Voelkerling. Among her pupils were the daughters of Mr and Mrs George Albu, later Sir George. He was one of Johannesburg's mining magnates. The girls had an English governess, a Miss Graham who, Miss Voelkerling told me, was interested in learning Russian. She asked if I would teach her. I was very pleased with the chance of earning a little money for myself so I was introduced to Miss Graham and through her to the Albus. I used to go there twice a week and was sometimes asked to stay to lunch and so got to know the whole family. They were all very charming to me.

Apart from the few pounds it gave me, this small job was good for me. It restored some of my self-respect. The life of continuous frivolity and not doing anything of importance, just going to tea parties, theatres and dances - now also to the German Club - was making a different person of me. Though I did not give up any of these pleasures, deep in my consciousness there was strong disapproval of the way I was living.

Phillip marries

In the meantime my brother Phillip got engaged to be married. The same thing was expected of me but I was not in love with anyone. I was most unrealistic and romantic. I liked men's company, liked to talk to them but was not fond of ordinary flirtations and hated to be kissed. The men just could not understand me. When Phillip got married, I went to stay with them. My sister-in-law Becky was a pretty and pleasant girl. She was born in Russia but brought up in a school in London. We did not have much in common but she had great tact and I never knew whether she liked me or not. However, she was fair to me.

Life in Johannesburg 1904 - 1912

The South African Women's Federation

The house we lived in was in Kotze Street on Hospital Hill in the suburb of Hillbrow. In those days Kotze Street was a very quiet street of single storey houses with little gardens in front and a few double storey houses. Fred Ingram's chemist shop was at the corner of Twist Street opposite our house and there was a Greek shop a block away. No trams came up Twist Street till a year later. Fifty years later the whole suburb had changed out of all recognition. The houses were replaced with skyscrapers and shops of all kinds, and the population had increased considerably. It now has one of the highest densities in the world.

I became friendly with the Ingrams and used often to go across to chat with Mme Ingram. She was a French woman and a qualified chemist but did not practise her profession as she had a house and children to look after. She was born Mlle Andre, the niece of a minister in the French Government at the time of the Dreyfus case. She said her uncle supported Emile Zola in the case. She was an Alsatian and hated the Germans. Her mother remembered the 1870 Franco-German War when Strasbourg was invaded. One of her brothers was an officer in the First World War and served under General Joffre. She was a very interesting woman and I liked to listen to her stories.

Mme Ingram took part in social work and I went with her to many meetings. She was a member of the South African Women's Federation. Its main aim was the rehabilitation of poor whites. In pursuance of its aim, it established centres where poor women were taught spinning, weaving and basket making. As many of the members of the Federation were English-speaking, the meetings were conducted in English. I do not remember anyone speaking Afrikaans then although there were some Boer[18] members. I also became a member and helped in the workrooms and at fund-raising functions.

Through the Federation, I met a number of interesting women including Mrs Dora Poultney, a friend of Mrs Annie Botha, the English-speaking wife of Louis Botha who became the first Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa in 1910. After the First World War she, together with her son, wrote her reminiscences of the Boer War and the events that followed. I also met Mrs Beyers, the wife of the future Commandant-General of South Africa, C F Beyers, who was accidentally drowned while trying to avoid capture during the rebellion at the beginning of the First World War.

The secretary of the Federation was Mrs Johanna Brandt, the wife of Predikant[19] Louis Brandt. The couple lived not far from our house and I often visited them. He was a Hollander and an exceptionally fine man who lived and worked for his poor congregation. They had many children and experienced some hard times. Mrs Brandt, in addition to her work at home with her small children and her work in the Federation, found time to write a book about her exploits during the Boer War, *The Petticoat Commando*. She was a born Afrikaner and a great patriot. As a very pretty girl living in Pretoria, she was friendly with many of the Brit-

18 Also called Afrikaners

19 Minister of religion.

ish Officers and spied for her people, the Boers. She told how she learned about the timetables for the military trains and delivered this information to General de Wet who was famous for attacking trains. The Governor-General of the Union Patrick Duncan, later Sir Patrick Duncan, was one of the people to whom she read her notes before the book was published.

One day Mme Ingram took me to a mayoral reception. She introduced me to a new set of women, British women, among whom there were several journalists and reporters - Mrs Stansfield, "Badge" of the *Sunday Times* and Miss Nina Boyle of *The Leader*, a morning newspaper. As was the custom at the time, they mentioned me and my dress in their reports on this function. After this they always noticed me at parties and balls. Miss Boyle soon took an interest in me. She invited me to come and see her in her flat. There I met other British people and learnt their point of view on the Boer War. Miss Boyle was a remarkable woman. She had come to South Africa to find out why her brother, who had been an officer, was killed, not on the battlefield, but on a Boer farm after hostilities had ended. She wanted Lord Roberts[20] to investigate the matter and have the culprits punished. She was never given a satisfactory explanation of what happened and she harboured a great grievance against the Boers on the one hand and the British army authorities on the other. But she did not go back to England. She joined the staff of *The Leader* and became a very good journalist.

Women's Enfranchisement League

When the late republics the Transvaal and the Orange Free State were given responsible government by the British, Miss Boyle thought that

20 Lord Roberts was the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army.

South African women should also have the vote and she started the women's suffrage movement in the Transvaal. One day when I came to see her, she had a pile of typewritten sheets in front of her. She told me that these were invitations to prominent women to a meeting to launch the Women's Enfranchisement League of the Transvaal and to elect a committee. The women she was inviting were mostly English. I suggested that she invite the women of the South African Women's Federation also.

The idea of taking part in forming a society that would work for the good of women was attractive to me. To start with I did not know that women were not entitled to vote. Miss Boyle, however, explained to me that in Britain every man aged 21 years and older took part in electing members of parliament but no woman, even one with the highest university education, could vote. She thought that women in South Africa should see to it that from the start of parliamentary rule, they got the same rights as men. She told me that before she came to South Africa, she had been working in England for women's suffrage.

I helped to write the addresses, put stamps on the envelopes, and posted all the notices. Almost all the women who had been invited came to that first meeting at the Irene School hall. Miss Boyle was a very good speaker and impressed her audience. It was agreed that a society, to be called the Women's Enfranchisement League, should be formed. A committee was elected to run its affairs with Miss Boyle as president. Other committee members included Mrs Wybergh, Mrs Krause, Mrs Madge Napier - three outstanding intellectual women - Miss Dasant, a journalist, Mrs Wolf Myers, also a journalist, Miss Lawrence and Miss Earl, head and vice principal of Roedean Girls' High School. Miss Boyle proposed me as honorary secretary and her proposal was accepted. Some men also joined the League. Among them were Dr Francis Napier whose wife was on the committee and several young members of the Parlia-

mentary Debating Society. These included Mr F W Lucas and Mr Leslie Blackwell, both of whom in later years became judges, as well as Mr Israel (Issy) Hayman, an attorney, Mr Phil Davies and Mr Gus Hartogh.

The League meetings were always lively. More and more people joined us either out of interest in our work or from curiosity. I learnt to take notes of the meetings and write the minutes, reading them at the following meeting. Miss Boyle usually helped me write them in good English. I also took part in the discussions and put forward a few quite good ideas.

The Parliamentary Debating Society

Mr Nathan Levi whom I had met in Cape Town told me about the Parliamentary Debating Society. He was now living in Pretoria and was the editor of a Dutch newspaper. He called on me one day and suggested that I should go with him to a meeting. The members of the Society were young intellectuals - lawyers, advocates and literary men. They discussed current political issues and followed strict parliamentary rules of procedure. Women were not admitted as members but could attend the weekly meetings. There were usually a few women at every meeting. I used to go whenever I could get a woman friend to come with me, and soon got to know and become friendly with some of the members. Many of them later became members of the Union parliament like the first and second speakers of the present parliament, Mr Emil Nathan and Mr Frederick Claude Sturrock. The latter was Minister of Railways in a Smuts Government. Mr Gus Hartogh became a senator. I knew him and his cousin Mr Phil Davies well. Phil Davies was interested in literature and later founded the Johannesburg Book Club. I also became friendly with Israel Hayman, Reginald Saner and Gordon Grimmer. They all remained my friends till the end of their lives.

It was my ambition to become a member of the Parliamentary Debating Society and Nina Boyle said, "Why not? We'll ask them for the franchise for women and get in as members." So it was arranged with the society's committee that we would plead for the franchise at the bar of the house. I was nominated to speak for the women. Although I had occasionally spoken at meetings of the Women's Enfranchisement League, I felt nervous at the idea of speaking before all those clever young men. However, Miss Boyle would not hear of my backing out. She helped to write my speech and I had to rehearse it in front of her, Mrs Krause, and Mrs Wybergh, the three most prominent women speakers in Johannesburg. They were going to be with me at the meeting and see me through. The secretary of the society said that the meeting had not been advertised so there would not be many people and I need not be frightened in anticipation. Putting on a pretty pink evening dress, I went with my three supporters to the meeting.

We came early and were led into the committee room at the back of the hall. We did not see the audience and the members as they arrived. When at last the secretary came to call me, I looked into the hall and saw that it was full of people. I quickly retreated, only to be pushed back by my three friends. There seemed to be no escape. I felt very nervous and could not remember the speech I had learnt by heart but I knew what it was that I was going to ask and, with an encouraging smile from Mr Sturrock, I spoke in my own words, saying it was very unjust to deny intelligent people the vote or the right to become members of the society simply because they were women. I pointed out that women's brains and experience might be very good for the country and the society and could supplement the men's capacities to rule both. There was tremendous applause. A vote was taken and the women got the franchise in the little parliament in a church hall at the corner of Bree and End Streets.

Straight away a number of women of the Women's Enfranchisement League became members of the Parliamentary Debating Society. At the next meeting I was informed that I had been elected a member of the little parliament for the constituency of Piet Potgietersrust,[21] a small town in the Transvaal. Subsequently the men used to enjoy calling on that member to answer questions on the mismanagement of affairs in that constituency.

Gandhi

One day I noticed an advertisement in the paper that a Mr Gandhi was going to give a series of lectures on Hinduism. I asked one of my men friends to take me to the first lecture. At the hall I saw Mrs Wybergh and we joined her. She was glad to see me and said she knew Mr Gandhi and would introduce me to him after the lecture. Mr Gandhi was quite a young man. He was a little darker than a European[22] but otherwise not much different. He was dressed in a neat dark suit and spoke excellent English. His subject was new to me but very interesting.

Mrs Wybergh kept her word and after the meeting introduced me to Mr Gandhi. She seemed to know quite a lot about his activities in Johannesburg and asked him how things were going. I knew almost nothing about Indian affairs either in India or in South Africa so I just listened.

Some time later, however, I met a couple - Mr and Mrs Henry Polak - at a friend's house. He was a lawyer and a partner of Mr Gandhi. Mrs Milly Polak told me that Mr Gandhi had come from India to settle a legal case for a rich Indian. While he was working on it, he saw how disadvantaged

21 Now called Potgietersrust.

22 Word used to denote a white person in South Africa.

the Indians in South Africa were. They could not move from one part of the country to another and were not given a chance to improve their lives in any way. The Government was not prepared to make life easier for them. Mr Gandhi decided to stay in South Africa to help them.

I met Mr Gandhi several times. I heard him speak privately and in public and was rather impressed by his work though I never took an active part in helping with it. I had already so many interests to keep me busy. However, a few years after I went to his first lecture on Hinduism and when I was working as a shorthand typist, Mr Polak asked me to translate a Russian letter from Count Leo Tolstoy to Mr Gandhi. With the help of a dictionary and reading the translation to friends to see if my English was correct, I completed the job. A few days later it was published in a Johannesburg newspaper, the *Daily Mail*.[23] I did not know at the time that Mr Gandhi was corresponding with Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy and that this was the last of the three famous letters that the great Russian author had written to him, urging him to go on with the passive resistance campaign.

I still have a copy in Russian of the original letter. I wanted to keep the letter but was not permitted to do this so I copied it out. I also have my English translation. Apart from *The Daily Mail* it was published in the golden number of *Indian Opinion* in 1911. Not long ago I saw a small journal printed in Brussels in Russian, the *Unesco Kurrier*, in which the correspondence between these two great men was recounted. It mentioned that the last letter that had been written by Tolstoy on the 6th September 1910 - this was the date on the letter I translated - was in answer to Gandhi's last letter. Tolstoy had written the letter two months before he left his estate Yasnaya Poliana. When it reached Gandhi in

23 See the translation and a newspaper article about the translation in the Appendix.

South Africa, the great author was already lying on his deathbed in Astapovo, a little known station in central Russia.

At the time that Gandhi received Tolstoy's letter, he was busy with preparations for the march of passive resisters from Natal to the Transvaal, which Indians were not allowed to enter. It was to ignore or resist this prohibition that Gandhi collected hundreds of Indian men to march with him across the border. Two whites, his friend Mr Herman Kallenbach and his secretary Miss Sonia Schleson, marched with him at the head of the procession. At the border, the majority of the marchers were stopped and arrested. Gandhi, Herman and Sonia were allowed to go.

I do not know how many Indian men were arrested nor for how long they were held in custody but their wives and children were left without any financial support. This led Herman Kallenbach to buy Lawley Estate, a piece of land on the West Rand. It was renamed Tolstoy Farm and the families of the imprisoned men were brought there. The women and children were taught how to grow fruit and vegetables for sale. They were also given other income-generating work.

Mr Kallenbach invited me to visit the farm. He also extended the invitation to Miss Boyle and Miss Stewart Sanderson, a girl of my own age who had recently come from England and who was now joint secretary with me of the Women's Enfranchisement League. Stewart and I were keen to pay this visit. Miss Boyle was preparing for her departure to England and could not come with us. So one Sunday morning Stewart and I, both fair European girls, dressed in white muslin frocks with raincoats on our arms, set out by train for Lawley station to visit Mr Gandhi and Mr Kallenbach on Tolstoy Farm.

Mr Kallenbach was at the station to meet us. At first I did not recognise him. He certainly did not look like the gentleman in a frock coat and top

hat that I first met at a reception a few years before, nor did he resemble himself as he looked in evening dress in a ballroom. The man who came up to greet us was a dark-looking, sunburnt man without a hat. He wore white trousers fastened with a belt, a white shirt without a jacket or tie, and sandals without socks. This kind of attire causes no surprise now, about fifty years later, but in 1911 it was very unusual. I had heard from Sonia Schleson that he was leading a simple life but up to that morning I had not seen him so dressed - or undressed. Afterwards I met him many times in the streets of Johannesburg dressed in this informal way.

I informed him that Miss Boyle was unable to come and introduced Miss Sanderson. He told us that he was expecting another guest who was travelling on the same train. I said I had seen only a black man come off the train besides us. "That's him, " he said, and raced off to the other end of the platform. He came back with the black man who he introduced as Dr Seme. I did not catch the first part of the name but learnt later that he was Dr Pixley Seme.[24] To our embarrassment and surprise, he stretched out his hand to shake ours. We could not do anything else but what was expected of us. Except for his black face, he looked a gentleman. He was dressed in well-fitting European clothes and, according to the latest fashion for young men at the time, wore matching socks and tie. He had a diamond pin in his tie. We later learnt that he was an advocate who had recently returned from England where he had studied at Oxford University. We were also told that he was the grandson of a Zulu chief but I cannot say whether this was so or not.

With Mr Kallenbach we walked to Tolstoy Farm. The station was in the middle of the bare veld. There were no houses, farms or green fields and it was an uninteresting mile's walk but as we approached the farm, we saw green hedges and tall trees. There were a number of small buildings

24 Dr Pixley Seme (1881 – 1951) was founder and past president of the African National Congress.

on the farm and a large house on one side. The house was surrounded by a broad verandah where we were greeted by Mr Gandhi. He was dressed as informally as Mr Kallenbach. Not for a moment did we hesitate to shake his hand. He said he was sorry Miss Boyle had not come. He took us to his library. It was a large room lined with shelves full of books. There was a large desk in the middle and some easy chairs all around.

The conversation was mostly carried on by the three men. Mr Gandhi told Dr Seme about his passive resistance movement and how he had settled the women and children on the farm. He remarked on how satisfactorily it had all worked out. After tea he took us to see the workshops where the boys were learning shoe-making and tailoring and the women, basket-making. We were then taken to the orchard from where fruit was being sent to the Johannesburg market.

Mr Gandhi told me that his wife was also living on the farm and suggested that, if Miss Sanderson and I wished, he would take us to meet her. Mrs Gandhi was a small woman, dressed in a sari. She was sitting on a mat on the floor in the middle of a room that was almost empty except for a bed, a table and a couple of chairs. She smiled at us and said something in Hindu that we could not understand and which Mr Gandhi said was a greeting in answer to ours. She could not speak English. We were invited to join the women at their lunch though Mrs Gandhi would not be there. In the dining room or the kitchen, we found a great number of lively women and children, chatting and eating. Most of them sat on the floor. Each had a small bowl of curry and rice. Miss Sanderson and I were each given a small bowl and by signs invited to help ourselves from the large pots of curry and rice. I took a little but could not finish even that. Miss Sanderson, however, was very brave and finished all she had taken. After lunch Mr Kallenbach took us to the orchard where we feasted on peaches, apricots and other fruit. Later in the afternoon we had a nice European tea served by Mr Kallenbach.

Time was getting on and I started fidgeting about getting back to town. Mr Kallenbach assured me that there was a train that would get us into Johannesburg before dark. He and Mr Gandhi were to speak at a meeting there that evening. He invited us to come to the meeting with them but we resolutely declined. We started to walk to the station in good time. When we were quite near, I saw to my horror that the train was just pulling out. I believe I screamed. Mr Kallenbach ran to the station and the stationmaster signalled the train to stop. It did - in the middle of the veld. Naturally, all the passengers looked out of the windows to see what was happening and they certainly saw a most curious sight for South Africa. Coming toward the train were four dark men, three who looked like Indians - Kallenbach looked like one too - and a Native. With them were two young white girls. The train stopped and our party went into a first class carriage which carried the sign "Reserved". I did not know then that this sign meant that the carriage was reserved for Non-Europeans.[25]

The train was the last one from the West Rand to Johannesburg that day and was packed with people. It stopped at every station. Each time it stopped, all the passengers seemed to pour out of their carriages and pass the window of our compartment to look at us. I was getting alarmed and pulled down the blind. When we got to Johannesburg, the passengers hurried to our carriage to see us coming out. I told Miss Sanderson that we should put on our raincoats, return to the carriage and get off on the other side of the line. Fortunately, there was no train there and we managed to get away from any demonstration that would probably have been staged as a protest against such scandalous behaviour on the part of two young white girls.

25 Word used to denote South Africans who were not of European descent; also called Non-Whites.

We never told anyone of our escapade and were much relieved not to see our names in the newspapers or even a mention of the episode.

Learning shorthand and typing

Contact with Miss Nina Boyle and the other women journalists as well as with women clerks in the civil service who were all earning their living, made me think that I should do likewise. Miss Boyle advised me to learn shorthand and typing before looking for a job. I was still living with Phillip and Becky. I had free board and lodging but they now had two children and I could not expect them to do more for me. Even though Sam had come to Johannesburg and taken over responsibility for me again, I was no longer happy to remain a parasite. I wanted to earn my own living.

Phillip and Becky were thinking of leaving South Africa to settle in London. His business had grown. He had two partners and they needed a buyer in England. It was decided that Phillip could fill that position and he soon left for London with his family. I went to stay in a boarding house and enrolled as a pupil in a shorthand and typing school. There were many girls from good middle-class homes at the school. I became friendly with two of them, Elizabeth (Bessie) and Rachel (Ray) Brodie, who later became Mrs Chapman[26] and Mrs Byng. That was about fifty years ago and we are still friends.

There were always young men paying attention to me and I had at least two proposals of marriage. I say "at least" because I never encouraged any one to go quite so far. I liked most of my men friends as friends only

26 See Appendix for Bessie Chapman's letter to Fay on Pauline's last illness in 1971.

but I was not in love with any of them. I thought that marrying should only be for a great love.

One day, however, I met a young man. I will call him LH. He had recently arrived in Johannesburg and was staying with Mr and Mrs Abrahams, my old friends. He had been born and brought up in London and came out to a job in the civil service. He was tall and good-looking. I fell in love with him. He became my constant escort. He visited me at my boarding house and took me to concerts and meetings. At weekends we went for long walks or picnics. I joined a reading circle to which he belonged. The latest books were discussed and I learned about modern English literature. Most of our friends took it for granted that there was an understanding between us. I was not quite so sure that the affair was what it seemed and at times I was terribly unhappy.

There was also another young man, not as good looking as LH. He was better educated and much better off financially. Perhaps he was even more of a gentleman than LH. He asked me once if I would come for a walk with him on the next Sunday. I was surprised and disturbed and asked if LH could come along. He got very angry: "If you want LH, go with him," he said and walked away. In less than a year he became engaged to a girl I did not know and soon after married her. He nevertheless remained my good friend until his death and his wife is still a dear friend of mine.

Outspan Club

When the work of the Women's Enfranchisement League was in full swing, Miss Boyle suggested that a social club be formed for members and friends. She thought that friendly social contact would help to make

our aims widely known. It was to be named the Outspan Club and was to be a place where busy women could come after work and relax.

For the official opening of the club every member brought guests, and committee members saw to it that everyone was well looked after. Miss Boyle asked me to meet a special friend of hers. She introduced me to Mrs Wyndham. The name meant nothing to me. She was a tall, fair woman and rather pretty. She spoke with a fine quiet voice and asked me to tell her about our League. She knew of the suffrage movement in England but was not a member of it. After I had satisfied her with my answers, she asked what else I was doing. I told her I was learning shorthand and typing and hoped to get a job soon. She looked at me rather intensely and said, "You don't look like a working girl." "But I shall be one when I start work", I told her. "I never thought a working girl could look like you", she said. "I always imagined them somehow different, living in an attic and wearing pink flannel nightgowns". I assured her that it was not always the case. I told her I stayed in a house in Bruce Street, which was at the end of Twist Street and not far from Parktown, the up-market suburb where she lived. She asked me to write down my name and address.

Some weeks later I received a note from the Honourable Mrs Hugh Wyndham inviting me to tea. Miss Boyle had by now told me who the lady I had entertained was and had given me her full name and title. Mrs Wyndham received me in a most charming manner. She introduced me to two gentlemen. One was her husband, the Honourable Hugh Wyndham.[27] He was a serious-looking, tall, thin man with a small moustache and spectacles. The other, a Mr Robinson, was shorter, more rotund and very lively. He led the conversation. Tea was served on a north-facing

27 Hugh Wyndham was a member of Lord Milner's administration.

broad terrace high above a lovely garden with a magnificent view of the Magaliesberg Mountains on the horizon.

When I entered, the men were evidently discussing the forthcoming election for the first Union parliament. Mr Wyndham was a candidate for the constituency of Turffontein, a working-class suburb of Johannesburg. They brought me into the conversation and Mr Robinson asked me many questions about myself and about people I knew. I did not in the least mind answering his questions and volunteering opinions, which I probably would not do so readily now. I did not know who he was and it would not have mattered, I suppose, if I had. I was used to talking to men with greater knowledge and wider experience than me. I thoroughly enjoyed that tea party and was not surprised when they said they hoped to meet me again.

I told Miss Boyle about this visit and she informed me that Mr Robinson was Geoffrey Robinson, the editor of the Johannesburg evening paper, *The Star*. Years later he became the editor of *The Times* in London and changed his name to Dawson. He afterwards became Lord Dawson. I visited Mrs Wyndham several more times and met Mr Robinson again on these occasions.

Split in the League

At a meeting of the Women's Enfranchisement League soon after the parliamentary elections, some English women decided that they did not want to work for the vote for women in South Africa. Their view was that there were not yet enough English people in the country and, as there were many Boer women, they would, when they had the vote, help their men to win every election. It was a very stormy meeting. Miss Boyle maintained that women must work for women. Many others de-

cided that it would be better to have a society working only for advancement and reform. They left the League and established the Women's Reform Club. Miss Boyle remained with the League and so did I.

Not long before the split, the League had two visitors from overseas: the president of the World Suffrage Societies Mrs Chapman Catt, an American, and her vice-president Mrs Alleta Jacobs, a Hollander. Both were clever and charming women. A public meeting was arranged and they spoke before a well-filled hall. A dinner was also held for them and the committee at the Carlton Hotel. This was followed by a reception for all the members of the League. As secretary, I met them many times and was impressed by their ideas. Months later I received a letter from Mrs Chapman Catt thanking us for our hospitality and wishing us luck in our work.

Another visit to Bloemfontein

I had finished my course at the typing school when I received a letter from Deborah asking me to come to her as she was not feeling well and was finding it difficult to cope with her children. She now had four. In addition to the two boys there was little Dolly and her small brother Harry. The children were quite good and there was not much for me to do. My sister recovered quickly and I enjoyed being with the family.

I renewed old acquaintances. Some were interested in the work of the Women’s Enfranchisement League and were thinking of forming a suffrage society in Bloemfontein. They invited Miss Boyle to address them. While I was there, Miss Boyle and Mrs Wybergh came and helped to establish the Women's Suffrage Society. I went to all their meetings. Miss Boyle appealed to the audience with her fiery speeches. Some, however,

preferred Mrs Wybergh who spoke in a quiet dignified manner. She was a theosophist and when addressing a meeting, she wore a simple Quaker style of dress - grey with a white collar and white cuffs - in which she looked impressive. The Bloemfontein women were pleased with their visitors. My sister could not go to the meetings but Miss Boyle came to see us before she left for Johannesburg. She told me that, while I was away, the League had held its Annual General Meeting and that Mrs Mary Fitzgerald[28] had been elected as the new secretary.

Paid jobs

I stayed in Bloemfontein for a couple of months and when I returned to Johannesburg, I went back to the typing school to refresh my skills. I was then sent to temporary billets. Some of these were with people I knew whose typists were away on vacation. Other temporary billets were for friends who asked me to do their typing while they were on holiday. This is why I worked for a month at the office of Baron Ramberg, the consul for Austria-Hungary. His typist, Leontine Schlesinger, was a friend of mine. A few years later she went to Europe to study dramatic art and afterwards became the famous actress and producer Leontine Sagan. Another billet was with Saner & Saner, a firm of two attorneys, whom I knew from the Parliamentary Debating Society and used to meet at the house of my friends, Ray and Bessy Brodie. Their late father was one of the earliest doctors in Johannesburg and their mother was a charming woman who welcomed all her daughters' young friends. Evenings spent at their house were always most interesting and enjoyable.

28 Mary "Pickhandle" Fitzgerald [1885 – 1960] was the first South African woman trade unionist, first woman printer and first woman city councillor in Johannesburg [1915] and later acting mayor.

The Brodies were old friends of the Saners. Reginald, the elder of the two Saner brothers, appeared to pay special attention to me but I was not interested. He and I lived in the same street, Kotze Street, opposite each other and we travelled on the same tram to and from work. He sometimes saw me home after we had spent an evening at the Brodies.

After a few more temporary billets, I got a permanent job with a firm dealing in agricultural implements. It was not interesting work but easy and it paid well. The head of the office was an Afrikaner. He was rather uncouth and often got on my nerves. But I stuck to the job, writing letters to farmers in English and sometimes in Dutch, which I did not understand. He would write them out for me and I would copy them on the typewriter. It was while I worked there that I translated Tolstoy's letter to Gandhi.

In need of a change

After about 18 months I was tired of working there. I was staying in a boarding house that I disliked very much. Miss Boyle had left for England and I was rather unhappy about other things as well. I felt very miserable and wondered what I should do.

I decided to go to England. Sam was very good to me. He was prepared to pay most my expenses and I had managed to save some money. I thought it would be enough for a ticket to England. Why not go there? Phillip and Becky were living in London and Phillip was doing very well. What the ultimate result of that visit would be, I did not allow myself to think. Once the thought took possession of me, I went on making arrangements and booked my passage. Deborah and Sam did not prevent me from going.

Travels abroad

Sea voyage to England

It was April 1912 when I boarded the *Armadale Castle* in Cape Town. After I had settled my things in the cabin, I went on deck where I bumped into a friend and fellow member of the Women's Enfranchisement League, Miss Charlotte McLeod. Her brother Mr Rose McLeod was editor of the Johannesburg morning paper *The Rand Daily Mail.* She was not travelling to England but had come to see off her friend Mr Appleyard to whom she introduced me. He in turn introduced me to Mrs Guillemard, an elderly lady - or not so elderly I would think now - and her young daughter Joyce. We were all travelling second class. We formed a little group and kept together the whole voyage. We settled with our deck chairs in a corner of the deck near the partition from first class. Mr Appleyard had several friends in first class who often came over to chat with him. Among them was a Mr Gwelo Goodman who came every day and joined Mr Appleyard, Joyce and me at quoits.

There were a number of distinguished people in first class: Sir Leander Starr Jameson, leader of the raid on Johannesburg in 1895, who sat most of the time well wrapped up in his deck chair; Sir J B Robinson, the mining magnate, with his family; and the famous pianist and composer Paderewski with his wife and secretary. Mr Paderewski had two pianos on board and used to practise every morning for hours. He did not mind us listening outside his cabin but he declined to play at the passengers' concert. We enjoyed listening to him even when he was only playing

exercises and scales. I had missed his concerts in Johannesburg because I was in Bloemfontein at the time.

Mr Paderewski's secretary spent most of the time at an easel, painting. Although I had never seen a painter at work before, I was surprised to see him use a ruler to measure and draw lines. When I mentioned this to Mr Appleyard, he said that evidently some used a ruler but most did not. After that Mr Appleyard often spoke to me about pictures and painting. I knew very little about this and was glad to learn.

One day I heard Mr Appleyard and Mr Goodman discussing paints and colours. Mr Goodman turned to Mr Appleyard and asked, "Are you hanging anything when you get back?" "Yes", Mr Appleyard replied, "Two small pictures, and you?" "The same", was the answer. I got the shock of my life. I realised that they must both be painters. Gwelo Goodman and Fred Appleyard were in fact both well-known artists, particularly Mr Goodman who was a South African. Mr Appleyard invited me to visit him at his studio in Kensington and said he would be glad to take me to the opening of the Royal Academy of Art in London in May.

A few days before we reached Madeira, a young friend of Joyce Guillemard came running from first class and said he had a secret to tell us. He had overheard the captain telling somebody that he had received a grave message that a very big ship travelling from England to America had struck an iceberg and that most of the passengers had gone down with the ship. The captain, not wishing to frighten the passengers, withheld the news. We were of course distressed but kept the secret until the notice of the Titanic disaster was posted by the Captain the night before we were due to reach Madeira.

A terrible gloom filled us and our cheerful anticipation of the Madeira visit vanished. At Madeira everyone rushed for the newspapers and

learned that some of the passengers of the Titanic had been saved. With all the available newspapers in our hands, we got into the funicular railway and went up to the mountain hotel for breakfast. There was not the usual bustle of sightseeing or of buying Madeira works for presents when we came down to the town. It was a very sad end to a very pleasant voyage and everyone was glad to reach Southampton.

During the last few days on the boat, my mind was preoccupied with misgivings and speculations. Why had I run away from a job and from earning a living? What was I going to do in England? Would my brother and sister-in-law help me to stay and perhaps enter a university to study medicine? I could not find any answers and decided it was best not to rush matters. I should rather just wait and see. Up till now Fate had been kind to me. It seemed as if everything was predestined, or was this just a theosophical idea I picked up from Mrs Wybergh? I hoped that Fate would look after me.

I was very excited when we docked at Southampton. I was looking forward to the new things I would see and experience.

Phillip and Becky

My brother Phillip met me at Southampton. He looked very pleased to see me. We went by train to London. Looking through the window, I was struck by the beauty of the English countryside. Everything was green – the fields, gardens, trees, and hedges. The green was so beautiful that I wondered how I had forgotten how lovely spring was in Europe. In South Africa, one now and then saw well-tended green lawns but they were never as green as in England. Most of the way from Bloemfontein to Cape Town, one saw only wide, empty, grey-brown spaces and an occa-

sional tree at a station. As one approached Cape Town, there were gardens and fine scenery, but nothing as green as here.

My sister-in-law Becky was at Waterloo station to greet us. She was a very pretty, well-dressed woman. Looking at her, I felt rather shabby. Becky took up the matter of my clothes straight away and in no time I had a fine wardrobe, which gave me a great thrill. Both Phillip and Becky made me welcome in their house in Keys Road, Cricklewood. Their two children Esther and Bernard looked lovely with their English complexions. They were cared for by their nanny who was to stay with them for the next twenty or more years.

Phillip and Becky took me out a lot. We visited their friends and went to theatres and concerts. They encouraged me to go on my own to the good shows they had already seen. They gave me directions to get there and told me how to queue for unreserved tickets. As a rule, I managed to get a seat but once, when I went to a play called *Milestones,* I had to stand in the pit because there was no more sitting room. Being very tired after the long wait, I sat down on the floor and saw nothing of the play. After this I avoided queues. I had better luck going to concerts at the Albert Hall on Sunday afternoons. There I heard Backhaus, Tetrazini, and Mischa Elman.

Becky came with me when I visited Mr Appleyard in his studio in Kensington. He was busy painting some panels for Liverpool City Hall. He served us a very nice tea. He recommended a list of museums and galleries to visit and arranged to meet us at an exhibition at the Royal Academy. When we met him there, he pointed out its most famous pictures as well as his own and those of Gwelo Goodman. I went to see him again some months later before leaving for the Continent and told him what I had seen of London. He asked me to come again when I returned to England.

London

London was a most wonderful place and I enjoyed every minute there. On the strength of my new interest in paintings, and under the guidance of Mr Appleyard, I visited the National Gallery, the Tate Gallery, and the Wallace Collection as well as several art exhibitions. Seeing all these things, I began to like art and tried to understand it. Art in paintings had hardly come into my life. I had seen a few famous paintings but, until I met Mr Appleyard, nobody had spoken to me about painters. I have loved music since I was a child and in Johannesburg I had a chance of hearing several celebrated musicians such as the Belgian cellist Gerhardi and the pianists Teresa Karenio and Mark Hamburg. London itself with its parks, palaces, shopping centres, masses of people moving along the streets, and policemen who helped me find my way, thrilled me.

I sometimes wandered off by myself in the mornings. I would take a bus to Marble Arch and then walk through Hyde Park to Piccadilly, looking at people. The women wore hobble dresses, in which they could hardly walk. By way of contrast, the men looked very smart in grey suits with top hats and white or cream spats. From Piccadilly I would make my way through Green Park to Buckingham Palace, then through Pall Mall to Trafalgar Square and back again, before going home by underground. I also liked to walk up Oxford Street into Regent Street or Bond Street to look at shop windows. If Becky had shopping to do in the West End, we would go for tea to Rumple-Mayers in Bond Street where we could see fashionably dressed women.

Once when I reached Marble Arch, I saw a big crowd standing at the gate of the park. I asked a policeman what was happening. He told me that King George V and Queen Mary were coming out of the park. "Oh, I have never seen them in my life", I said. "Haven’t you?" he asked. "Where

do you come from?" "South Africa", I answered. "Well, come along then and stand here", he said, and he put me in front of the crowd. The carriage with the King and Queen passed right by me!

Some time later I also saw the Dowager Queen Alexandra. It was the first Rose Day when money is collected for poor children. I went right up to Marlborough House from where the old Queen was to emerge in her carriage. The horses trotted slowly along and a man in livery ran in front clearing the way. She looked a frail, pretty, old lady. As she passed, the women in the crowd called out "Bless you, my dear", and then added, "Isn't she beautiful?" Later, when I was returning home by bus, women were talking about "the dear old thing" and wondering whether the new Queen Mary would ever be so loved.

The best place to see interesting and famous people was Hyde Park on Sunday mornings. It was called, if I remember rightly, "Church Parade". We would get there early, take seats in the main avenue, and see the world go by. Well-known people such as royalty, politicians, actors and actresses would pass by on foot, in carriages, or on horseback. The onlookers seemed to know "who was who" and readily pointed them out.

Sometimes Phillip would hire a carriage on a Sunday and the whole family would go for drives to Richmond, Kew Gardens, or other places. I enjoyed Kew Gardens with its lovely flowers the most. One Sunday we went to Hendon to see "the flying". It was the early days of aeroplanes. There were many people watching as the pilots took off and landed. At least three planes crashed and the pilots and passengers were taken away by ambulances, which were standing ready in case they were needed. I thought I would not like to go up in a plane!

Old friends

Two of my friends Miss Nina Boyle and Mrs Wolf Myers were now living in London. Miss Boyle was carrying on with her suffrage work and was a member of the Women's Freedom League. Being a good and witty speaker, she was in big demand to address meetings. She was very glad to see me and took me around with her. Once, when we went to a drawing room meeting in a house on Moon Street, the main speaker was Mme Despard, a sister of General French. She looked a dear old lady in her white lace headgear. She was an earnest suffragette. Miss Boyle spoke after her. Her speech was as usual enthusiastically received and brought a few new members into the suffrage movement. Another meeting to which we went was in the open. It was held by a militant group and was addressed by Miss Sylvia Pankhurst.[29] It was on a Sunday and there was a huge crowd listening to her.

Mrs Myers had been a journalist in Johannesburg and had served on the committee of the Women's Enfranchisement League. In London she did not take part in the suffrage movement. She was interested in other things. She belonged to a studio where a number of women attended discussion classes on literary and political subjects. She invited me one day to go with her. The class was held in a house in Chelsea that was allegedly next door to where Thomas Carlyle had once lived. It was conducted by a lady whose name I cannot remember but who was at that time a well-known literary critic.

29 Sylvia Pankhurst (1882 - 1960) worked for women's suffrage alongside her mother Emmeline and her sister Christobel. She based her campaign on working class women and refused to break links with the labour movement or support the First World War. She later helped to found the British communist party.

It was a rather odd meeting. There was a table in front of several rows of chairs in the room where the meeting was held. Behind the table was a curtained door through which came two young women dressed in long white robes, like those of nuns, with their long hair hanging loose down their backs. They were followed by an elderly woman dressed in a similar robe, only dark instead of white, with her hair in a bun at the nape of her neck. The older woman sat down at the table facing us – she was evidently acting as the chairlady – and the young ones sat behind her on chairs near the wall. The chairlady asked who had brought anything of interest and public importance for discussion. These topics were then discussed. Suddenly the chairlady asked me my name and what I had to contribute. I excused myself saying I was only a visitor but, on her insistence, managed to say a few words. Everybody's input was then criticised or approved by the chairlady.

Mrs Myers also took me to the Lyceum Club in Piccadilly. It was a Women's Club and Mrs Myers was a member. She knew many people personally and some by sight. I twice had lunch with her there and on one of these occasions, she pointed two men visitors out to me. One was George Bernard Shaw and the other H G Wells. I had been reading both these authors and was thrilled to see them in the flesh.

Summer holiday

As July was coming to an end, Becky made arrangements for us to go to the seaside for the month of August. We went to Westgate in Kent. It seemed a particularly fine summer – or have I forgotten the rainy days? The bathing at Westgate was very good and we seldom missed a bathe. After tea in the afternoon, Becky and I used to go for long walks, sometimes right up to Margate. Phillip would come out for the weekends.

Brussels

My eldest sister Golda was still living in Shavli. She knew that I was in London and wrote that I should come to see her. Her eldest daughter Lena was studying Medicine at Strasbourg University in Germany. She too wanted me to visit, on my way to Shavli. She wrote that she would meet me at the station in Brussels. She had made arrangements to spend a short holiday at a convent just outside the city.

I told Phillip about these letters and he was glad to help me arrange the journey. He booked my passage to Brussels via Ostend and packed a parcel of presents for Golda and her children, Becky having done the shopping, of course.

The crossing from Dover to Ostend was rather rough but did not affect me too badly. When I climbed into the train for Brussels, a gentleman with a little girl, whom I had noticed on the boat, got into the same carriage. The child seemed to take a liking to me and so a conversation started between her father and me. He told me he was taking his little daughter to see her grandmother, his mother, and asked me where I was going. I told him. He was glad, he said, that I would be met at the station because Brussels was not a place for a young lady to be about by herself at night.

The train pulled into Brussels station after nine at night. It was very dark. I got out onto the platform but could not see Lena. The gentleman and his daughter were met by an elderly lady. He looked round and saw that I was standing all by myself and did not know what to do. I had the name and address of the convent but could not decide whether I should go there by myself or wait a little longer for Lena. He came up to me and I told him my predicament. He said that I should not remain alone at the

station and advised me to take a taxi. He called one and told the driver to take me to the convent. He took the name of the driver and the number of the taxi and said he would telephone me in half an hour to find out if I had reached the convent safely. Within half an hour I was there and was able to tell the kind gentleman when he telephoned, that I was safe.

The nun who received me handed me a telegram from Lena telling me that she had been prevented from coming to Brussels and that a letter would follow. Naturally I was put out but being tired from the journey, I slept well. In the morning, the letter arrived. Examination dates at the university had been changed and would continue the whole of that week instead of ending earlier. Lena urged me to stay on for a week in Brussels and then come to her in Strasbourg.

At breakfast I was introduced to two middle-aged American ladies. They had arrived the week before and had seen much of Brussels already. They invited me to join them on a visit to Waterloo. It was an interesting and enjoyable excursion.

I liked to wander about and explore the town. The *Place Royale* was fascinating with its magnificent old buildings around a square. I saw the tiled *Maison du Roi* and, in a street not far from the *Place Royale*, I saw the *Guilds Building* with the ancient guilds depicted on its facade. I went inside the 15th century *Hotel de Ville* and admired the paintings on the walls and ceilings. I visited a palace that was open to the public. I went into the famous church of *St Gudule* and saw the lovely woodcarvings on the pulpit. Coming out of the church, I stopped on the opposite side of the road to watch women sitting on low stools on the pavement making lace.

One day, I went out very early to be in time to see the flowers in the morning market at the *Place Royale*. Stalls with the most magnificent

flowers crowded the square. The variety and colour of the different blooms was wonderful. I walked from stall to stall, feasting my eyes on the beautiful sight. On another day, I went to the Musee Wurtz where I saw some beautiful as well as some horrifying pictures. The picture of Napoleon in the next world impressed itself particularly on my memory. It is huge and depicts Napoleon facing hundreds of victims of his wars. This picture came to mind during the First World War and even more so during the Second World War. I also went to the Royal Museum where I saw many famous paintings.

With Lena in Strasbourg

It was a dull rainy day when I arrived in Strasbourg. Lena was at the station to meet me. She took me to her digs in a private house. She told me that some of her examinations, which should have finished a week earlier, were still going on. While we had tea and a cold supper, we talked about ourselves and our family in Russia and South Africa.

She was still at school when I left Russia. Though we corresponded, we hardly knew each other, living as we did in different parts of the world and under different conditions. She did not approve of the life I lead in South Africa – in her words, "wasting your life and your time". She could not understand why I had not returned to Europe earlier to study medicine as I had intended. She said I should not go back and would not hear that I might have to if I did not get financial support to study. Her parents were not rich people but she managed, like all the other Russian students abroad, on very little. I felt that at least she had parents who stood by her. She told me she was engaged to a Russian student who was studying engineering in Mannheim. She had known him in Russia. He was coming to Strasbourg at the weekend to meet me.

We talked late into the night. The following morning, she had to go to the university for her last examination. She explained to me how to find my way about. I accompanied her to the university, looked round the place and then went to the main shopping centre. I walked past the cathedral and came into the large park where the big statue of Elsa, the symbol of Alsace, stood among lawns and flowerbeds. The statue was dressed in the national costume of the Alsatian women as were many of the women I saw in the street. The national costume was a wide long black dress with a small white apron and a large black bow on the back of the head.

Strasbourg was a bilingual city and the capital of the province of Alsace. I was rather surprised that the majority of the people in the street spoke German as I had been led to understand that Germany had taken Alsace from France in 1870. It was explained to me that the province had originally been German. Though France had seized it from Germany in 1681, the peasant population remained German.

When Lena came home for lunch, she told me that she had the afternoon free so we went sightseeing. We went to the cathedral. I saw the famous big clock with the saints in their niches. We walked up hundreds of steps to the very top of the cathedral. It was a long climb up the narrow stairs but the higher we went, the more interesting was the view of the town and the wonderful river Rhine.

On Sunday morning when Lena's fiancé Phillip Lopatnikov arrived, we were ready to go out with him for the day. Lena suggested that we go to some of the Rhine villages where wine festivals were being celebrated and then to an old castle in the Vosges Mountains. The train stopped at many stations. Everywhere people, dressed in national costumes, were singing and dancing. At one or two stations we got out of our carriage to refresh ourselves with Rhine wine sold at the buffets.

Lena, Lopatnikov, and I were excitedly chatting and exchanging views on what we saw. We spoke mostly Russian. Lopatnikov wanted to practise speaking English so he and I spoke a bit of English while he and Lena spoke German to each other. There was a good-looking young man sitting with us in the carriage, watching us and listening. When he corrected an observation of Lopatnikov, the conversation became general. He told us that he could follow our conversation in German and English though his language was French. He could not understand the third language. We told him that it was Russian. He was very interested. He was a university student studying languages but not any of the Slavic languages. He lived in the vicinity and knew the mountains well. He offered to accompany us to the old castle *Haut-Koenigsbourg*. He said he would take us up a more direct path. He asked us to come to his house where he could leave his case. It turned out to be a very large house in big grounds. He invited us in. We thanked him but could not accept as there was the long climb ahead and we would have little time to spend on the top if we were to catch the last train back to Strasbourg.

The slopes of the mountain were thickly wooded. At the side of the path were brambles. We picked and ate the blackberries as we walked. We passed a shepherd's cottage where our new friend stopped to speak to the shepherd who seemed to be a friend of his. The old man brought out mugs of fresh milk with black bread that made a most welcome afternoon tea.

Through a chink in the woods, we could see green valleys, vineyards, and cottages. On the summit of the mountain was the castle. With its towers and stone wall lit up by the afternoon sun, it looked majestic. We were told that the Kaiser used it as a shooting lodge. Inside we saw only one large hall that was preserved in its original condition. It was almost empty. Here and there, the floor was covered with animal skins and at the far end was a large tripod under a large chimney.

It was a lovely excursion and we returned to Strasbourg feeling very tired and ready for bed. The next morning Lopatnikov left by an early train for Mannheim and I never saw him again. Lena still had much work to do in connection with her final examinations. In fact, she had to concentrate on writing her thesis, which had to be presented to the examination board after the results of the other examinations were known. Under these circumstances I too took leave of her.

Journey to Russia

When I left Russia ten years earlier, I did not have a passport, only a birth certificate. One could travel all over Europe then without being asked to show one's passport. It was, however, not possible to get into Russia without one. Lena and l discussed the matter and she suggested that I take her passport. We resembled each other. Both of us had fair hair and blue eyes and although I was older, I did not look it. She was not going home until she had finished her studies and had obtained her degree. She did not know when that would be. In any case, the passport could be returned to her somehow. This meant that I had to leave behind everything that could identify me because I was going to travel not as myself but as Lena Schutz[30]. I had a number of press cuttings about my activities in the Women's Enfranchisement League as well as some describing me at social functions. Being young, I rather treasured them but I could not have them on me and left them with Lena. Sad to say, I never saw them again.

30 The family changed their name from Schutz to Schultz in South Africa.

Stop at Berlin.

I do not quite remember how I got to Berlin or who arranged for me to stay at a pension in Passauer Strasse. I, however, remember the name of the street because of an incident there.

Paul Neuman, a friend from Johannesburg, had returned to Germany after his father died and left him a considerable fortune. Now he could indulge his hobby of flying. He even offered to take me up but I was much too scared.

Paul and his wife lived not far from my pension. They were very hospitable and took me out to dinner at Kempinsky's and to supper at Kaffe Bauer after a show. They took me to see Ibsen's *A Doll's House* and to the opera *Tristan and Isolde*. It was after this opera, when I got off the tram at what I thought was Passauer Strasse, that the incident happened. I had two large keys, one for the outer door of the block in which the pension was, and the other for the pension itself. I came to the building and tried to open the door with my key but it would not open. Then suddenly someone opened it from inside and I slipped in. The lights were on and I quickly ran up to the third floor, saw the right number on the front door, and put the small key into the keyhole. It would not turn. I was obviously at the wrong building in the wrong street. And then the lights went off again. I felt nervous and miserable and did not know what to do, so I sat down on the stairs thinking that I would have to spend the night there. I do not know how long I sat there when suddenly I heard a man's voice. He spoke in a language I did not know. I tried to explain to him what had happened but he did not seem to understand me. To my relief, the lights came on again and a woman, who opened the nearest door, sorted out the situation. She spoke to me in German

and to the man in his language. She told me that she understood my mistake and that her husband would escort me to my pension.

During the few days I spent in Berlin, I learned to find my way about the city. I walked through the Tiergarten into the *Siegesallee* (Avenue of Victory) and saw the statues of German heroes. I visited a palace that was open to the public and a museum.

Journey's end

Tired but happy after the splendid time I had in Berlin, I was on the train again on my way to the Russian border. I slept well the whole night and awakened when the train arrived at Koenigsberg. There was no time to go into the town but I saw through the window the walls of the old fortress – the only thing I remembered from my stay there when I met my brother Sam.

The last German town on the Russian border was Eydtkuhnen[31]. The passengers had to get out of the train and walk across to the Russian side. Many gendarmes were waiting for the new arrivals. Our passports were scrutinised and we were asked what we were doing abroad. Our luggage was minutely examined and left in a heap while they assessed what duty was to be paid. I had to pay quite a lot for the presents I had with me. I then put my things back into the suitcases in a hurry. When I came out of Customs, I found my brother-in-law Hirsch waiting for me. I was delighted to see him. I did not expect him to be there. He looked just the same as when I had seen him ten years before. He came to fetch me in a motorcar hired in Shavli because it was the eve of the Jewish New Year and the family wanted to have me with them the same evening.

31 Now in Russia and called Chernyshevskoyen.

Shavli 1912 - 1913

Entering the town, I eagerly looked for old landmarks. The streetlights were on but they were dim and everything looked strange. Buildings seemed to have shrunk, or was it the bad light? At the house my sister Golda was waiting for me on the doorstep. With tears and kisses she kept on hugging me, saying, "Paya, Paya" – the name by which she called me in my childhood. She could hardly believe that I was really there. It seemed she never expected to see any of us who had gone to far-away South Africa again. The large dining room was well lit by a hanging lamp and by candles in old silver candlesticks that stood on the long table covered with a snow-white cloth. Everything was ready for the festival meal.

It was a touching reunion. Golda kept on asking me questions about everyone – her sister Deborah, her brothers Sam, Phillip and Charlie, and particularly about her own son Mark. What did everyone look like? What did they do? What kind of country was South Africa? And so on. Now and then, Hirsch put a question or made an observation. The rest of the family, sitting round the table, listened attentively. There were seven children at home. The eldest Shmuel-Behr was in business with his parents, two younger boys Chaim and Lipa had recently left school, and Norman, a boy of ten, was still in school. Their oldest daughter Zillah had recently passed her final examinations at high school. The two youngest children were girls; Esther was eight years old and Fay six.

A day or two after my arrival, I went with Zillah to see what the town looked like. The old buildings that I once thought big now appeared small and shabby. Only the big chestnut avenue in Count Zoubov's Park was still magnificent. The whole Zoubov estate had been taken over by the town. The large old residence, the palace, was now the city library. I

went in and found that an old school friend was the librarian. She was very surprised to see me and we had much to talk about. I discovered another old friend living next door to my sister. It was a young man Victor Kaminsky. He was home on vacation from Munich where he was studying medicine. He was not at all interested in medicine. He preferred music and was a good pianist but his father wanted him to be a doctor. He told me about Munich with its music, art galleries, and gay life and tried to persuade me to come there. I would often go to his house and listen to him playing the piano.

Visiting relatives in Riga

When my cousin Rosalie heard that I was staying with Golda, she wrote asking me to come and visit her. The autumn weather with its rain and mud was rather unpleasant and one could not even go out for walks in Shavli so I was pleased to accept Rosalie's invitation. I thought that in a large town one could find more things to do even on rainy days. It was the end of October when I arrived in Riga. The rains were much less frequent and there were some days of sunshine without even a nip in the air.

Rosalie's daughter Lena, a young lady of nineteen, met me at the station. She was tall and well built and, although not pretty, looked chic in well-tailored clothes. She had graduated from high school speaking the two official languages, Russian and German, as well as some French and English. She was glad of the opportunity to speak English to me. Rosalie was pleased to see me and, like my sister, wanted to know all about the family in South Africa.

I had to repeat the same stories many times as I met other members of the Podlashuk family who now lived in Riga. There was old uncle Yudel

with his wife and daughter Sonya. His eldest son Boris was married and had his own business. The second son David, an old friend of mine, was getting married before the end of the year. Rosalie told me that her father had settled in Riga after his big tobacco factory in Shavli came to a sad end. He now had a sweet factory but was not well off. Sadly my aunt had lost her sight due to cataracts. She suffered from diabetes for which there was then no treatment. There was also no operation for cataracts which are often caused by diabetes.

Within a few days I had met all the cousins. Everyone was good to me and helped to make my stay a very happy one. They took me to the theatre, the opera, and to Sunday symphony concerts at the opera house. David's wedding was a jolly affair with champagne and caviar, toasts and speeches. I was called upon to reply to the toast to absent friends and relatives. They were pleased with what I said. An unexpected guest came to the wedding. It was Rosalie's second son Leva who was studying in Berlin. He came for a short vacation. He was a tall, good-looking young man, two years older than Lena and full of life and fun. He said I was a very nice cousin and invited me to stop in Berlin for a few days when he and his other brother Phillip, who also lived there, would show me round.

The weather was getting colder with occasional light snowfalls. I had a winter coat made, padded like an eiderdown to keep me warm, and bought high overshoes. It was time to leave Riga; I had had a very pleasant holiday. I said goodbye to Uncle Yudel and the others – seventy-five others. All came to the station to see me off. My compartment was filled with boxes of chocolates, flowers, and books.

Last days in a Russian Shavli

The winter was rather late that year. On New Year's Eve there was still not much snow. That evening I went with Zillah to a party given by some of her friends. Most of the visitors were young people. Some were home from their universities for the winter vacation. One young man had already taken his degree as an advocate. When he heard that I came from South Africa, he wanted to know all about the country. He was impressed by my account of the freedom enjoyed by white people and the opportunities every white had of making a living and rising from humble beginnings to wealth. "Here in Russia", he said, " there is no air to breathe. One only knows how to bend one's head and be thankful for not having one's life or living taken away – particularly as Jews". He said a number of young people managed to get away and start a new life in some kind of business but wondered if educated professional men could emigrate and find suitable work. "Could one practise Russian law in the Transvaal?" He told me that there were many fine young and old Jewish men with grand characters and high ideals. He told me how they suffered. Only a few – mostly those who did not have the courage to keep on struggling – assimilated and became Christians.

As Zillah and I walked home from the party where we celebrated the arrival of I9I3, we found that winter had also arrived. Snow was falling heavily. The following morning it was still snowing and everything looked white. After a few days the sky cleared and frost set in, displaying the beautiful panorama of winter. The forest in the distance, the houses and the gardens were all covered with a white velvet carpet. The sun was shining and the temperature was below zero. On the roads we saw and heard the sledges drawn by horses with small bells on their necks. Zillah and I went for a walk in Zoubov's park where a great transformation had taken place since summer. On the wide lawn that had

been green in September, there was now a covering of ice. Young and old people, school boys and girls, and many officers and their ladies were skating on the ice, gliding up and down. Several times a week the military band played there. It was all so lovely and gay and one could certainly not imagine that in less than two years the place would be occupied by the Germans and the inhabitants would be forced to leave Shavli.

Rumours were rife that King Franz Joseph of Austria was not well disposed towards Russia and was looking for an excuse to go to war with her. This was about a year before the assassination of the Austrian crown prince at Sarajevo. Golda thought it would be better for me to get away now and not to wait for the war in which Germany would no doubt join. Because of this and the now severe winter, she was also against my visiting my cousins in Perm. This town was in the very east of European Russia near the Ural Mountains. Originally one cousin and his wife had gone there to help build the trans-Siberian railway. Later they brought out other young family members, all cousins, to work with them in the contractor's office. I was keen to go there but it was not wise to do so during such a cold winter. Golda was also against my visiting Ukraine.

The only thing then was to go back to London and probably to South Africa. Of the latter course I was not yet sure. I was waiting for letters from my brothers. Phillip was the only one who was well to do. He and his wife were urging me to return to Johannesburg. Sam had married while I was away so I knew I could not depend on him and Charlie, the youngest, was trying to establish himself as an attorney in Pretoria. He would also not be able to do much for me. I learnt all this from letters that arrived one after another at about the same time.

From Shavli to London

I decided that I had enough of illegal crossings of the Russian border and that I should get a passport. This was, however, not easy. Hirsch made the necessary enquiries and was told that my application would first have to go to the police. They had to investigate why and when my father had left Russia. Were there any political reasons? Enquiries had to be made in his birthplace as well as in the Ukraine where we had lived. It took a couple of weeks before the reply came that all was well. Then I had to be personally vouched for. This was also successful. How it was all done and how much it cost my brother-in-law, I do not know. It was all far from simple but I got my Russian passport. I still have it with my other souvenirs.

With a feeling of sorrow I took leave of my sister and her family. They had all been so good, kind, and thoughtful. I wished I could take them with me instead of leaving them in the country of *Uradnikovs* (small police). I seemed to have had a presentiment that they were going to be in for even worse times. In less than two years the First World War started and the Germans attacked Russia. The Jewish population – seven thousand of them from Shavli – had to evacuate the border towns, abandoning their homes and being scattered all over Russia. This was followed by the Russian Revolution.

On my way back to London, I stopped in Berlin for two days as I had promised my cousin Leva. He and his brother Phillip gave me a hectic time, taking me to a nightclub, a late show, and a restaurant for delicious food – all on the first evening. I was very tired the following morning and decided to leave by the night express for Flushing in England. I phoned my friends the Neumans and told them that I might not have time to see them. They wished me a happy journey and asked me to re-

member them to their friends in Johannesburg. They did not intend to return to South Africa as they were happy and content in Berlin. From all appearances Germany seemed to be a free country, especially when compared to Russia. There was no legal discrimination against Jews – they could study where and what they liked and could enter any profession. Most of them were in good businesses and occupied honoured positions in the professions and communities. On the whole there was not much anti-Semitism in Germany in 1913.

My brother Phillip met me at the station. He said that Becky was not feeling well and was waiting for me at the house. Very charmingly and tactfully, as usual, she welcomed me back and said that she was glad that I had made up my mind to return to South Africa although I had not yet mentioned it myself. Phillip had already booked for me to leave on a ship that was sailing in three weeks time and Becky thought that we should get all the clothes I would need to take with me as soon as possible.

Preparing to return to South Africa

There were some letters from South Africa waiting for me. One was from Deborah saying she too was glad to hear I was coming back. Another letter was from Mrs Abrahams telling me that they had bought a little house in Yeoville and that there was a room for me whenever I might want it. So everything was settled by others. In a way I was glad that I did not have to keep asking myself, "What shall I do?"

Becky was unstintingly generous in getting new clothes for me. She did more than I ever expected. She took me to her French dressmaker who made two lovely dresses for me, a pale grey one for afternoon or dinner

wear and a pink charmeuse[32] evening dress. They both suited me well. Her tailor also made me a navy costume and, as an extra gift, she bought me an attractive evening cloak. Shoes and stockings were bought to match the dresses, as well as the best underwear. A veritable trousseau! And this she meant it to be. It transpired that, when LH was in London while I was in Shavli, he had often visited Phillip and Becky and talked a lot about me. They knew that for years he had been paying me attention and they probably thought we were engaged to get married. But he never asked me to marry him and I had no idea how our friendship would end. This had caused me much unhappiness for many years and would for a few years still to come.

I was sincerely grateful to Phillip and, particularly, to Becky for all they had done for me. We promised to write to each other and afterwards I had a letter from Becky every other week to which I replied regularly.

During my three weeks in London, I went to see Miss Nina Boyle several times. She was still active in the women's suffrage movement and I went with her to some meetings. I also visited Mr Appleyard at his studio a few times. He took my address in Johannesburg and promised to write to me, which he did until the outbreak of the First World War when he gave up painting to help make munitions.

So the year of my European adventure came to an end and I left London for South Africa.

32 Charmeuse is a soft, smooth, silky dress fabric.

Back in South Africa

The voyage from Southampton on the 10,000-ton *Kildonian Castle* was very dull. I do not now remember a single passenger. The first few days I looked round and did not see anyone I knew from South Africa. The passengers were just an uninteresting crowd of total strangers. A woman was sharing my cabin but I do not remember her either. It must have been with her that I went ashore at Madeira. I intended buying some presents for my sister Deborah, my new sister-in-law, and Mrs Abrahams. After choosing some hand-embroidered cloths, I found that I did not have my wallet with about ten pounds in notes on me. I had the wallet in the morning when I went for my bath. I could not buy anything and had to excuse myself to the shopkeeper for giving him the trouble.

When I returned to the boat, I ran to my cabin and searched through all my things and around the cabin but could not find my wallet. I reported the loss to the chief steward and the purser but the wallet was never found. I had about £2 left in my purse, which had to last me till my arrival in Cape Town. I mentioned my loss to one or two of the passengers. One man looked at me as if he thought I was making up a story as an excuse to borrow money. This determined me not to mention the matter again and just to manage as well as I could. I kept to myself - reading, watching the sea and occasionally playing a game of quoits.

Cape Town

I was glad to get to Cape Town. A number of telegrams and some letters were handed to me while we were still on board. There was a letter from LH, another from Deborah, a wire from my friends the Brodies, and one from Charlie but nothing from Sam. I felt very hurt and did not know what to think.

I was met by Bertha Schwartz. Her father was a cousin of my brother-in-law Abraham-Leib, who had written to tell the family of my arrival and asked them to meet me and give me some money should I need any. I was delighted to see Bertha. She was a pretty and charming girl. She helped me settle a few small debts and tip some of the stewards.

After getting through Customs, I went with Bertha to her home. Her parents and her sister Esther were very pleased to see me and hoped I would stay with them for a while. I stayed for only two days, however, as I was keen to get my journey over and anxious to get to Deborah's home and find out what was happening in the family. With Bertha as my guide and a motorcar that was put at my disposal by an old friend, I had a chance to see some of the beautiful spots round Cape Town. I was enchanted. I thought the Cape more beautiful than any of the places I had visited during my year of travelling in Europe.

Bertha was interesting and clever. She had studied law at the University of Cape Town and obtained an LL.B degree. She was not then interested in women's suffrage but later, as Mrs Bertha Solomon, well known as a member of the South African parliament, she did a lot to win some needed rights for women.

Family troubles

I arrived in Bloemfontein on the 21st Apri1 1913.They were all well and glad to see me but they seemed perturbed. There was a letter from Sam's wife Violet. She wrote that she regretted my returning to South Africa. She had heard that Sam always spoiled me and spent a lot of money on me. She was determined that there would be an end to this. She did not want Sam to have anything to do with me. He was not to write to me or see me. She did not want me ever to come back to Johannesburg. It sounded quite mad and I was very upset because I was very fond of Sam. I was also sorry for him. I was ready not to receive any money from him, but never to see him? That was absolute nonsense. I could not reply to the letter as this would just make things worse.

A few days later Charlie arrived from Pretoria. He knew of the sad events in Sam's life and was also very worried. We all loved Sam. He was the best son, the best brother and a great gentleman. He fell in love with this young English girl who had evidently married him for more money than he really had. It was a tragedy and for Sam's sake, we all hoped that it would adjust itself soon.

I stayed on in Bloemfontein but there was nothing for me to do there. At the end of May I left for Johannesburg. My train came in very early on a Sunday morning and I went straight to Mrs Abraham's house in Saunders Street in Yeoville. I was at the house before I was expected. When Mr Abrahams and Charlie, who had come into town the night before, arrived at the station to meet me, I had already gone. They came back home and we all had breakfast together. LH was also there. Sam did not come to see me but Charlie took me down to his shop where he was supposed to be busy with his books.

Settling down

Almost from the day after my arrival, I started looking for work. I got in touch with most of my friends and asked them to help me find a job. Mrs Bigger, who as Miss Dasent was a member of the Women's Enfranchisement League, was now married to a man high up in the civil service. She undertook to get me into the service. In the meantime the old firm where I had worked before was ready to take me on again, so I went there while waiting for the other billet to materialise.

Mrs Abraham's house was small, but cosy. My small room faced the back where the ground dropped away, giving me a fine view of the lower part of Yeoville and some other parts of the town. Mr and Mrs Abrahams and their young son Herbert were most hospitable to me and I felt very much at home.

LH was a friend of theirs and he used to come over from Pretoria and stay there for weekends, sharing a room with Herbert. He seemed to have changed. He was still quite attentive to me but tried to keep back. I decided to let things go as they would and not to worry. I realised that my sister-in-law in London was wrong in her assumption that he wanted to marry me. He was in a slightly better position in the civil service but could certainly not support a wife. This I realised. I had nothing at all.

I contacted my old friends and went out a lot. There were changes in the life of some of them. Issy Hayman had married Ethel and they had a beautiful home on a hill in the best part of Parktown. My friend Bessie Brodie was engaged to a Mr James Chapman and they were going to get married soon. They were glad that I had come in time for the wedding. I picked up the old threads of my former interests. I went to meetings of the Women's Enfranchisement League but did not want to serve on any

committee. On Thursday nights, my old friend Miss Steward Sanderson and I again attended meetings of the Parliamentary Society. I went to the theatre with various friends. There was a good company performing at His Majesty's Theatre. I think it was Louis Waller and Madge Tittarage. The Standard Theatre was being enlarged for an opera company The Quinlands and we were all looking forward to their productions.

The miners' strike

The opera season opened at the end of June. Mr and Mrs Abrahams and I went to see *Faust*, and I was looking forward to seeing *Tannhauser*. I had also booked seats for Mozart's *Don Giovanni* for Friday, July 4th, 1913. Charlie and our nephew Mark who now worked in Pretoria were coming too.

The morning started like any other. My office was in President Street facing Market Square. When I got there, crowds of people were milling around. I was told that they were the white miners who were out on strike. At lunchtime I phoned Stewart Sanderson to walk round with me to see what was happening. A meeting was in full progress and we tried to get near to hear what the speakers had to say. We were turned back by someone who said it was no place for us. As I was going back to the office, I passed a procession of strikers marching through the streets. Then some drunken strikers started quarrelling amongst themselves and detachments of police came out to restore order.

The trams had stopped running so after work I walked the two miles home. I had to change and come back to town to go to the opera. Charlie was supposed to fetch me. When by seven forty-five he was still not there, I presumed that the trains from Pretoria had also stopped. This turned out to be correct. Herbert came with me and someone in a cab

gave us a lift to town. Mark was waiting there but no Charlie. We went inside. It was a bit late and the opera had already started. I was enjoying it very much when suddenly I heard a latecomer say that Park Station was on fire. A little later someone else came in with the news that the strikers were burning the offices of the evening newspaper *The Star*. In the interval Mark, Herbert and I went to see what was happening. We found Charlie outside with LH. Somebody had given them a lift from Pretoria. They walked with us to Yeoville after the show but did not come into the house as they were getting a lift back to Pretoria the same evening.

The following morning's newspaper said that General Louis Botha, the Prime Minister, and General Jan Smuts, the Minister of Defence, were coming to Johannesburg to meet the leaders of the strike. Things were settled for a while,[33] but early in the next year trouble broke out again. The miners were now joined by the railwaymen and the municipal employees on the trams and at the power station. This time it was a general strike. There were no trains, no trams, and most of the town was in darkness after sunset. The Government did not come to talk with the strike leaders [34] who were also the leaders of the Parliamentary Labour Party. Nine of them, with Mr Cresswell[35] at the head, were arrested and sent off to Durban where they were put on a ship and deported back to Britain.

33 After twenty-one people died in a clash between troops and miners, an agreement was reached.

34 Martial law was declared.

35 Leader of the Labour Party.

Magistrate's office

It was about this time that Mrs Bigger told me that there was a vacancy for a typist at the magistrate's office and suggested that I send in an application. This I did. I was interviewed by the chief clerk who engaged me. The Chief Magistrate, Mr Harry Osborne Buckle, was Head of the office. I was to be his personal typist. It was a particularly confidential post, I was told, and I was thrilled that I was going to have an interesting job.

I was not very efficient but Mr Buckle was patient with me. He was a clever man and a jurist. He was often away from the office serving on different commissions. When in the office, he was busy, not so much with the work of the magistrate's court as with matters of importance to the state. General Botha and General Smuts often asked for his advice. Correspondence about the strike was still going on at the time I came to work there.

The Magistrate's Office was run by the chief clerk Mr Arthur Lancelot Shaw who was nicknamed "The Knight" by the senior members of the court. In time I got to know all the magistrates and prosecutors. When Mr Buckle was away, they often asked me to do some typing for them. During lunchtime a few of the younger men would bring me some work and would stay to chat. The other girls in the typing room said they had never before had such a lively time.

The court records were always typed in that room. The evidence of court cases was taken down in longhand by the different magistrates and this was handed over to the typists. Occasionally, when I was not busy on more important work, I too was given records to type. These were not very interesting and the handwriting of the magistrates was awful, par-

ticularly of the two elderly ones, Mr Van den Berg who was a magistrate from the old Republic days and Mr Macfie who was called "79" because that is what his signature looked like.

In those days the crimes that came before the magistrates were mostly concerned with the illicit selling or buying of liquor by Non-Whites. There was not much serious crime amongst the Natives. They made good honest servants. The Whites trusted them. Doors and windows were left open at night and nobody ever tried to enter and burgle a house. After a meeting, I often walked from the tram stop to the house, quite a few blocks away; no one was anxious about me. Now, even in my small car, it is not safe to go out after dark. Often even men in large cars are stopped and attacked.

To return to the magistrate's office: it was housed in an old building of Dutch architecture at the southern end of Joubert Street. One entered into a large dark vestibule that had round columns on either side. The floor was covered with asphalt that was broken in many places. The little light that penetrated this vestibule came from small windows high up the walls on which all kinds of notices were stuck. I always marvelled how the young attorneys, continually darting in and out of this place, could read the notices and did not break their necks doing so. On the right of the entrance was a corridor leading to the chief's office. To enter the corridor one had to pass through the general office over which "The Knight" ruled with a young clerk. This was the place where all the staff had to report in the mornings, where the inner business of the court was administered, where civil marriages were performed, where cupboards full of old and new records were kept, and where rats and mice were in abundance. At the far end of the corridor was the typing room where five or six girls sat typing.

I had a physical aversion to both rats and mice and could not control a scream when one of these creatures came near me. Once when I was having lunch in the typing room, I felt something touching my ankle. When I looked down and saw a mouse, I screamed and jumped on to the table. The door opened and Mr Shaw came in. "What is this, Miss Podlashuk? You are disturbing the peace of a government office, you know". I stared at him and told him to send a constable to catch the horrid little creature.

Mr Shaw liked to tease me and the incident of the mouse put an idea into his head. Once when the chief was out of town, his bell rang for me. Wondering when he could have returned, I quickly took my notebook and pencil and ran to answer the call. When I opened the door, I saw a big rat fastened by a string, sitting just inside the door. I uttered one big scream and retreated out of the room. Then I climbed through a window that was near the ground and went from there into the next office. I telephoned Mr Shaw and asked him to have the rat removed. I also asked whether it was the chief who had rung for me. He told me I had rats on my brain. I answered that if this kind of joke was going to continue, I would walk out of the office for good. He had quite a job this time to coax me back to work. The practical jokes, however, did not quite stop but were not so annoying and I took them in good spirit!

When the chief was in town, the office was a very serious place. Interesting people would come to see him while I was in his room and so I was able to listen to their business. The chief did not talk much to me but now and then he would make remarks about his visitors. He did not like fools and I was surprised when he sometimes said, after a well-known man had left, "Oh, what a fool! How he wasted my time". My work in that office was undoubtedly interesting and I enjoyed it very much. This was in peacetime, but it was soon to acquire a different aspect.

War, rebellion and the Foster Gang

I had been working at the magistrate's office for nearly a year when, on the 4th of August 1914, Britain declared war on Germany. There was great excitement in the office. Most of the young magistrates and prosecutors were English and they all wanted to enlist in the army. The Afrikaners were rather reticent.

The British government had sent a request to General Botha to occupy German South West Africa. Most of the old Boer generals, like General J H de la Rey and General Christian de Wet, refused to take part in this. General Smuts and General Botha consulted with Mr Buckle and there was a lot of correspondence on the matter.

Things came to a head and Commandant General of the Union Defence Force, General C F Beyers, resigned. He and General de la Rey then left the military headquarters in Pretoria for Potchefstroom in the western Transvaal. Nobody was sure what they intended to do. At the same time the police were looking for the Foster gang, a band of notorious criminals. They were ordered to stop all cars to search for the gangsters. One large motorcar would not stop and a policeman fired at it. It transpired that General de la Rey and General Beyers were in the car. General de la Rey was killed but General Beyers got away. Soon afterwards the rebellion started. General Botha and General Smuts, in addition to enlisting troops to fight the Germans in South West Africa, had to fight their own Afrikaners.[36]

36 When Britain declared war on Germany, the old Boer generals were planning to overthrow General Botha's government. South Africa declared war on Germany on 8 September. General Beyers resigned and left Pretoria to prepare for the rebellion which started soon afterwards. Botha enlisted Afrikaners to fight the rebels and on 16 November General de Wet was captured and General Beyers, who was with him, drowned while trying to escape.

German and Austrian subjects were registered as part of the war effort. The police had an office in the court where they interviewed and registered them. Some, so we heard, were interned for the duration of the war. We in the magistrate's court had nothing to do with it. I seldom saw any of the Germans coming in for registration but when I did see an old friend or acquaintance, I felt very sorry for them. I rather liked them in social life and had many friends among them.

One day as I was going to the office, a man dressed in a uniform I did not recognise caught up with me. I was surprised to see that it was Mr S whom I had often met at the German Club. I asked him what his uniform was and why he wore it. He told me he was an Austrian reserve officer and was coming to register. "But, why the uniform?" I asked. "They will probably give me special consideration," he said. I told him not to be silly and to go home and take off the uniform. He took no notice of me. Later, I heard he was interned. Years later, when I was doing post-graduate medical work in Vienna, I met an Austrian woman who, on hearing that I came from Johannesburg, asked me whether I had ever met Mr S. I told her I had known him before the War. "Poor man," she said, "he was betrayed by a girl in Johannesburg and in consequence, he was interned for the duration of the War". "That fool", I thought, and told the woman that it was nonsense. I wondered why he had invented such a story. Would this make him a hero in the eyes of his countrymen?

In spite of all the predictions that the war would last only a short time, it dragged on and on. Atrocity stories about the German treatment of conquered countries circulated and the riff-raff of Johannesburg attacked and destroyed businesses belonging to old German citizens. Feelings ran high on every side and everyone felt uncomfortable.

Our wounded were brought to Johannesburg from the battlefields in German South West Africa. The General Hospital was full of soldier pa-

tients. There were not enough nurses and many young women volunteered to help. I too volunteered to go to the hospital after office hours in time to help serve the evening meal to the patients. Later in the evening I attended first aid classes run by the St John Ambulance Service.

My time was fully occupied with all my activities. Only at the weekends could I visit my friends, the Haymans and Bessie Chapman and her family. Sam would come in for a short while on Sunday mornings. This made me happy, though I saw that he was a rather unhappy man.

Illness

At the end of 1915 I took ill and had an operation to remove my appendix. The surgeon was Dr Pettavel and the anaesthetist, Dr Thalmessinger, the first a Swiss and the other a German. I mention their names because years later when I myself became a medical practitioner, I met Dr Pettavel in London and before that, when I was doing post-graduate work in Germany, I came across relatives of Dr Thalmessinger in Heidelberg and Berlin. After the operation I was told that it would take some time before I recovered completely. And so it did. This was probably due to how post-operative patients were treated in those days. I was put in a sitting position and was not allowed to move for almost a fortnight. The result was that adhesions formed, and on getting up I could not straighten myself nor could I walk without pain. I could not return to work and I was fed up.

I consulted another surgeon who advised me to go to Durban and try swimming to stretch the adhesions. I followed his advice. I stayed in a small hotel, the *Oceanic*, on the beach. One night I was awakened and told that the hotel was on fire. Someone took my things and helped me out of the burning building. I was not yet well and felt quite bewildered.

However, some good people saw that I got fixed up in a neighbouring hotel where I spent the next few weeks. The *Oceanic* belonged to Germans and some British "patriots" were "smoking out" the Germans by burning and wrecking their businesses in Durban, as they also did in Johannesburg.

At last after feeling in better health for several weeks, I returned to Johannesburg and hoped soon to get back to work. When I went to see the chief clerk at the magistrate's office, however, I received a shock. Mr Shaw informed me that as they did not know when I would be back, they were obliged to take on another typist and it would not be convenient to make a change again. He said that the Civil Service Department had been informed of my illness and they had placed the new typist there. Now they would also find me a job in another department. This led to my being transferred to Pretoria.

Pretoria

I knew Pretoria from the occasional visits I paid my brother at weekends and I thought it was a dull place. However, as a civil servant, one cannot choose one's office. I thought it might turn out better than I was expecting because Charlie was living there and LH too.

In the meantime the campaign in South West Africa had come to an end. New volunteers were asked to go to East Africa to fight the Germans. Charlie volunteered to serve with an ambulance unit of the Red Cross. Before going, he got engaged to Fanny Liebman. I did not see much of LH and he too was soon to go. The government was establishing a new civil service in South West Africa and he was sent there to take up a new post. Their going away was rather a disappointment to me but I settled in Pretoria as well as I could. My nephew Mark who had been working

in Pretoria was also no longer there. He was studying engineering in Johannesburg at the School of Mines.

Work at Union Buildings

The department to which I was transferred was the Public Works Department in the Union Buildings. This majestic building is on top of a hill called Meintjieskop. There were magnificent gardens laid out in terraces on the slopes of the hill. It was always a pleasure to go to work there in the mornings. I never tired of looking at the gardens and the view.

The office where I had to work, however, was the most uninteresting and dull place imaginable. About 20 typists sat in rows at little tables in a large room. At the head of them sat the chief or head typist, watching that nobody wasted any time. Most of the work consisted of typing "specifications" on wax sheets for public buildings in the Union. Every typist was supposed to do a certain amount of work, so many sheets or so many lines. The typists were not allowed to talk to each other. It was really a terrible place and, after a few weeks, I went to the office of the Civil Service Commission and asked to see the Head. I told him I could not continue working there and would like to be transferred back to Johannesburg. He told me there was no vacancy in Johannesburg but promised to keep me in mind should one occur. In the meantime, he would place me in another department in Pretoria.

So I was transferred to the Department of Lands. This was also a big department with many typists in one large room. The chief typist there, Miss Little, was very human and a "dear". There were no "specifications" to be typed on wax sheets, but the typists were assigned to different men from whom they had to take notes. The correspondence and projects

were interesting, as for instance, settling of poor Whites on land and giving them cattle. I usually took notes from Mr Cooke who dealt with land transfers. Occasionally, I was asked to go to other people also. In this way I met most of the people in the department.

Once, when I came in to take notes from Mr Cooke, he was busy on the telephone. Suddenly he burst out laughing. There were other men working at their tables in the same office. Hearing Mr Cooke laugh so heartily, everyone looked at him. He continued to talk over the telephone and continued to laugh. At last he was finished and told everyone who cared to listen what it was all about.

Some land had to be exchanged between the Government and the Pretoria Municipality. The land that the Government was acquiring adjoined the big mental hospital in the charge of Dr Dunstan. He had to pay a visit to the hospital before returning to town. With him was the city engineer Mr Jamieson known as "Jacaranda Jim" because he planted the Jacaranda trees in Pretoria. Dr Dunstan asked Mr Jamieson to wait for him while he went to see a patient. The matron was waiting for him. Knowing that Mr Jamieson was fond of pretty girls, he asked the matron to send a nurse to look after Mr Jamieson. The nurse arrived and served Mr Jamieson tea. Mr Jamieson was in rather a hurry and when Dr Dunstan did not get back when expected, he got up to go. The nurse, however, would not let him leave. She thought he was a patient and that she had to look after him until the doctor and the matron returned. Mr Jamieson realised what was happening and started to argue with her. The nurse had heard these arguments before. Fortunately, Dr Dunstan appeared and took Mr Jamieson away.

Dr Dunstan told this story to Mr Cooke while reporting on the outcome of negotiations with Mr Jamieson on the exchange of lands. Everyone in the office enjoyed the story. I, knowing Mr Jamieson personally, was

much amused. It was pleasant to work in "Lands". The chief, Mr Somerville, was very nice and the head typist was, as I said before, a "dear". When there was not much to do, she would always allow a typist to take the afternoon off for tennis or shopping.

I was in Pretoria for about 18 months when Miss Little told me that Mr Somerville wanted to see me. When I came to his office, he asked me, "Are you unhappy with us here?" I could not understand why he was asking this and said so. He then told me that he had been informed by the Civil Service Commission that there was now a vacancy in Johannesburg in the Native Affairs Department. I explained to Mr Somerville that my request for a transfer had been made before I came to "Lands".

Although I was quite happy in his office, I thought I should still take the opportunity to return to Johannesburg. He was sorry to lose me, he said, but would not stand in my way and wished me luck.

Office of the Director of Native Labour

I was glad to be back in Johannesburg where I had many friends with whom I had interests in common. I was also glad to be back with Mrs Abrahams who was like a mother to me.

,The Department of Native Labour was however not much of an attraction. It was in the old shabby Winchester House in Loveday Street. I had been in those offices many times before, as I knew some of the typists there. They often typed notices for me for the Women’s Enfranchisement League. The two head typists, Miss Roos and Miss Gibson, were members of the League. Mrs Byng, whose husband was on active service, and who was Rachel Brodie before her marriage, had been a friend of mine for years. Miss Marjorie Carrol and Miss Jordaan were also friends.

As far as the work was concerned, I did not know what to expect. I was the last person to join the department and would certainly get the most unimportant stuff to type. The Director of Native Labour Mr Pritchard organised the Native Battalion and I was given the job of looking through files and finding out particulars about the Natives who had been sent to Europe with the Native Labour Battalion.

When the campaign in East Africa ended, the battalion was sent to France and Belgium to help the allies behind the lines. Casualties were reported to the Director's office where their records were kept. Some of the Natives were killed and others were disabled. If a Native died overseas, the relatives were informed and pensions were given to them. The disabled were sent back to South Africa. When wounded Natives were returned to the Union, the department looked after them. I knew nothing of these battalions and was at first interested to learn about the role played by the Native troops in helping the allies overseas and how much their contribution was appreciated. After a while, however, the repetition of the same service, but with different names and numbers, began to pall.

Very occasionally, as if to offset the monotony, I would be called in to take notes from Mr Pritchard or from Colonel Cooke, the second in command, when the other typists were busy with their routine work. Two such occasions I remember particularly well. These were conferences with Native leaders. They might have been chiefs. The main speakers were well educated and were editors of Native newspapers. I must confess that I did not know that such newspapers existed until I took notes at the conferences. I was amazed to hear those powerful looking Natives - they were all tall and of broad build - expressing their views in perfect English and giving advice to our chiefs.

There was some trouble on one or two mines at the time and the Natives miners threatened to strike. There was talk and fear that other Natives, ordinary labourers and "house boys", would join the strikers. It was strange to hear about all this when ordinary life in town seemed to be going on quite normally. The white citizen did not suspect that there was a threat to his home life, that he might wake up one morning to find that the house boy had walked out, that the stove was not cleaned - there were coal stoves then - and that there was no boy to do the house work. The conferences were, of course, highly confidential and I anxiously waited to see how it was all going to be settled. Both Mr Pritchard and Colonel Cooke were very wise and patient men, and very tactful too. The Native leaders were also wise; they trusted the white men and had respect for them. A compromise was finally reached.

While the negotiations were going on, a protest was staged by the Natives. A large procession moved through the main streets of Johannesburg and people demonstrated in an open square between Winchester House in Loveday Street and the magistrate's court on the other side of Rissik Street - there were no buildings between them then. There was a long verandah outside our office looking out on the street. We all came out to watch what was happening. Suddenly a detachment of mounted police appeared from round the corner and surrounded the demonstrators, beating them with sjamboks.[37] This was not the advice of our department. One of our typists, a very decent Boer woman, suddenly put her hand on her chest and said, "It does my heart good to see the Blacks beaten up". We all looked at her, surprised and disgusted, and no one said a word. A reply to this remark came later when a Native office messenger came to collect our baskets of typed sheets. On the way out he turned and said it would do his heart good to see what would one day

37 A rhinoceros hide whip

happen to the Whites. This messenger was a decent man and soon, I believe, forgot the whole incident.

The Native strike did not materialise and the housewives carried on their usual domestic lives without knowing or guessing the serious threats to their homes and comfort.

News from Russia

In the summer of 1913 Lena, who had graduated as a Doctor of Medicine in Germany, came home to Shavli with her fiancé Philip Lopatnikov. She married him despite her parents' objections. Soon after the wedding Philip went to America to look for suitable work. Lena was to follow when the necessary papers had been obtained. At the end of July the next year she eventually set off for London accompanied by her mother. Lena had just left London for America when war was declared between England and Germany. Golda hurried back home but, on arriving in Berlin, she discovered that war had also been declared between Russia and Germany. After some delay, she managed to get home via Sweden and Finland.

At the beginning of the war we were naturally worried about Golda and her family because Shavli was a garrison town almost on the German border. The Russians were not at all happy to have a large and potentially hostile Jewish population so near the German border, and gave orders for the Jews to evacuate the Lithuanian towns and villages. As there were not enough trains to transport them all to the interior of Russia, many people in the border towns acquired horses and wagons. They packed what they could into the wagons and drove off. Golda and Hirsch also left Shavli in this way with all their children. They travelled east and south, mostly through forests. When it rained, the whole family

sheltered under the cart. Eventually they were put into a goods train which took them to a town called Yeletz in the province of Orel in east-central Russia.

When they had settled down there, they were at last able to write to us. It was not for long, however. All communications ceased again when the revolution broke out. I only learned of their experience during and after the revolution in 1923 when I visited them in Shavli.

Until the revolution I used to exchange letters with my old history teacher about once a year. He wrote about life in Russia, about the formation of the Duma, and of the hopes of the Russian people for better times. He had long before left Shavli for Mozyr, a town in the Ukraine. As I did not go to the Ukraine when I visited Shavli in 1923, I did not see him then.

In 1916 when I was working in Pretoria, he sent me a Russian newspaper with a speech made in the Duma by Professor Miliukov, a liberal member of that body. He examined the dangers Russia was facing because of mismanagement by the government of the affairs of the state and the war. At the end of his address, he said, "We now see and know that, with this government, we can no more make new laws than, with its help, we can bring Russia to victory." He also said, "Now gentlemen, I think everyone has come to the conclusion that it is useless to turn to the government for justice, when their fear of the people of their own country blinds their eyes and when the substance of their problem is to end the war quickly, only to get rid of the necessity to look for the people's support…" He finished with the following, "You must understand that today we have no problem except one, and that is to see the end of this government. It is just because there is a war, that they are especially dangerous. They are a danger to the successful termination of the war,

and in the name of the war and in the name of that which compels us to unite, we must fight them".

As I thought the address was very significant, I translated it and sent a copy to the *Daily Mail*, a Johannesburg morning newspaper. Its receipt was never acknowledged and it was not printed. When the Russian revolution was an established fact, the speech was used in a leading article, without mentioning of course, who had sent it and when.

New plans

The war was coming to an end. Russia had pulled out and was in the throes of its long awaited revolution. The Russian Tsar had abdicated and later he and his family were brutally murdered. The campaign in East Africa was also over. The men who did not go overseas to continue fighting, were being discharged. My brother Charlie came home for good. He busied himself re-establishing his neglected law practice and preparing for his marriage. He had written interesting letters from East Africa but since his return I had not seen him much.

LH was in Windhoek and also wrote me letters telling me of his work and life in the conquered German colony. His job was coming to an end and he would soon be back in the Union. When he returned to Pretoria, he did not come over as usual to spend the weekends with the Abrahams family. His behaviour was strange. One day, Mrs Abrahams said she had news for me. LH had telephoned to tell her that he was engaged to be married. Mrs Abrahams was surprised and rather indignant. She knew the girl and presumed that the girl's sister-in-law was responsible for the match. She had brothers in big business who could help LH. I was furious, not to say broken-hearted. All these years I had thought what a fine

man he was and would not look at any one else and now what? What a fool I was. I never wanted to see him again.

Life went on as usual, however. I went to meetings and the theatre. Some evenings and at weekends I visited friends and tried to enjoy myself. One evening I was escorted home from a party by a young doctor Dr B who had just come back from active service at East Africa. He told me of his work and how he liked it. He intended to go back to England or Scotland to take a further degree. "You are a lucky man to be in the profession I have dreamt of entering since my earliest youth," I said. "But why don't you go overseas and take up medicine now?" he answered. "There will be quite a number of people, men and women, not so young, flocking to the universities to take up professions after their service in the war." "That would not apply to me." I replied, "I was not in the war and I have no English or Scottish matriculation certificate. So how could I get into a university?" "You should write to Edinburgh," he said "send them your Russian certificates - translated of course - and you will see they will accept you." While wishing me goodnight, Dr B remarked, "Now don't forget to do what I told you. I will telephone to remind you."

I did of course not believe that the idea could become a reality but it took possession of me just the same. I did not tell anyone about my new hopes. I found my Russian matriculation certificate. It was quite an impressive document. It showed the marks in all the subjects and was signed by members of the senate of the Gymnasium. My marks were all excellent with three exceptions, which were simply good. I translated this document and on the 12th of December 1918 I sent it, together with an application for admission, to the address of the Registrar of Edinburgh University that Dr B had given me.

It was good to have my mind busy with the new plans. How wonderful it would be, I thought, if I could study medicine and do something really

worthwhile. Then I suddenly faced reality. I was not young, past thirty. I had only enough money to buy myself a ticket to England. My relatives had supported me before I started earning my own living. For about six years I had been able to keep myself and now they might think I was starting my nonsense again.

I waited for a reply from Edinburgh. One month passed and another and still no reply. Who could I talk things over with? It would have been most natural to turn to Sam but he had worries enough of his own, particularly with his business. I decided to talk with Charlie. He had been married for nearly a year and seemed engrossed in his new life.

My office job was getting more and more boring. Something must happen or I would burst, I thought. No answer from Edinburgh. Did that mean that I might as well abandon all hope of being accepted into a Scottish University? I could not stand it any longer and one day when I was more depressed than usual, I went to the telephone and called Charlie. I told him I must get away. "To study medicine?" he asked. "Your guess is right. I have sent in an application to Edinburgh University and am waiting for a reply. I do not know of course, where the money will come from." "Good luck," he answered, "go ahead. I will help you with a small monthly allowance, say £5." "God bless you," I murmured.

I could speak no more as tears surged to my eyes and I put down the receiver. Then I wrote to Deborah in Bloemfontein. She was always against my studying and had not allowed me to remain in Europe when she was coming to South Africa. She too, to my astonishment, understood me this time and said, "Perhaps it would be for the best" and said she would also give me an allowance equal to that of Charlie.

Deborah's son Alec who was in his father's business heard of my project and wrote to say how splendid it was that I should undertake such a

venture at my age. He said he would be glad to help and would send me a monthly allowance of £5. The generosity of my family cheered me up considerably and I started preparing for my trip.

Preparations

First of all I had to book a berth on a boat. There were no passenger boats to England. Most of the mail boats had been converted into troopships that were bringing the South Africans who had fought in Europe, back home. These ships were very dirty and would not take women, the steamship company informed me. Only men who had urgent business overseas were allowed to travel on them. The Union Castle Company, however, informed me that there might be a nice clean ship for passengers in August. This was the *Cap Polonio* built by the Germans for luxury trips to South America. It had not been put to sea before the war and was handed over to Britain as a part of war compensation. It was bringing troops from England and would take passengers back. My passage was provisionally booked on it.

Next I had to get a passport. For this, I had to go to Pretoria. I knew the chief clerk of the Department of Interior and thought I would have no difficulty getting a passport. He gave me forms to fill in. Looking through them, I realised that I was not a British subject. My brothers were all naturalised British subjects and everyone assumed that I was also. No questions had arisen when I entered the civil service. The chief clerk said he could do nothing and advised me to see the Secretary of the Department, Mr Shawe.

Mr Shawe and I knew of each other through his daughter Dorothy who was a typist in the Department of Lands. He asked me why I wanted a passport. I explained that I wanted to go to Scotland to study medicine.

He was willing to help me but could not issue a passport unless I first became a naturalised British subject. He said he would recommend that the proceedings be carried out without delay. I had to provide the names of two people who would guarantee my reliability. I chose Mr Somerville in the Department of Lands and Colonel Cooke in the Department of Native Affairs.

Mr Somerville was glad to help me and asked me to write to him from Scotland to tell him how I was getting on. Colonel Cooke was also interested in my new venture and ready to help. As I had about four months leave due to me, he advised me to apply for long leave. This meant that I could go as a civil servant and receive four months' pay as well as concessions on rail and boat fares. If I succeeded in getting into a university, I could submit my resignation. If not, I could return to the service. I was very grateful to him.

In a couple of weeks I received my naturalisation certificate as well as my passport. Luck was with me and I felt elated and hopeful that everything would turn out well. I wrote again to the Registrar of Edinburgh University, reminding him of my application and asking for a definite answer. I told him I was coming to London and gave him my brother's address. Then I wrote to my brother Phillip and his wife Becky that I was coming to Britain to study medicine and was booked on the *Cap Polonio*. As the mail was very irregular, I did not expect a reply before my departure.

At the end of July I left the office. I was going to Bloemfontein to Deborah to complete my preparations and to await information about the *Cap Polonio* - her arrival and departure from Cape Town. I had a tremendous send-off at Johannesburg station. Relatives and friends came to wish me "Good luck" and a pleasant voyage. My seat in the train compartment was littered with boxes of chocolates, books and flowers. I

spent two happy pleasant weeks with my sister and her family. I left Bloemfontein the very same evening that I heard that the *Cap Polonio* had arrived in Cape Town.

My dream realised

The sea journey

The *Cap Polonia* was more than a week late in arriving at Cape Town and bringing South African troops home. The newspapers were full of news about her. They described her as the largest and most modern ship ever to come to South Africa. Then all kinds of rumours started circulating; that she was damaged by the Germans and that two boilers had burst on the way from England. When at last she arrived, crowds of people swarmed all over her to look at her and to take away souvenirs. Guards were deployed to prevent people from stealing.

I found her the most marvellous ship I had ever seen. She was a big ship of 25,000 tons. There was a huge dining room with famous paintings on the walls and a gallery where a band played at dinnertime. There was a ballroom with parquet floors and mirrors covering the walls. Above the ballroom on the upper deck was a beer-garden furnished like a German tavern. There was a lift from floor to floor and a gymnasium, fully equipped with

all kinds of apparatus for physical exercises. On the same deck as the dining room was a music room with two pianos. The side decks were wide and long and one could take long walks without interruption. I walked there almost every morning. There were a number of state suites furnished in the same style but in different colours. The tables and dressing tables had enamel tops. On the first lower deck was a swimming bath but it remained without water. As the ship carried no cargo it was feared that water might make the ship top heavy and cause it to capsize.

There were rumours about the ship predicting an early disaster. They were not without foundation. Things were definitely not right. The refrigerators did not work and there was no ice cream or ice to be had. The ship did not keep a straight course but would at times circle round and round. This was amusing to watch. She did not make as many knots a day as was expected. She was supposed to reach Southampton within fifteen days but it took her nearly a month to get to Britain and then she docked not at Southampton but at Plymouth. Throughout the entire voyage, she hugged the African coast so closely that we could see its outline. The passengers came from all walks of life. After a few days I became friendly with a family called Warren. They were medical missionaries from Nyasaland[38]. They had two young daughters with them, one eight and the other ten years of age whom they were taking to school in Edinburgh. Quite by chance I met them again in 1922 in Robin Hood Bay when they and I were there on holiday. There were the usual games and entertainments on the ship and I used to play quoits with the Warrens. I remember a fancy dress ball that I quite enjoyed. I was persuaded to attend as "The End of a Perfect Day". I walked in the procession with an immaculately dressed "Johnny Walker" and we made a splendid pair representing "Cause and Effect".

38 Now called Malawi

After a fortnight's journey we stopped at Freetown in Sierra Leone for a few days. Many passengers went ashore. As the ship was docked far out at sea, we went into Freetown by tug. It was interesting to be in a part of the world I knew nothing about. I don't think I remembered it even from my geography lessons at school.

Most of the inhabitants were black. We went to a bank where all the clerks were black with only an occasional white in a far corner. Policemen were black and so were the salesmen in the shops. The houses were built mostly on stilts high above the ground, which was swampy and full of mosquitoes whose bite caused the dreaded malaria. We were advised not to stay in Freetown for long because of it. As our party wanted to see as much of Sierra Leone as we could, we hired a taxi to drive us into the interior. It looked to me like the proverbial Garden of Eden with many varieties of palms and exquisite tropical flowers as well as other tropical plants. Occasionally we came across a clearing with a house and a garden. The town, however, was a poor and depressing place and I was glad to return to the ship.

After another week's sailing, we came to Madeira and it took us another week to get to Plymouth. From there I wired my brother to meet me in London. The *Cap Polonia,* I read later, was never again used by the British.

Overcoming uncertainties

Phillip met me at Waterloo Station. He told me that there was a letter with an Edinburgh stamp waiting for me. He also told me that Dr B had called on them and asked when I would arrive. I was glad to hear about the letter and anxious to see and read it.

When we arrived at the house, Becky welcomed me rather coldly. After enquiring about relatives in South Africa, she wanted to know what this new idea of mine was. She thought I was much too old to start any studies, never mind medical studies. She was sure I would not be accepted at the university. I explained that I was determined to go on with my plans and that I would get a monthly allowance from Charlie and Deborah as well as from Alec. I thought I would manage on that. After our first conversation, my sister-in-law did not mention her doubts again. She was, as before, friendly and reacted tactfully to my endeavours to get what I wanted. Phillip told me that, if I were admitted to the university, he would also give me a monthly allowance so that I would not have to worry about money.

When I opened the letter from Edinburgh, I was shocked. The Registrar informed me that, while my matriculation certificate could be considered, there were no vacancies for the current winter term. I would, however, be accepted in April. This was not good news. I did not want to waste any time so I went to see the Registrar of London University. After looking through my papers, he said that it might be possible to accept me at the Royal Free Hospital but only for a diploma and not a degree course. He thought I should aim for that. I said I would consider it.

When Dr B called soon thereafter, I told him what had happened. I did not want to remain in London. He had with him the latest issue of the British Medical Journal. It carried notices of the new terms at different universities. There was also a longish article about Glasgow University and the facilities for women at Queen Margaret College. This seemed attractive and I decided to write to Glasgow at once.

Whilst waiting for a reply, I got in touch with some old friends. I went to see Nina Boyle who still lived in her flat in St Martin's Lane. She was just the same old Nina, full of fun and ideas. She told me she was now

working for *Save the Children Fund* and might soon be going with a party to Russia on behalf of the Fund. She heartily approved of my plans and wanted to hear all about it. I told her of my disappointment with regard to Edinburgh and that I had now written to Glasgow.

"Glasgow!" she exclaimed, "But this is splendid; you will certainly get in there". "Why are you so sure?" I asked. "Because I have friends there who are connected with the University. Don't you remember me talking of Eunice Murray, my great friend from the Women's Freedom League? Her father Dr David Murray is connected with the University and is a friend of the principal Sir Donald McAllister. Then there is Frances Melville, the Head of Queen Margaret's College. She worked for the suffrage movement and is a friend of mine. I will write and tell them about you and they will get you in." "Don't wait for a reply", she continued. "Write again and tell them you are coming to Glasgow. Send all your certificates and interview Miss Melville at once".

I wrote again to Queen Margaret College. The Secretary answered almost at once telling me that she was handing my application together with my matriculation certificate to the Registrar of the University. In the meantime, she wrote, if I did want to come up, I might find accommodation at Queen Margaret Hall, which was open and where there was room as the majority of students were not due back for some time.

Journey to Glasgow

At the time there was a national railway strike. It was difficult enough to get about in London but it seemed impossible to travel long distance. Phillip advised me to go to the travel agents Thomas Cook and ask them how to get to Glasgow. Cooks told me that a train journey to Glasgow was out of the question. There was, however, a very large ship - and the

man looked pointedly at me when he said this - of 5,000 ton coming from India and East Africa. It would touch at London and then go on to Glasgow via the west coast of England. He again repeated the size of the boat and I could not help telling him that only a few weeks before I had come off a 25,000 ton ship. I booked my passage to Glasgow.

I did not have long to wait for the ship. Phillip brought me in a taxi to the London Docks and I went aboard. The ship came from India and the crew was mainly Lascars[39]. It was a one-class ship. Most of the passengers from India or East Africa had disembarked in London. Now the passengers were people from London who were in a hurry to get to Scotland. Among them were some professors from Glasgow University who were returning for the winter term.

I was shown to a small cabin where another woman was putting her luggage away. We exchanged a few words before dinner. In a brightly lit dining saloon, we examined each other. My cabin companion was a slim woman of about forty. She had a pale face and lovely auburn hair. She seemed to know many of the people round the table and exchanged greetings with them. At dinner pleasant remarks were passed about the food. In Britain there was food rationing but this ship had been stocked in East Africa with real butter instead of margarine, poultry, and lots of tropical fruit.

When we got back to the cabin, my companion told me that her name was Phyllis Lyall and that she was the Almoner at Rotten Row, the Great Maternity Hospital in Glasgow. She had to be back on duty in a few days. I, in turn, told her who I was and why I was travelling to Glasgow. She became interested when I mentioned the people I was going to see

39 Asian seamen. The first European use of the word dates back to the Portuguese employment of Asian seamen in the early 1500s. The East India Company first employed Lascars in the 17th century.

in Glasgow. She said she knew Miss Melville very well and that Miss Eunice Murray's sister Sylvia had been at Girton College, Cambridge with her. She had also met Miss Boyle in suffragette circles.

In the morning Miss Lyall introduced me to two Glasgow professors, Professor Medley, professor of history, and Dr Maitland Ramsay, professor of ophthalmology. Professor Medley was most friendly. He asked me many questions about South Africa and about Russia and the revolution. He showed me places of interest on the west coast of England and drew my attention to the lochs and the beautiful scenery of the Scottish coast. When we entered the Clyde and were deafened by the noise of the shipbuilding, he told me about this industry. Near Glasgow we saw the skeletons of ships along the northern side of the river.

On arriving in Glasgow, my new friends wished me luck and said they hoped to see me about the university. Miss Lyall helped me to get a taxi and she instructed the driver where to take me. She said she would telephone me soon.

Queen Margaret Hall and College

As the taxi entered University Avenue, I saw to the left the magnificent university building on top of Gilmore Hill in the large university grounds. It was a lovely sight and it thrilled me to think that fate might give me the chance of studying in such beautiful surroundings. Queen Margaret Hall was further up in Bute Gardens. It was an old double-storey house set in big grounds. The warden Miss Jane McGregor, a mid-

dle-aged woman, welcomed me as I came up the long row of steps leading from the garden into the spacious vestibule. She led me to her office for a cup of tea and a chat. She told me that, as almost all of the rooms were booked for old and new students for the new term, she could only give me a basement room that I might keep if I was accepted by the uni-

versity. It was a horrible little room with a window near the ceiling that was level with the garden outside. I accepted it, of course.

Miss McGregor then directed me to Queen Margaret College. It was across Great Western Road near the Botanic Gardens. Miss Melville was not there but the secretary Miss Wallace who had written to me and knew of my application, said that she would tell Miss Melville about me when she came back from her vacation. In the meantime she introduced me to Miss Maud May, the Adviser of Studies to the women of Queen Margaret College.

It was Miss May in the end who was most instrumental in my being admitted as a student to Glasgow University. After she heard my story, she told me she would speak to the authorities at Gilmore Hill. From that day on until now, forty years later, Miss May has been a friend of mine. She now lives in Cambridge and we correspond regularly. In due course Miss Melville returned from her vacation and interviewed me. She said that Miss May was in charge of my admission to the Medical Faculty. In the meantime, I was to wait.

The Murrays

A week or so later, I received a note from Miss Eunice Murray of Moor Park in Cardross. She wrote that she had received a letter from Miss Nina Boyle introducing me and that she would be glad if I came out to Cardross on the following Saturday. I would be met at the station. On this first journey to Cardross, I wondered what this visit would do for me. To my surprise, I was met at the station by Miss Melville. She was spending the weekend at Moor Park and Miss Murray had asked her to meet me because she already knew me.

Moor Park was about eight miles from the station. The approach to the estate was through a small village where the tenants lived in small cottages. The big house was deep inside a garden. It was all covered with ivy and looked out onto the moors. Beyond the moors was the river Clyde.

Miss Eunice met us at the front door. We entered a large hall that had parquet floors and very little furniture. An old gentleman, tall and stately with long white hair and a white beard, stood at the door. He reminded me of the photographs of Count Leo Tolstoy. He looked at me very gently and said, "Be welcome". Then I was introduced to the elder sister Miss Sylvia. She was tall and thin whereas Miss Eunice was short and stout. They made me feel at ease. They told me that they had heard from Miss Boyle and now from Miss Melville about my problems. Dr Murray said I

should not worry and everything would come right. He would put in a word for me with his friend Sir Donald McAllister, Principal of the University. I had lunch and tea with them, all the while answering their questions about South Africa and about what I knew of contemporary Russia.

After tea I was taken to the station by the chauffer Graham who was to take me this way for many years. I got back to the Hall in time for dinner.

Meeting other people

Miss Lyall did not forget me. She was a fine and interesting woman. Her father was Sir Alfred Lyall, a Sanskrit scholar, who was once Governor of a province in India. He was also a poet. She was fond and proud of him and spoke a lot about him. She telephoned me and invited me to dinner. She was pleased to hear that the Murrays had taken an interest in me and was sure that I would be accepted as a student. I saw her often afterwards and she introduced me to some of her friends.

One Sunday she took me to tea at the home of Professor and Mrs Letta who lived in a house in the university grounds. There I met Mr and Mrs Gomme. Both were archaeologists. He was the lecturer in Modern Greek at the University. Before he took this job, they had worked on excavations in Greece and in the near East. They asked me if I liked walking. When I said that I did, they immediately arranged to show me the environs of Glasgow. I was delighted at the prospect.

Two Sundays later we travelled by train to Milngavie and started our walk. We passed some old-fashioned villages and woods. They told me that they used to walk a lot in Greece and Asia Minor and also in Pales-

tine. I was particularly interested in Palestine and told them of my short visit there in my youth. I also told them that my father lived there and that he was one of the early Jewish settlers in Palestine. They seemed thunderstruck when I said "Jewish" and hardly spoke to me until the end of our outing. I never heard from them again although I met them once or twice at Miss May's Sundays "at home."

This was the first snub I was aware of receiving because I was Jewish. I was perturbed by the incident and wondered how many more people felt like the Gommes. In any case, I would not pretend to be anything else but what I was.

The Brennans and Alexander Werth

Soon after arriving in Queen Margaret Hall, I was introduced to Mrs Brennan. She was Russian and had met her husband in St Petersburg when he was teaching English at a boys' college there. When the revolution broke out they managed to get away and came to Glasgow where he was appointed a lecturer in Russian.

Maria Oswaldovna Brennan and her husband became my friends. They lived near Queen Margaret Hall and I often spent my free time with them. A young Russian man called Alexander Werth lived with them. He had been Mr Brennan's pupil in St Petersburg and was now a student at Glasgow University. Being clever and amusing, Alec added much to the evenings at the Brennans. We all spoke Russian and often talked about what was happening in Russia. Not having spoken the language for many years, I was rather rusty and had difficulty finding words and expressions. Mrs Brennan and Alec helped me to become fluent again. He is now a well known journalist and author. He has written many books, most of which I have read. I follow his articles in *The Statesman*,

an English magazine. Two years ago I had a letter from him in answer to mine, which he said he was pleased to receive.

Admission to medical school

The opening of the university for the last session of 1919 was approaching. Old students were returning to the Hall, which now assumed the air of a jolly meeting place of old friends. The Hall filled with the sounds of an English spoken with what seemed all "r"s and "l"s. There was chatter and laughter and the silent Hall became alive. The warden Miss McGregor introduced me to the first-comers and they in turn introduced me to the others. Everyone was friendly and asked what I was doing. I replied that I did not know. I had to wait for the decision of the Scottish Examination Board on whether I would be allowed to study medicine.

A few days before classes started, I was called to see Miss May at Queen Margaret College. This charming and friendly lady said she had good news for me. The Board had accepted my Russian Matriculation Certificate and I could start classes in chemistry and zoology. The only thing the Board required was a certificate that I could follow the lectures in English. As that language was not on my certificate, I had to pass an examination in it.

I was delighted. I wrote immediately to Miss Boyle to tell her of the good outcome and to thank her for her introductions and the things she probably told her friends about me. I also wrote to Phillip in London and to my relatives in Africa. After years and years of yearning to study medicine, I was now about to become a medical student at Glasgow University.

Life as a medical student

My new life

I settled down to work. It was not easy. It was seventeen years since I had studied and it was hard to concentrate. There were four subjects in first year; chemistry, zoology, physics, and botany. Chemistry was new to me and seemed more difficult than zoology. The lecturer in chemistry Dr Bolan was very good and helped me a lot. The Professor of zoology Graham Kerr would also occasionally speak a few words of encouragement to me.

While working on these two subjects, I was conscious of the need to prepare myself for an examination in English. One day, however, Miss May told me that she had received a communication from the Scottish Examination Board that it was waiving the condition of my passing the examination as several members of the Board had met me personally and could vouch that I could follow lectures in English. Another blessing! There were so many to count now. All that remained for me to do was to work and justify myself.

Most of the students worked hard but they also had time for fun. They drew me into their social activities. We went to theatres and concerts. There were chats and also debates started at my suggestion. We went to *The Pit* to see George Bernard Shaw's plays performed by a repertory company. I went with another student Nelly Farquharson to most of the concerts given by the Glasgow Corporation's symphony orchestra. They

were usually conducted by its permanent conductor Landon Ronald and occasionally by guest conductors. Sometimes I went with Miss Lyall or with the Murrays who had season tickets. On these occasions the Murrays would invite me to dinner at their town house before the concerts.

Many solo musicians came to Glasgow. Yascha Heifetz[40] came as a youngster of nineteen. He already played beautifully but not yet with much feeling. I had occasion to hear him many more times in London and Vienna and later in South Africa. Fritz Kreisler[41] paid annual visits to Glasgow and Nelly and I always went to hear him. Pachman[42] and Louisa Tetrazzini[43] also came to Glasgow.

The examinations in the first two subjects, chemistry and zoology, were not taking place until March 1920 but I did not slacken in my studies.

Weekend at Moore Park

After I was enrolled as a student, Eunice Murray invited me to spend a weekend with them. On that visit I was able to get better acquainted with the family. They were all - Dr Murray, Miss Sylvia, and Miss Eunice - most charming and friendly. Dr Murray was a clever man and

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40 Yascha Heifetz (about 1900 – 1988) Child prodigy violinist who was born in Vilnius, Lithuania and died in Los Angeles, California. Among works commissioned by him is William Walton's Violin Concerto.

41 Fritz Kreisler (1875 – 1962), violinist and composer of violin pieces. Born in Vienna and died in New York City. In 1910 he gave the premiere of Elgar's Violin Concerto, a work dedicated to him.

42 Vladimir von Pachmann (1848 -1933) a virtuoso pianist of Ukrainian-German origin, noted for performing the works of Chopin, and for gesturing, muttering, and addressing the audience during his performance.

43 Luisa Tetrazzini (1871–1940), Italian coloratura soprano.

had a great sense of humour. Miss Sylvia was rather serious and seemed a little unapproachable at first. Miss Eunice, on the other hand, became a friend at once and we could always chat about all kinds of things. All three were cultured people and when the family sat in the drawing room round the fire in the evenings, the conversation would include politics, literature, history, and sometimes just gossip.

They lived in a large double storey house in big grounds that were part of the moors. It was situated on the right bank of the river Clyde. Across the Clyde one could see Greenock. From the bay windows of the dining room downstairs and the drawing room upstairs, one could see the Clyde in front and Loch Long and Gare Loch to the right. From the breakfast table in the bay window, one could see ships going up and down the Clyde. I had this view also from the windows of the room I occupied on that visit. On a later visit, I had a room with a view of Ben Lomond.

On Sunday morning, Dr Murray took me for a walk along the railway lines. Only an early fish train ran on Sundays. He told me that the line was the site of an old Roman road. He recounted the history of the ancient Roman occupation of Britain and at the same time told me something of Scottish history. He and his daughters made it quite clear to me that they were not English as I in my ignorance had referred to them, but Scottish. I used to think that everybody in Britain was English. I enjoyed that weekend immensely and was to have similar hospitality extended to me many times in the future.

Christmas holidays

When the University closed for the winter vacation, I stayed on at the Hall. A few other students whose homes were overseas also remained at the Hall.

When I came up to breakfast on Christmas morning, I was surprised to find that everything was in turmoil. Ladders stood against the walls and workmen were busy painting. I rubbed my eyes and thought I was mistaken; it could not be Christmas Day. I asked Miss McGregor what day it was. She explained that Christmas was not a holiday in Scotland. She said that if I went into town, I would find all the shops open as usual. That Christmas, however, was the last one not observed in Glasgow. The following year it was a public holiday and businesses were closed.

We were all invited out for Christmas day. Miss May who was English invited me for dinner and to meet her family. She lived with her mother and father. Mrs May was a dainty-looking old lady dressed in the Victorian style in black with a white lace cap and small apron. She greeted me in a most kindly manner and said she was glad I was able to come. Mr May was a scientist engaged in historical research. He looked serious

and made me feel shy at first but soon put me at ease. Miss May had two sisters and two brothers. Only one brother was at home; the others were away in England. He was a doctor. In later years he was the superintendent of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, a hospital for old soldiers. Miss May lived with him then. It was a small but congenial party with interesting conversation. I spent a happy and enjoyable evening with these charming people.

As I came out of their house to the waiting cab that was to take me back to the Hall, I found a scene reminiscent of an old Russian Christmas. It was snowing and everything was white. When I wrote to Miss May for Christmas in 1959, I reminded her of that party and how good she was to me when I came to Glasgow forty years earlier. I expected that, after a night's snow, there would be a lovely white sunny and frosty morning but alas the following morning was absolutely black. I had never seen anything like it. It smelt of soot and it was impossible to see more than a foot or two ahead. All the streetlights were on but were of little use. Eunice Murray had invited me to spend a few days with her. It was very foggy in town and I did not know how the cabby would find his way to the station. It was dark when I got onto the train but, after a few stations, we suddenly came into bright sunshine. There was no fog in the country. The ground was covered with a blanket of snow. It looked wonderful.

At Cardross station, the chauffer Graham was waiting for me and greeted me like an old friend. Dr Murray and Miss Sylvia were away in Glasgow at their office at MacLay, Murray and Spence but Eunice was at home with her nephews Tom and Allen and her niece Frances. Tom and Frances stayed at Moore Park during their school vacations but Allen, being too young for school, lived there permanently. Their parents Mr and Mrs Cowan lived in India.

After lunch Eunice ordered her small car and drove us into the country to a small frozen lake. It was a sunny, frosty day. They were going to play a game called curling[44] on the ice. I watched for a while and then joined in. The following day it was warmer, the snow and ice melted and there was no more curling. On Saturday when Dr Murray and Miss Sylvia were home, we all went in the big Rolls driven by Graham to Scott's country - places described by Sir Walter Scott in his novels. In the evening Tom was asked by his grandfather to read aloud a chapter from one of the novels, in which the scenery we had visited, was described

On Sunday the cars were not taken out. The day was spent quietly at home. That particular Sunday evening, Eunice asked me if I would like to come to prayers. She wanted to know if Russians held family prayers in their homes. I told her that I had read that on some estates and homes it was so but not in our family. We had no estate and were not of the Russian Church; we were Jews. She looked at me and said I need not come if I did not want to. "But I would very much like to come, if you don't mind", I replied. The prayers were held upstairs in the drawing room. All the servants came and the whole household was there. Dr Murray conducted the service. I realised that they had not known that I was not a gentile. Miss Boyle had evidently not told them. That night I slept very badly wondering what their attitude towards me would now be.

In the morning, I found that the whole family was as nice to me as before and when I left for the station, Dr Murray said he hoped to see more of me. In all the years that I spent in Glasgow, they continued to invite me to Moore Park where they made me feel at home.

44 A game played with large flat stones sent along the ice towards a mark.

During World War II, I was glad to be able to reciprocate their hospitality and send them food parcels from South Africa. Dr Murray was already dead by then. Miss Sylvia died soon after the war. As I am writing this - April 1960 - I have before me a cutting from the Glasgow Herald sent by a friend with an obituary of Eunice who died on the 27th March 1960. (I had a letter from her for Christmas 1959 – forty years after I first met her). She was one of the Scottish leaders of the women's suffrage movement and the first woman candidate for parliament in Scotland. She was president of the Glasgow branch of the Women's Freedom League. When the struggle for the vote was over, she diverted her energies to other social work. She was a member of Dumbartonshire County Council and worked for improvements in health and for the provision of better housing. Her public services were later recognised by an MBE award. I felt very sad hearing of her death, the last of my three dear friends to whom I owe so much. They helped me attain my life's ambition to become a doctor of medicine.

New Year 1920

I was in the Hall on New Year's Eve. Miss McGregor had some private visitors and asked me to join the party. The Hall looked very different from how it had looked on Christmas Eve. It was brightly lit and there was a roaring fire in the large drawing room where we sat after the festive dinner. At midnight we drank wine, wished each other a happy new year and sang Auld Lang Syne. In the morning, the maids came to my room to wish me a happy new year and to "first-foot"[45] me with some small presents. It was all rather jolly and interesting.

45 Scottish custom of being the first to cross the threshold in the New Year

Work and examinations

After the holidays, I settled down to work. The examinations in zoology and chemistry were due in March. I could now concentrate better on these subjects but was nervous about how well I would do. I was afraid and wondered if I would remember what I had learnt. Happily I passed both subjects. I spent the weekend after the ordeal with the Murrays at Moore Park and told them all about it.

The Easter holidays

My sister-in-law Becky invited me to come to London for the Easter holidays. They lived in a new house in Bracknell Gardens in Hampstead. It was a lovely house in fine grounds not far from buses and Finchley Road tube station. I could easily go out by myself. Becky and Phillip were good to me and in the evenings took me to shows and to visit their friends. Of the plays I saw in London on that visit, I remember only Bernard Shaw's *Back to Methuselah* at a matinee in a little theatre in Sloane Square. The principal woman's part was taken by Miss, now Dame, Edith Evans. She was a lovely young woman then.

In the daytime, I liked roaming about by myself, visiting museums, art galleries, and old friends. Miss Boyle was in London and I went to thank her for introducing me to the Murrays and to tell her what those good people had done for me. She was glad to hear it and told me that Eunice had written to her saying that they liked me very much.

Second half of first year

There were two more subjects to tackle to complete the first year's studies, physics and botany. I had learnt them at school but now they were quite different and I had to pay close attention to this new task. The term ended in June and the examinations were to be held after the summer vacation in October. It was rather a nuisance as it meant that I was anxious over the whole of the summer.

Summer vacation in the Highlands

When I was at Moore Park, Eunice told me that her sister Mrs Cowan was coming home from India to arrange a boarding school in Scotland for her third son. She was going to spend the summer with her children at Fort William in the Highlands. Eunice thought it would be a good place for me to spend my holidays too. Mrs Cowan was looking for a house for herself and could at the same time find a room for me.

When I resigned from the Civil Service in South Africa, I received a nice sum of money in lieu of four months' long leave together with a smaller amount that I had contributed towards a pension. I put this money aside for holidays and the trip to the Highlands was to be the first of these. I saved a bit more as I did not have to pay the Hall when away.

Mrs Cowan booked a room for me in a Women's Hostel in Fort William. It was inexpensive but pleasant. In the evening I often visited her. She told me she was expecting her father and her two sisters to join her at Fort William.

There were several students from other universities at the hostel who, like me, had little money to spend. I became friendly with two of them and we went about together. Fort William was a beautiful place surrounded by lochs and hills covered with heather. It was one of the most picturesque places I had seen. Ben Nevis was visible in the near distance. The neighbouring villages were pretty and I walked through most of them either with the two students or with the older Cowan children Frances and Tom.

On Mrs Cowan's suggestion, Frances, Tom, and I went to Oban on the local loch steamer. It was a lovely day. There were several other summer visitors on the steamer. It stopped at a number of villages - at some for more than an hour. We got off at Ballachulish and at Glencoe, a pretty spot with the river and the conical mountain behind it. Oban was the biggest place we visited. We had a good lunch there and later, before leaving on the return journey, a splendid Scottish tea. The main streets had lovely shops with the finest woollen clothes for women and men that Scotland offered.

One day my student friends and I climbed Ben Nevis. Going up was not difficult. We stopped several times to look at the view. It got colder as we approached the top and we had to put on our cardigans. The summit was disappointing, just heather and an old broken-down hut. A patch of white snow in a corner, however, made us feel that the climb was worthwhile. The coming down was most unpleasant. The path was very slippery, our legs ached and we had to walk most carefully. When we came back to the hostel, I was tired, stiff and exhausted. I would have liked to have a hot bath but there was no hot water in the evenings.

A note was waiting for me from Eunice. They had arrived in the forenoon, she said, and were going to Fort Augustus the following morning. Would I be ready to come? Of course, I was ready to come but oh, how I

ached all over on that journey. I was glad to get back that evening and to go to bed early.

With the Murrays I went every day to places of historical interest. The Highland Games took place during the last week of my stay at Fort William. It was interesting to watch the games as well as the people who were pointed out to me as the cream of Scottish aristocracy. The men looked splendid in their highland outfits. But the women! I wondered where they found the old dowdy clothes they wore. The same women probably looked very smart in London or Edinburgh.

Back at university

After the glorious holiday in the Highlands, Queen Margaret Hall looked rather dismal. The weather had changed, with September rains and little or no sunshine. There was now always a fire in our cosy study but I could not concentrate with all the talking. I preferred to work in my own room, which was, however, dark and cold. I was preparing for the examinations in botany and physics that were to take place in October.

There were about three hundred students in our class, both men and women. It was rumoured that the professor of botany, Professor Bower, had said that he would not pass us all, as the class needed thinning out. The rumour turned out to be correct. About one hundred and fifty students failed. Some of us had expected distinctions. I would have been happy with a modest pass, but I did not get even this. The next examination was due in March 1921. I was most unhappy about it. I did pass physics though. That was something. We were, however, informed that we could start anatomy classes and dissection despite failing botany. This meant we could do second year work.

Second year

There were two subjects in my second year of study, anatomy and physiology. Anatomy classes were held at Queen Margaret College as had been the chemistry classes in first year. The college was part of the university. It was established by progressive women in Glasgow in the 1880s when women were not yet admitted to the university. The college was well endowed and could afford its own lecturers. The women were lucky to have special facilities. They also had sufficient subjects for dissection; the men on Gilmore Hill did not. There were only twenty-four women in this post-war year. Dr Hutton, a senior lecturer, and his assistant looked after us.

Dr Hutton was a very competent teacher and a gentle person. We all liked him. He paid personal attention to every student. He was, however, somewhat old-fashioned even for those days. He did not like to see women students wearing high-heeled shoes or powdering their faces and could be very rude about it. He was also very moody. When he was in a good mood he would be helpful but sometimes he was angry and annoyed with us for no apparent reason. At times he even stopped speaking to a student.

Anatomy required a lot of memorising but dissections and charts helped me remember the different parts of the body and their names.

The Prince of Wales visits Glasgow

It was autumn 1920. There were many unemployed in Glasgow. The world was full of trouble. Conditions all over Europe were unsettled. Russia had its communist revolution, the kings in Germany and Austria

gave up their thrones, regimes changed in other countries also, and working people had more say in politics.

Nelly Farquharson was my partner in the anatomy dissection room. One day she suggested that we should leave the dissection room to see the Prince of Wales who was on a visit to Glasgow. We walked out quietly without saying a word to Dr Hutton and thought he had not seen us. He said nothing the next day but stopped taking any notice of us for weeks. However, the adventure was worth it.

Nelly and I knew nothing about unemployment in Glasgow, nor that a demonstration was planned during the visit of the Prince of Wales. On our way to town, the train suddenly came to a stop. From a side street we saw a procession of men carrying red banners and singing revolutionary songs. The police stopped the procession. Out of a parallel street came another procession led by a band. The Prince of Wales with the Lord Mayor of Glasgow sat in the leading motorcar. The workers' procession booed. I felt quite sick, expecting what might have happened in old Russia on such an occasion. Here, however, nothing happened. The workers stopped while the Prince and the Lord Mayor proceeded to St Andrew's Hall. The band kept on playing. We heard later that the Prince received a deputation of the marchers.

The event made a great impression on me. It showed that in Britain tempers were not easily roused, that people did not lose their heads - in more ways than one - and that tact and respect for authority as well as for workers constrained any violence.

Edinburgh

During the Christmas vacation of 1920-21, I paid my first visit to Edinburgh. I arranged to stay at The Mound, a women's hostel in a double-storey building on Castle Hill. My room was on the first floor and I had a good view of the town in the distance, and closer I could see Princess Street, Princess Gardens, and the Museum. Some women students were living there as Edinburgh University did not have its own women's hostel. They told me what places to see and how to find them.

I walked to the Castle and went inside on the very first day as it was right at hand. Then I made my way along the Royal Mile, the street from the Castle to Holyrood Palace. On both sides of the street stood the grand old houses, now very dilapidated and inhabited by poor people. The whole of Edinburgh was saturated with Scottish history. Almost every room at Holyrood Palace was associated with the life of Mary, Queen of Scots.

I was disappointed in the buildings at the University. Neither the architecture nor the position was in any way attractive. It had nothing of the grandeur of my Glasgow Alma Mater that stood on the top of Gilmore Hill with the Kelvin River right below it.

A brother of my sister-in-law Fanny in Pretoria was studying medicine in Edinburgh. He had come to Glasgow early in winter for an intervarsity debate. As promised, I let him know that I was in Edinburgh. He took me to meet his friends and to some dances. On New Years' eve, I went with him to St Giles Cathedral to see the crowds waiting outside for the bells to ring after the midnight service. There were thousands of people there and more poured out of the Cathedral, everyone joyfully wishing friends

a happy new year. Some also had bottles of alcohol in their hands, which they offered round.

Physiology

On my return to Glasgow, I resumed my studies. In March I passed my botany examination and could devote myself to anatomy and physiology.

Men and women students attended physiology classes together at the university on Gilmore Hill. The laboratories for practical work were also there. Our professors were Professor Noel Paton,[46] affectionately known as Nolly, and Professor Cathcart. The latter was striking-looking. Women students were attracted to him. He had worked in Russia with Professor Pavlov of "dog reflex" fame. When he heard that I came from Russia, he used to come to me to practise the little Russian that he knew. He liked to talk about Pavlov and the work that was being carried out in Russian laboratories. He also spoke about other things that he had seen and learnt in Russia.

Professor Paton also visited the laboratory. I liked him and was always glad to see him and hear his explanations. He was then working on hormones and their actions and interactions in the human body. Research on these subjects was new and followed with much interest. There were also two assistants to help look after us. Physiology was becoming my favourite subject and I looked forward to Professor Paton's lectures. My own particular interest in physiology was the brain and the nervous system. I thought it was a marvellous machine for controlling all the actions, voluntary and involuntary, of the human body.

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46 Diarmid Noel Paton (1859 - 1928), son of the Scottish artist Joseph Noel Paton, became regius professor of physiology in Glasgow in 1906

My fellow students accused me of flirting with our professors and wondered what they had to talk to me about. My reply was always, "Physiology, of course". Sheila Thompson, a science student who worked with me, and who became a friend, found it interesting to listen to me chatting with the professors and did not think I was flirting.

Summer vacation in Brittany and Paris

As the long summer vacation of 1921 was approaching, the students in the Hall were talking of what they might do during the vacation. I thought that it would be a good opportunity to go to France.

One or two students said they would join me if we could find suitable cheap accommodation. We looked at advertisements in the newspapers and studied pamphlets sent to the Hall by travel agencies, which offered summer accommodation for young women on the continent. An advertisement for a convent in Brittany seemed rather attractive. The Convent de la Croix was at Treguier, the birthplace of the French philosopher Ernest Renan.[47] The advertisement said they had nice rooms and bathrooms and good food. There was a good beach for sea bathing only two kilometres away and lovely places for excursions. The price was reasonable; one could not live more cheaply in Scotland.

Molly Rigby said she would join me at the beginning of August; her cousin from Manchester would probably also come along. Molly had first to go home to a small town near Manchester where her father was a

47 Ernest Renan (1823 –1892) was the author of the controversial book *Life of Jesus* in which Jesus is a person and not a god, and who in *What is a Nation* defined a nation as a group who wanted to live together, who were united by a view about the past and a hatred of neighbours, and whose existence was based on a "daily referendum" and not on objective criteria.

medical practitioner. I sent my passport to Phillip to take to South Africa House for a visa for France. He approved of my arrangements and wrote that he would give me an extra allowance to help cover my expenses. He met me in London and took me to Waterloo Station on my way to Southampton, from where I was to sail for St-Malo.

Lannion

It was evening when I boarded the ship. I was very tired and went straight to bed. Awakening early, I came on deck to watch the approach to St-Malo. A group of young women not far from me were chattering away. They had American accents. I joined them and learned that they were students who were also going to Brittany for their vacation. Their destination was Quimper, a favourite place for artists. When they heard that I was going to Treguier, they were sure that it would turn out a very dull place and suggested that I join them. I declined their invitation. We were all catching the same train, the Brest Express, and had a few hours to wait. This gave us time to see a bit of the ancient walled city of St-Malo and to have something to eat.

I got off the train at Lannion where I was to change for a local train. I had only two small suitcases as I had been advised by friends to take very little luggage with me because I might not get porters at small stations in France. Even so, I could not carry them myself. At Lannion the guard put my suitcases on the platform at the furthest end from the station. There was no porter to be seen. There was a train on the other side of the main platform. I thought it might be the one for Treguier but there was no one to ask. I stood perplexed when a middle-aged gentleman with a small beard came up to me and asked in perfect English, "Can I help you in any way, mademoiselle?" I explained my problem. He told me that the train for Treguier had just left and that there would not be

another until the following morning. He said that I would have to spend the night at Lannion. There was only one small hotel and he would get a porter to take my luggage there. As I followed the porter to the hotel, the gentleman who had helped me said he would see me later. I thanked him for his kindness.

It was a small hotel with a kind landlady in a black dress with a pretty Breton lace headgear. She offered me something to eat, for which I was very glad as I had had nothing to eat since the breakfast at St-Malo. It was still early afternoon so I went out to see what Lannion was like. I remember little about it now except an old cathedral built in the early middle ages. Years later, during the Second World War, I was reminded of my visit there when the radio told the world of the bombing inflicted on it by the British; it was then an important German military base.

I returned to the hotel in good time for supper. There were only two other guests, a woman and the man I had met at the station. He came and sat down next to me and asked me what I had done during the afternoon. I told him. He explained to me that he was in Lannion for the day on business. He lived with his family on an estate in a small place on the sea not far from Treguier. He had a wife, a son who was home on vacation from Oxford, and a small daughter who was looked after by an English governess. He spoke to me in a kind fatherly way, telling me that his name was M Chevallier and that he had lived for a long time in England.

Early in the morning, I was awakened by the landlady who brought me coffee with tasty French rolls and butter. She told me I had half an hour to get to the train. I soon got ready and found M Chevallier waiting for me. During the two-hour train journey, I told him what was taking me to Treguier. He was furious when he heard what the nuns of the convent had advertised. The convent, he said, would probably be nice and clean

and have good food. But sea bathing? The nearest little bay where one could bathe was on his estate. It was not open to strangers and was five and not two kilometres away. He said that, if I remained at Treguier, I might pay them a visit. He thought the nuns were cheats and liars and had no business inviting young ladies to their convent under false pretences.

Treguier

M Chevallier's tirade against the nuns quite upset me but I decided not to be rash and to see things for myself. I was expected at the convent and was met by a nun at the station. She seemed a kindly middle-aged woman. She brought me to the convent and showed me a scrupulously clean room with freshly scrubbed wooden floors, simply furnished like a cell. The bed had crisp clean linen. Outside the bedroom was a bath-room, which brightened me up considerably as I had been told there would probably not be one at all. The dining room was a long room with a large table and chairs round it. Dinner was served in the middle of the day and it was ready when I had unpacked.

There were several young women at the table when I came in. Their accents were familiar to me; they turned out to be teachers from Glasgow. One young lady who sat next to me also had a familiar accent but not Scottish. She was a South African and her name was Miss Mybergh. She told me that she and her mother had been caught in France during the First World War and had gone to live in the convent. When her father died, they remained in France. Miss Mybergh attached herself to me and was a good guide. I told her how disappointed I was that there was no sea bathing in Treguier. She said there was a seaside town not far from Lannion called Perros-Guirec, which had a lovely sandy beach. It was a

favourite summer resort for French people. She thought I should go there.

My room, although on the ground floor, was high up with a view of the river, which was filled with water only at high tide. Beyond the river was a monastery. Early every morning and late every afternoon, the monks would come out in a procession and walk round their large park chanting their prayers. I was reminded of this monastery years later when I met a German doctor who had been a prisoner of war in France and was interned there.

Treguier had an old cathedral and in the middle of the town stood a monument to Ernest Renan. There was also his old house to be visited. Not far from the convent was the market with stalls displaying Breton pottery and lace. The peasants at the market were all very picturesque in their national dress. The men, in wide trousers, wore large hats and waistcoats over white shirts and the women wore black dresses with small white aprons and lovely lace caps or bonnets.

After a week, Miss Mybergh told me about the big Catholic festival of Pardon Corpus Christi that was due to take place in Treguier. She suggested that I stay to see it. People from all over Brittany came. Some wore even more picturesque costumes than those I had already seen. There were church processions with banners and singing. It was thrilling and I was glad to have seen it. While waiting for the festival, I suggested to Miss Mybergh that we visit the estate of M Chevallier. We took our swimming suits and towels and looked forward to a pleasant outing. We took the train to Port Blanc and when we arrived there, asked how to find the Chevallier estate. It was not far from the station.

A fine old house stood inside a large garden. We went to the front door and rang the bell. A maid answered and looked at us in great surprise. I

asked for Mme Chevallier. A middle-aged lady appeared and explained that she was the English governess. She told us that M Chevallier was away from home - I had not asked for him - but she would tell Mme Chevallier about me. She came back and said Madame could not see us. At the same time a young man appeared. He said he was M Chevallier Junior. He seemed to know something about me and said that his father was away and that his mother was busy. He would take us to the bay and the bathing beach and we could have our bathe there. We went with him but I did not feel like bathing any more. I thought I was well snubbed and it was best to return to Treguier with the lunchtime train. I wondered who Mme Chevalier thought I was.

Perros-Guirec

I told the nuns that I was going to leave Treguier for Perros-Guirec because I wanted sea bathing. They were nice about it and were glad that Miss Mybergh offered to go with me to help me arrange accommodation. Miss Mybergh had evidently never been to Perros-Guirec but had heard about it. I did not know this at the time. When we reached the place, we found it to be just a fishing village with a small bay full of fishing boats and fishermen who were mending their nets and chatting. There was no sandy beach to be seen. Most people spoke only Breton which Miss Mybergh could not understand. She looked puzzled, repeating that the place was definitely said to be a good summer resort. She did not know why it did not look it.

We managed in the end to find a hotel and as Miss Mybergh had to catch her train back to Treguier, I took a room there. When I looked round the dining room at dinnertime, I felt certain that I was in the wrong place. The guests, both men and women, were oddly dressed and seemed rough and loud. As it was still light, I went out and walked round but

could not see anything to make me feel less pessimistic. During the night there were shrieks and laughter and at breakfast the guests came to the dining room in pyjamas or dressing gowns. As soon as I had had my breakfast of coffee and rolls, I went to the woman at the desk and told her I could not stay on. She said she understood and told me that her hotel was in the fishing village. Perros-Guirec was the place with hotels and summer visitors. It was a few miles further out. She directed me where to go and gave me the names of hotels and pensions. She said she would keep my suitcases until I sent for them. She seemed an honest person and I trusted her.

Off I went. The further I got from the village, the better everything looked. Small cottages were replaced by larger ones with gardens. Further on there were villas with tall hydrangeas of all colours and fuchsias, tall as trees and with flowers like ear rings, climbed the walls. Then, through a chink in the road, I saw the yellow sandy beach and the blue sea. My heart lightened and I felt more cheerful.

I came to a house with a sign *Pension Keradeque*, one of the names on my list. It looked a nice place. I went in and asked if they had a room. I was offered one in an annexe. It was some way from the main house, but nearer the beach. The price quoted was well within my means and I decided to take it straight away. As it was near the mid-day meal, it was suggested that I have it with the other guests in the dining room. The woman I spoke to said she would send for my luggage and have it taken to Rose Blanche, the villa where the room was.

Russian refugees

At lunch, I discovered that my neighbours at table were Russian-speaking. They were making remarks about some of the newcomers. I told them that I understood what they were saying. It turned out that they were also living at villa Rose Blanche. They were M and Mme de Gasler. He was in Brittany for a short holiday and was soon to go home to the Riviera. His wife was to spend the whole summer at Perros-Guirec. We became friends.

Later they told me that they were Russian refugees. M de Gasler was an ex-colonel of the Imperial General Staff. When the Tsar was compelled to abdicate, he with other officers joined the Kerensky group, which intended to continue the war against the Germans. He was sent to Britain to negotiate to bring Russian troops to the west. In the meantime, the Bolsheviks overturned Kerensky's "bloodless revolution" and took over the government violently. Colonel de Gasler told me that the army was glad to see the Tsar abdicate and hoped that a democratic republic would be installed. But Lenin came back from Switzerland and made peace with the Germans. The Bolsheviks upset the idealistic aspirations of all decent Russians by forcefully establishing the Bolshevik regime. Mme de Gasler was left in Russia but managed to escape just in time, leaving all her possessions except some jewellery and old lace behind. By selling these, they were able to live for a time in Britain and then in France. After the war was over, the colonel made a small living as a tourist guide on the Riviera. It was interesting to hear about the beginning of the Russian revolution from a liberal source. The de Gaslers were not Tsarists and certainly not Bolsheviks

I corresponded with Mme de Gasler, whose name was Olga Osipovna, for a number of years after I returned to South Africa. I knew that they

eventually settled in Paris where she opened a dressmaking establishment. I last heard from her in 1929. During the German occupation of France in the Second World War, I read in an English newspaper that a Colonel de Gasler led several attacks by small British ships on the coast of France and I wondered if it could be the man whom I met in Brittany.

Perros-Guirec was a lovely place. It had an excellent sandy beach stretching far out and ending on the south side at a wall formed by rocky cliffs of pink granite. At the north end the beach merged into moors that extended a long way into the country. Giant rocks were scattered on the

moors, singly or in groups, and represented figures of men or animals or other things. Each rock had a name of something connected with French history. A few miles out at sea were the *Sept Iles* or Seven Islands. On one of these islands, I was told, was a castle belonging to the Polish author Henryk Sienkiewicz who wrote his famous book *Quo Vadis* there. I read the book when I was a schoolgirl in Russia.

It was lovely to take walks through the moors to the next village Ploumanach and further. The path had bramble bushes on both sides. We enjoyed picking and eating the berries. It was also interesting to sit on the beach outside our bathing cabin and watch the summer visitors. Most of them were French who stayed in the big hotel facing the beach or in villas. Occasionally one heard English spoken.

My own little circle increased with the arrival of Molly Rigby and her cousin. There were also two English-speaking Canadian women in our villa. Mme de Gasler spoke good English and we spoke this language when we were all together.

Not far from our bathing cabin was one belonging to a very smart French family - a youngish-looking man, his beautiful, always well-dressed wife, and a small boy of about five years of age. They employed a woman to look after the child but she did not seem to know how to manage him. The father often helped her. In the afternoons when the parents were away in their smart big car, the child played in the sand near his governess. She was a young woman. She somehow looked distinctly different from the rest of the people on the sand. She was good-looking with black eyes and an olive complexion, carried herself well and looked well dressed in simple clothes. In those days the women wore very ugly bathing suits but she wore a simple, well-fitted, one-piece black satin suit with rather short trousers. Not one of the French women looked as smart as this governess. When Olga Osipovna and I sat by ourselves talking in Russian, I imagined that the young woman was listening to us. I remarked about it. "Nonsense," Olga Osipovna replied, "If she were Russian, she would have come over and spoken to us". The Canadian sisters had spoken to her and told us she spoke excellent English but was a foreigner. She had told them her name but they could not remember it.

One day, when I was alone on the beach as Mme de Gasler was in bed with a bad headache and the others had gone somewhere on their own, this young woman came up to me and said in English, "Good morning. May I sit down with you?" "Of course," I answered. "do. My friend is ill and I will be glad of your company". "And I of yours", she answered. "I admire how well you speak English," she continued, "and I would like to speak to you in that language. I have so little opportunity these days. You see I am Russian, like yourself. I always listen when you talk to your Russian friend or your English friends and decided that I would like to speak to you when you were alone. I am a Russian refugee", she added, "and you?" I explained that I left Russia a long time before the Revolution and was now a British subject. I kept up the Russian language whenever I had the chance. "Why don't you join our little circle?" I asked. She told me she was rather afraid of my Russian friend and did not care much for the Canadians. She had not been long in France and was glad to get work with a French family who were kind to her. She came from Petrograd and escaped from Russia via the Caucasus and Turkey. She had many relations in Paris, all refugees and hard up. Her name was Nadejda Kleinmichel but she would be glad if I did not mention it to my Russian friend.

This happened during the last week I was at Perros-Guirec and I did not mention the incident to Olga Osipovna. The young woman's name conveyed nothing to me and I did not care to upset her. I had planned to go away with Olga Osipovna and thought I would tell her later. Colonel de Gasler was coming to join his wife in three weeks' time and wanted her to go to a small place near Morlaix. She persuaded me to go with her to Morlaix. From there I could take the express train to Paris where I wanted to stay for about three weeks. Before I left, Nadejda came to speak to me a few times. She thanked me for having been kind to her and said she would miss me and remember me.

On the way to Morlaix, I told Olga Osipovna that the little governess to the small French boy had come to speak with me. She had told me that she was a Russian refugee and how she had escaped from Russia. When I told her Nadejda Kleinmichel's name, Mme de Gasler burst out, "A Kleinmichel! Indeed! She is probably the niece of the old Duchess Kleinmichel. She had a niece called Nadejda. That old Duchess was also an aunt of the late Tsar and had been plotting with Stuermer, the Minister of External Affairs, to make peace with Germany and to betray the Russian people. A good thing the girl did not come and speak to me. I would certainly have snubbed her." I tried to persuade my friend that Nadejda, even if a Grand Duchess was not responsible for her aunt's activities and deserved sympathy. Mme de Gasler would not listen to me and asked me not to mention Nadejda again.

We stayed at Morlaix for a few days taking some trips into the surrounding countryside as well as seeing the town itself. We parted good friends and promised to write to each other, which we did for about eight years. She came to the station to see me off to Paris and gave me a letter of introduction to a friend.

I travelled third class. There was a constant change of passengers as the train stopped at almost every station. Men, women, and children came in and out. Sometimes the passengers had cages of poultry with them. They seemed to be eating and drinking wine from bottles all the time. It was a tiring journey and I was glad when it came to an end.

Paris

The train arrived in Paris towards evening. The lights in the streets had just begun to twinkle. I gave the taxi man the address of the hostel where I was going to stay. I had written from Brittany to a women's hostel at

Paris University and had had a reply saying it was closed for the whole summer. They recommended the British American YWCA hostel on rue d'Anjou.

I asked the taxi man to tell me the names of places we passed. The streetlights were becoming brighter and brighter. We travelled along the avenue des Invalides and then crossed the Seine on the Pont Alexander III towards the place de la Concorde. It all looked like a magic fairyland. At last, after a few more turnings, we came to the rue d'Anjou. It was a small street, a cul-de-sac, and the ordinary little building that housed the hostel seemed an anti-climax to the fairyland with the bright lights and statues from which I had just come.

The inside looked very simple, almost like a Lyon's tearoom in London. At the end of a narrow passage was a large room with small tables covered with checked tablecloths. There were a number of young women and some not so young women chatting away in English mostly with American accents. I was taken to the superintendent who told me that she had a cubicle for me. This rather upset me and I asked if she could not give me a single room. There was not one to be had but, if I was prepared to go to the attic just under the roof, I could be there by myself. We climbed an old wooden staircase and she opened a creaking door into a tiny room with a slanting roof and a little window. It contained an iron bedstead, a small locker that served as a table, and a cupboard. There was also an iron washstand with a jug and basin. I looked through the window and the sight of an avenue with the brightest of lights and traffic was amazing; I decided to take the attic. The superintendent said the view was of the avenue des Champs Elysees.

When I woke up in the morning, the rays of the sun penetrated my little window. I rushed to look out and tried to guess what I was seeing in the famous avenue. After breakfast, I ran downstairs to get a guidebook and

start my wanderings. It was a glorious morning, sunny and warm, and everything seemed most wonderful. With guide book in hand, I walked to the Madeleine, from there to the place de l'Opera, along rue de la Paix, stopping at shop windows, then to the place Vendome and the Tuilerie Gardens. Everywhere was like a big museum. I was thoroughly thrilled. I walked from the place de la Concorde to the Champs Elysees and sat down on a bench near a fountain and just gazed at the enchanting panorama in front of me.

Feeling tired and hungry, I returned to the hostel to have some lunch and a rest. At the hostel, I met an Australian girl who had been in Paris for over a week. We agreed that we might go together to places that she had not yet seen. With her I went to Montmartre and saw the basilique de Sacre Coeur, which reminded me of a Russian church. We had chocolate at one of the cafes and wondered if the other clients were artists or models. With her I also went up the Eiffel Tower, passing the Trocadero Palace on the way. We lunched together several times in pavement cafes.

I enjoyed seeing most of the other places by myself. I could go where I liked and stop as long as I wanted. On my own with my guidebook, I thoroughly enjoyed wandering about Paris. I went inside the Madeleine and stayed through a mass, watching people strolling in and out right through the service. I went to the Louvre repeatedly to see the paintings of the great artists and to admire the other treasures. I loved the miniatures and the snuffboxes. I also visited the Luxembourg Museum but did not understand or appreciate the modern pictures then. I spent another day going through the Paris Medical School with its museum and library. I joined a sightseeing party to the Pantheon and descended with them into the crypt to see the tombs of Voltaire, Jean-Jacque Rousseau, Victor Hugo and others. Walking along the boulevards and gardens gave me much pleasure.

I telephoned Mme de Gasler's friend Mme K and she invited me to her house for lunch. She lived at Neuilly beyond the Bois de Boulogne. I walked all the way there along the Champs Elysees, passing the Arc de Triomphe and the Bois de Boulogne. I liked this walk so much that I took it several times later to the Bois de Boulogne where I would sit at a small table drinking chocolate and watching the smart people pass by on foot or in their carriages and motor cars.

I found my way to Mme K's villa easily. She was a big, friendly woman who greeted me heartily. She and her husband had settled in Paris before the Revolution and were evidently able to bring their money with them. She told me of the other Russians in Paris who were poor or hard up. She tried to help them when possible. The young men, she said, were mostly taxi drivers; the older men made a living in small ways. She knew an ex-colonel who was mending shoes and who used to send an ex-captain to collect and return the shoes to his customers. The women were mostly into dressmaking.

Mme K had also invited a young man to lunch. He had been born in France of Russian parents. He was a promising actor and his name was Sasha Guitry. At lunch he gave Mme K news of the theatre and the stage. I just listened and wondered if they remembered that I was there at all. Sasha Guitry became a famous actor and playwright. I visited Mme K once more when she asked me to tell her what I had seen in Paris and suggested other things and places to see.

With some American women who were staying at the hostel I went for a day to Versailles. I was overwhelmed by the beauty of this famous historical place. It exceeded all my expectations. As I went from palace to palace, from garden to garden, and stood at the different fountains, memories from history and literature came to my mind and I blessed Fate for the opportunity to see it all. I did not go to music halls or night-

clubs in Paris but I visited the opera house twice. The first opera I saw was *Faust* with a most wonderful ballet. The other was *Sampson and Delilah*.

Before leaving Paris, I bought a couple of very fine dresses for myself and some bottles of eau-de-Cologne as presents. When I declared these items to the customs officer in England, he told me to pass along without looking at my luggage. Evidently I did not look like a smuggler!

And so ended my holiday in the glorious sunny summer of 1921.

1921 - 1923

London

On my return from France, I spent a week in London with Phillip and Becky. I had hardly any time to see my friends. Only Ada Myers was in London. I went to see her and told her about my holiday. Miss Boyle was away with Mr Nansen in Russia where, after the war and the revolution, there was a terrible famine. They worked with the society *Save the Children* that helped starving children and adults in those grim days. Miss Boyle stayed in Russia for over a year.

Glasgow

Back in Glasgow, I settled down to work. Lectures and practical classes in anatomy and physiology occupied all my time. Anatomy was a vast subject and there seemed no end to the things to be learned. I was, however, more interested in physiology.

The examinations in both subjects were far ahead in June the next year. I had a new room on the ground floor that had better light in the daytime and a warm fire in the evening. Friends often came in for a cup of coffee after dinner and we would sit around the fire and chat. The British National Opera was in Glasgow that winter and we attended some of the performances. We also found time to go to the winter concerts. Christmas and New Year came and went. It was 1922. At Easter a few of us

went to a nearby resort at West Kilbride. We went on walking tours and had fun.

In April all unimportant occupations were set aside and serious preparations for the examinations began. They were considered the most difficult of the whole medical course, particularly the anatomy examinations. One could never read up everything on that subject so one hoped for the best. Physiology did not worry me as I thought I knew it well and was sure of a pass. However, the unexpected happened. I got a single pass in anatomy - I must have obtained over sixty percent - and I failed physiology. Professor Cathcart was my examiner but he was not his usual charming self on that day. Professor Noel Paton asked me what had happened and why I had failed. He could not believe it and neither could I. I was thunder-struck and did not know what to say.

I had made arrangements to go to Cambridge for the summer to do preliminary work in pathology. Could I go on with these plans? My friends the Murrays encouraged me to carry on as if nothing had happened.

Cambridge

One morning early in July, I arrived at Cambridge. My lodgings with a Mrs Welsh on Park Parade were recommended by Girton College, which did not take outside students. I was given two rooms with a bathroom. Mrs Welsh was to cook for me. It was inexpensive and turned out to be very comfortable.

As soon as I put my things down, I hurried out to see famous Cambridge. King's Parade with the colleges of medieval architecture looked most wonderful in the light and shade of that glorious summer morning. I walked up and down the whole street at least twice to savour the beauti-

ful sight. I did not enter any of the colleges that morning as I was going to spend two months in Cambridge and would have time to see them separately and at leisure.

Miss Sylvia Murray, who was a student at Girton College in her youth, gave me letters of introduction to two women dons. I telephoned them and was invited to lunch. I was their guest and sat with them at high table overlooking the rest of the dining hall where the students were having their lunch. I told them of the purpose of my visit and heard that some of their students would also be attending the course. After lunch they introduced me to them. The students, all women, received me warmly and offered to show me round their college. They also invited me to lunch with them.

The lunch with the students a few days later was interesting and entertaining. They told me about student life in Cambridge. The pathology and bacteriology lectures, they said, were starting about a week later. They offered to fetch me when the classes began. In the meantime, they took me out a few times in a punt on the river. I was also invited to picnics on the punts and one of the students taught me how to use a canoe. I could now go on the river by myself.

The summer lectures on pathology and bacteriology were conducted by Professor Strangeways, a well-known cancer research worker, Professor Corbett, and Dr Swann. There were over fifty students in the class, mostly men from Cambridge. There were also a few men from other universities and six Cambridge women - three from Girton and three from Newham College. I was the only woman from another university. As an outside student guest, I was given a seat with the men but the Cambridge women had to sit at the back of the lecture room. Cambridge at that time did not officially recognise women as students and did not grant them degrees - only diplomas. It was years later that the university abandoned

these out-of-date practices. After the lectures were over, the men and women were very friendly towards each other. I still have hanging on my wall the group photograph of all of us.

I also had a letter of introduction from Miss Lyall to her friend Miss Ridding. She was a scholar of Sanskrit languages like Miss Lyall's father. Miss Ridding took a keen interest in me and kept me informed on what was happening in Cambridge. Through her I met Mr and Mrs Richard Parsons, both physiology lecturers, he at Cauis College and she at Girton. I was often invited to their home and liked them both very much. Mrs Parsons arranged picnic parties in the evenings when we would go to some small place on the river by punt. We would build a fire to boil a kettle and provide light so that the picnickers could see what they were eating.

Mr Parsons did not lecture in the summer but he introduced me to his friend who held a summer physiology class. I thought it might be wise to attend some of the lectures in view of my impending examination in that subject. After two visits, I found that I did not like the lecturer. He annoyed me with his personal attention and compliments and I did not attend any more of his lectures.

Summer schools

Miss Ridding also told me of a summer school event due to take place in Cambridge in August. It was a celebration of the 600th anniversary of the death of Dante. Many visitors from all over Britain and America were expected to attend. I gladly joined that summer school. It proved most interesting. Most of the lectures were in the evening. They were not only on Dante and his writing but also on other poets of the time and on the great medieval painters. Many slides of famous paintings were shown.

My time was fully occupied with these instructive and interesting activities when yet another pleasant pastime presented itself to me. Through Miss Ridding I heard that a summer school for British university students of the Jewish faith was being held in Cambridge. It was organised by a Committee of British Jews among whom were Mr and Mrs Radcliff Solomon and their two sons, Professor Charles Myers, a professor of psychology, and Phillip Samuel, a Trinity College law student and son of Sir Herbert Samuel, High Commissioner for Palestine (later Lord Samuel).

The lecture course was almost finished when I joined the summer school but social activities continued until the end of August. The members of the committee acted as hosts and entertained visiting students. In the clubrooms there were always interesting people to talk to over a cup of tea. I particularly liked to talk to Professor Myers. He was interested in South Africa where he had a cousin Mr Wolf Myers whom I knew personally because he was the husband of my friend Ada.

One Friday evening we all went to a service at the synagogue. The synagogue was built in memory of Jewish students who were killed in the First World War. A very young man conducted the service in Hebrew. He was a son of the Solomons. A week later on a Sunday, the members of the summer school went for the day to their family estate, a lovely place not far from Cambridge. The house stood in a large park where we had a noisy and enjoyable treasure hunt. Soon after we arrived, we were served a most lavish luncheon and before we left, we had a sumptuous tea with strawberries and cream and other delicious things. Mrs Solomon was a most gracious hostess and we all fell in love with her. She was a charming woman, tall and stately, with a plait of grey hair round her head. I heard that she was a poet who wrote under her own name, Nina Davis. She also wrote articles on Jewish subjects for several journals.

The pathology lectures were coming to an end and the summer schools were also finishing. It had been a summer full of interesting and useful events and work, and I enjoyed every minute of it.

Robin Hood's Bay and surrounds

I still had another month's vacation before my physiology examination at the end of September. I decided to take a holiday at the seaside and asked my friends for advice on where to go. Some suggested Robin Hood's Bay. The name took my fancy and there I went.

I had no time to make arrangements for accommodation and on the last day of August, which was a Saturday, I set out for Robin Hood's Bay. When I got there, I found that the only hotel in the place could not give me a room until Monday. The proprietor said that the whole town was fully booked up for the rest of the season. He advised me to find a room in a private home and gave me some addresses. Late on Sunday I found a room with a window facing the sea, but no food. For that I would have to go to the hotel.

The little town was most fascinating. The old part had very narrow streets - paved with fine pebbles - going up and down the hills. No vehicles could use them. The small houses on both sides were old fashioned and dainty with geraniums in the windows. The modern part had wider streets, not paved at all and very dusty. There was a main street with a few shops and some newish houses for summer visitors. The beach was rocky with occasional sandy patches where people could bathe.

At the hotel I met two sisters who came from the west of England. We discussed what excursions we could take. Someone told us of an old guesthouse on the Yorkshire Moors. As there were no trains to the

wilder parts, we hired a cart and horse that I was to drive and we chanced on finding something of interest. We came to a farm belonging to a very old lady. She was pleased to get visitors and treated us to a big tea with homemade bread and butter, scones with homemade jam and cream, and crumpets. She had good stories to tell about superstitions on the moors. In the big dining room cum-kitchen there was a beautiful old English dresser of black wood with old English china and pottery on it.

On another day the three of us went to Whitby by train. We visited the cathedral and went to a fishing village where the packing of fish was done by girls.

Walking along the main street one morning, I heard someone behind me say, "That girl in front reminds me of Miss Podlashuk who was with us on the *Cap Polonio* in 1919". I turned round and saw Mrs Warren, the wife of the missionary from Nyasaland, with her three daughters. I told her that I was indeed the same girl as on the boat. We were delighted to meet each other again. She told me that Dr Warren was back in Nyasaland but she was living in Edinburgh with her daughters who were at school there. After that first meeting, I saw them often on the beach and we bathed together. I promised to visit them in Edinburgh when I next went there.

Physiology examinations

The fortnight at the seaside was the finishing touch to my splendid summer vacation. I returned to Glasgow full of optimism and did not mind facing the forthcoming physiology examination. Once again, I had Professor Cathcart examining me in the orals. I could answer all his questions. He asked me why I had failed in June. Had I been working hard on physiology during my holidays? Where had I spent my vaca-

tion? I told him I had been at Cambridge doing a course in pathology and bacteriology. I passed the examinations and entered third year.

As the third year's lectures did not begin until a fortnight later, I spent a week with my friends the Murrays. They wanted to know how I liked Cambridge and were pleased to hear that I had had such a good time.

Third year 1922 - 1923

Pathology and materia medica - therapeutics - were the principal subjects of third year. We also started working in the hospital. The professor of pathology was Robert Muir[48]. He lectured to the students every day and was a great favourite. We called him Bobby behind his back. I sat on a front bench but he never noticed me or spoke to me.

One day, when I returned to the Hall late in the afternoon, I was told that there was a message for me to see Professor Muir at once. I could not think what I had done wrong. He was in his office when the janitor showed me in. He greeted me and asked me what my name was. When I told him, he asked, "Are you a very rich woman?" I was astonished at the question and answered, "Not at all". "So why are you throwing money about?" For a moment, I was rather non-plussed and then by some instinct I opened my bag to look inside. That morning I received a letter with a cheque from South Africa and read it just before the lecture began. I now found that the cheque was missing. Professor Muir told me that the janitor found the cheque on the floor and brought it to him. "It is not good to be absent-minded", he told me but he sympathised with me as he was that way inclined himself.

48 Sir Robert Muir (1864 – 1959) was professor of Pathology at Glasgow University from 1899 – 1936. His publications include *Textbook of Pathology* and *Manual of Bacteriology*.

Indeed, there were always stories about Bobby's absent-mindedness. Once he left his motorcar outside his club in Buchanan Street where he had been dining. He was taken home by a friend. For days, he wondered what had happened to his car and then he heard that it was still standing in the street where he had left it

After that meeting, Professor Muir often came to chat with me. He was interested in South Africa and asked many questions about the country and about Johannesburg in particular. One of his assistants Dr Archibald Strachan had been for a time a lecturer in pathology at Cape Town. Later, when I returned to South Africa, I found that he was professor of pathology at the Witwatersrand University in Johannesburg.

Professor Ralph Stockman was head of the department of materia medica. He seldom lectured to the class and we hardly knew him. He had a reputation for being a woman-hater and no woman student ever worked in his wards at the Western Infirmary. It was also said that he failed every woman who had the misfortune to be examined by him. Lectures were usually given by Dr David Campbell who was easy-going and liked by everyone. On the few times that Professor Stockman lectured to us or came into the laboratory, he did not seem so bad but he never came to the table where I worked nor did I ever speak with him.

The course for this subject lasted only six months. It involved a lot of memory work and drug doses had to be learnt by heart. Students could take the examination either soon after the lectures ended or they could take it at the end of the academic year at the same time as the pathology examination. The majority of students decided to try the examinations after the lectures ended to see how they would fare and set about learning doses. Everyone seemed to be murmuring doses and asking each other, "What is the dose of this or that". I knew I could never learn this way. There were far too many drugs to memorise in such a senseless

way so I decided to learn only those drugs which were most frequently used - the correct doses, their actions on patients, and how to use them. From every side, I heard that I was foolish to try the examination without knowing all the doses. "And what if you get Stocky to examine you?" they asked. My answer was that, if I failed on account of the doses, I would go up again in six months' time.

When the time arrived for the trial, I was in a don't-care mood. My written paper, I felt was a pass; time then for the orals. Molly Rigby and I stood waiting to be sent in to our examiners. I was to go to Professor Stockman and Molly to Dr Campbell. "Poor Poddy", the girls murmured. I was rather curious about Stocky. He answered in a friendly way to my "Good morning" and asked me to sit down. He took up a bottle containing a white powder and asked me what it was. I said it might be anything. He did not persist. He took up another bottle containing some seeds and I told him what they were. "How do you know?" he asked. "Because I saw them at the museum yesterday", I answered. He laughed and said I was right. Next he asked me about iron, arsenic, salicylates and mercury, all drugs which were much used in those days and I knew their uses and doses. Then he mentioned a drug of which I knew absolutely nothing and I said so. "What would you do if someone, say a consultant, should suggest it?" "I would ask him what it was and probably read it up". "That's all now", he said suddenly. "You can go". I was glad to go but did not know whether he would pass me or not. Just as I reached the door, he called me back, saying I had forgotten something. "What is it, Sir?" I asked. "You have forgotten to say 'Good-bye'", and he smiled. I said, "Good bye", and went out laughing. Outside the door the students surrounded me and asked how I got on with Stocky. Did I pass? I did not know but he had made me laugh.

We got back to the Hall in time for lunch, after which Nelly Farquharson and I went to a matinee to see the opera *Mignon*. I was seeing it for the

first time. I enjoyed it very much and thought it the most beautiful opera I had ever seen. When we returned to the Hall, some students were coming from the university where they saw the results of the day's examinations. They told me that my name was on the list. I felt happy and thought I liked Stocky.

Easter vacation

I went to Moore Park to the Murrays that weekend to tell them about my good fortune. They were very pleased with me and persuaded me to stay a few extra days as it was the beginning of the Easter vacation.

The rest of the vacation I spent in Leeds with my friends Mary and Cecilia Shiskin. They had obtained their medical degrees two years earlier in Glasgow. They had both come from South Africa with their mother. Cecilia was a brilliant student and had done research on encephalitis lethargica with Dr Leonard Findlay[49] when she was his houseman. They were now settled in Leeds. Both had good municipal appointments. Cecilia worked in the Child Welfare Department and was, in addition, working on her thesis for a MD degree. I spent over a week with them, chatting about work and being shown places of interest.

The end of third year

When the academic third year came to an end in June 1923, I also passed the second subject of that year, pathology. Professor Muir per-

49 Leonard Findlay (1878-1947) was appointed the inaugural Professor of Child Health at Glasgow University in 1924. His research showed that dogs developed rickets if denied fresh air and exercise.

sonally introduced me to Professor Teacher who examined me in the orals. Both made me feel at ease.

The whole of third year was a very happy and interesting one. I got into stride with studying and no longer experienced any difficulty concentrating on what I was doing.

A dance, a fete and the Murrays

The Hall held its big annual dance in the winter and for the first time I attended. There were men I knew from my year at the university and I was introduced to other men I did not know. I danced every dance and enjoyed the evening more than I expected.

During the summer term, a fete was held at Queen Margaret Hall. The occasion was to present the Hall to the College and the University. Until then the Hall belonged to a trust formed by some Glasgow women who helped to found Queen Margaret College before the university admitted women students. Among the founders was Mrs Frances Murray, the wife of Dr Murray and mother of Sylvia and Eunice. Dr Murray made the presentation. I felt very proud that he and his family were friends of mine. Sylvia and Eunice were also there, as were Miss Melville and Miss May. I took an active part in the celebration. I was dressed as a gipsy and sat on a wagon telling fortunes. I still have a copy of a Glasgow newspaper *The Bulletin* with a photograph of me reading Miss Melville's hand.

I spent the last weekend of the academic year with the Murrays. They were truly good friends. I loved them for themselves and for the opportunity they gave me to get to know Scotland.

Lithuania - 1923

Crossing the North Sea

My eldest sister Golda wanted very much to see me and asked me to visit her in Lithuania. I decided to go during the long summer vacation. My journey would take me by boat from Leith in Scotland to Hamburg in Germany, then to Berlin and from there to Shavli - now called Šiauliai.

The short sea journey was most enjoyable. It was a lovely warm summer and the North Sea was blue and calm. On board the small steamer I met a Scottish family - Professor J Grey of Edinburgh University, his wife, and her sister. They were on their way to Göttingen where Professor Grey had studied before the war. He wanted to visit his old friends and professors. We talked endlessly about the situation in Europe, particularly in Germany, and wondered about changes in the new German Republic. It was the beginning of the inflation; the German mark stood at eight thousand to the pound sterling whereas previously it had been twenty. We thought that, if we bought five pounds worth of marks, we would be well away for money in Germany for quite a while.

We watched the boat pass through the estuary into the river Elbe to the port of Hamburg where we disembarked. The German officials were very polite and did not even look at our luggage. Mrs Grey's sister, however, roused their suspicion and, in spite of her protestations, they insisted on opening her trunk. They found some English tea and she had to pay a rather heavy duty on it. The examination of her trunk and its subsequent

repacking delayed us considerably. We had to go straight to the station to catch the Berlin train and could not take a drive round Hamburg as we had intended.

Berlin

I had written to my cousin Boris, who had been living in Berlin since leaving Moscow during the revolution, to let him know that I would be there for a few days. He invited me to stay with him and said he would meet me at the station. After saying good-bye to the Greys at the station, I looked round the platform but could not see Boris. I was wondering what to do when a young man came up to me and asked, in Russian, if I was Pauline Podlashuk. He told me that Boris had asked him to meet me as his wife Emma was very ill and he could not come himself. He had arranged a room for me in the Hotel Adlon on Unter den Linden as it would not be possible for me to stay at his house in Hallensee because of his wife's illness. The name of the hotel signified nothing to me but I knew that Unter den Linden was the best-known street in Berlin. I thought it was crazy of him to put me in that street. I could certainly never afford to stay there. On reaching the hotel, my reservations were confirmed. When Boris telephoned, he told me not to worry: I should go up to my room - he would pay for it. The hotel was indeed luxurious and the room, the finest I had ever stayed in. I learned later that, due to inflation, it would cost very little in English money.

Boris told me that Becky was in Berlin to do some shopping. She was staying at the Bristol which was near the Adlon. She had been with the children in Karlsbad and was on her way back to England. Boris had telephoned her to tell her of my arrival and had asked her to look after me as he could not get away to see me. So it was that I spent most of my time with Becky; I had my meals with her too. I went shopping with her

and saw her get the most beautiful things for next to nothing in English money. I bought a few presents for my sister and the children and thought I would buy things for myself on my way back from Lithuania. I bought five pounds worth of marks to use on my return journey.

We went to two musicals. I was very surprised to see that the actresses, with the exception of the principals, all wore paper dresses. We were told that they were too poor to afford any other material. I saw Boris only twice. The second time was when he took me to the station when I left for Lithuania.

Lithuania

The ticket to the Lithuanian border cost only about two pounds sterling. The train was an express blue train that started in Brussels. It was very comfortable. Its route took us through the Polish Corridor, the part of Poland that was cut out of Germany by the Treaty of Versailles. All carriages were sealed when we passed through the Corridor. We were not allowed to go in or out of our carriages until we got to the eastern part of Germany. On my previous trips along this route, it was in Germany and then in Russia, even if some of the towns were of Polish origin.

When I got to the Lithuanian border, I was surprised that the customs officers spoke only Lithuanian and pretended that they could not understand Russian. They could not speak English but did not mind speaking German, and so I had to send a telegram to my sister in German.

The family

The express passed through Shavli and the whole family was at the station to meet me. We had been very anxious about them during the war and the revolution so it was lovely to see them all alive and well. Golda and Hirsch now lived on the outskirts of town in a small house attached to the small tannery that they owned before the war. They occupied the smaller part of a house that had been the office and their partner's home before the war. He still lived in the other part of the house.

Golda was delighted to see me again and to hear about the family in South Africa, though I had not seen them for three years. I could tell her more of our brother Phillip and his family in London. She in turn told me of their life and trials during the years of war and revolution.

At the beginning of the First World War when Jews were expelled from Lithuania, Golda and her family fled from Shavli to the interior of Russia. They eventually settled in Yeletz where they lived throughout the war and the revolution. Life was extremely difficult. Yeletz was occupied in turn by the Whites (the counter-revolutionary forces) and the Reds (the Red Army). With each army in temporary control, the inhabitants were required to supply the troops with clothes, money, and anything else they had. Golda and Hirsch were forced to part with the little money they had, their silver, and whatever else they had managed to bring with them from Shavli. They hid their fur coats and some bedding, which they needed to survive the extreme winter cold of central Russia.

Their two small rooms were bearable in summer when it was warm and the days were long. But in winter when it got dark early, they had no light except a small oil lamp. They were then glad to get into bed, still wearing their warm coats. There was little or no wood to heat their small

house, very little to eat, and hardly any money for food. Fay and Esther were taken in by a kind teacher from the local Russian school. They lived with her in comparative comfort though they also did not have enough to eat. The three younger boys, Chaim, Lipa, and Norman, had to be hidden by day - until they escaped from Yeletz - so as not to be taken into the army by either the Reds or the Whites. Shmuel-Behr, the eldest, who was crippled in childhood by polio and was never required to serve in the army, remained with his parents. Hirsch would go to the market early in the morning to see peasants who let him treat small sheep hides in exchange for flour and other farm produce, which he would bring home in the evening. He had to go to the villages to do the work.

When the Bolshevik republic was established under Lenin, people who had come from the newly established small republics outside Russia were given permission to return to their old homes. Hirsch and Golda claimed Lithuanian citizenship and left for Lithuania. The journey back took a long time as there were very few trains and these travelled only short distances. They would then have to wait for the next train to take them further northwest.

This was my sister's story. They were now satisfied to stay where they were. Hirsch was an old man, almost in his seventies, but he still tried to earn something by tanning small hides. Shmuel-Behr opened a small leather business in the town and supported his parents and his two young sisters Esther and Fay. His brothers in South Africa also helped.[50]

50 PP wrote, "The other three brothers (meaning Chaim, Lipa, and Norman), who escaped from Russia during the revolution, had eventually reached South Africa [and] also helped their parents." This is not correct. Only Mark and Norman were in South Africa in 1923. Chaim and Lipa were in Palestine.

Shavli

Esther and Fay fretted to get away. We chatted about their ambitions and I told them about myself. They took me to town to see what Shavli looked like. It was a walk of three miles and the picture that met my eyes was a sad one. The houses that were not destroyed by the war were very dilapidated. The once prosperous town looked poor and drab and so did the people. My late uncle's tobacco factory was now the Lithuanian Army Barracks. The big walls surrounding the old factory were still there but Uncle's pretty double storey house looked shabby. I wondered if the garden at the back still existed. The only place that still had its old grandeur was the chestnut avenue in Zoubov Park. There were no military band concerts now, I was informed, but the townspeople still came there to walk up and down. There were few people that I knew from my visit in 1913. I had to be introduced to everyone we met.

In my childhood and youth, Shavli had been so Russian - a border town garrisoned to fight back a German invasion. Now it seemed entirely Lithuanian. At the beginning of World War I, the Germans occupied the whole western part of Russia, including its Polish and Baltic provinces. The Russians later took the territories back. At the Versailles peace conference, the American President Woodrow Wilson urged self-determination for the small east European nations. Lenin agreed to the formation of an independent Poland with Warsaw as its capital, the Lithuanian Republic with Kaunas[51] as its capital and Latvia and Estonia with their respective capitals, Riga and Reval[52]. These republics, which had been part of the Russian empire for over a hundred years, now tried to efface every trace of their previous rulers. They re-established the lan-

51 Kaunas also known as Kovno

52 Now called Tallinn

guages and traditions of their forefathers. Most of the Russian officials left at the beginning of the war and did not return but some Russian civilians who sympathised with the revolutionary ideals of the local population were still there.

The Lithuanians were a peasant people living in villages and on small poor farms. They sold milk, butter, and cream as well as grains and vegetables in the towns. In the summer they also sold fruit, berries, and mushrooms but did not earn enough to live on. The middle classes in the towns were mostly of Polish origin and occupied positions in government departments. There were, of course, many Lithuanians who became town people and worked well with the Poles. Many of the Jews who were expelled at the beginning of the war returned to their old homes. Most came without young people - they had either left Russia like my nephews or had remained in Russia as supporters of the Bolshevik regime.

Bureaucracy and nationalism

Before leaving Shavli, circumstances forced me to get in touch with an old schoolmate Manya Sholkovskaya. I intended to visit my relatives in Riga before returning to Germany. I had a visa for Latvia and was getting ready to go. Unluckily, just when my visa for Lithuania was about to expire and I had to leave, I was bitten by an insect. My face became very swollen and I ran a high temperature. The local doctor said that travelling was out of the question until the swelling was down and I no longer had a fever. Hirsch went to see the police to find out what was to be done about my Lithuanian visa. He was told that I had to come to them myself despite the doctor's certificate.

When I was brought by cab to the police station the following morning, the *Inspravnik* (chief) would not speak Russian to me. I did not understand Lithuanian and he could not speak English. I did not know what to do and, feeling desperate, went home. Golda, on hearing my story, asked if I remembered Manya Sholkovsky. One of her brothers was a member of the Lithuanian Parliament and could probably help me. I phoned Manya who was surprised that I had been in Shavli for a fortnight without getting in touch with her. I explained that I had been ill in the last week and could not stay on because my visa had expired. I told her that I was still ill and could not leave either unless my visa was extended. I might even be arrested. I had applied to their local *Ispravnik* but he would not speak Russian to me and I did not know what to do. Could she help me? She said she would speak to her brother that evening when he came back from Kovno. The following morning she telephoned me to tell me that I should go to the *Ispravnik* again and that he would now speak Russian. When I saw that gentleman again and he had arranged for my visa to be endorsed in Kovno, I told him that I was surprised that he had forgotten how to speak Russian in three years whereas I remembered the language after ten.

I cancelled my visit to Riga and as soon as I recovered from my unpleasant indisposition, left for Berlin. I was very sorry I did not see my relatives in Riga. I did not think, of course, that I would never see any of them again. When Hitler's armies invaded Latvia, the Latvians turned against the Jewish population of Riga, plundered their businesses and homes, killed many who were well known and sent others to concentration camps. Amongst the names, mentioned in an article in an American journal, were those of my cousin Rosalie Michelson, her husband, and their family. It was terrible to read about it.

Inflation in Berlin

Having obtained my exit visa, I went to the station to book a seat on the express train that travelled from Riga through Shavli to Berlin. I was told that I could not get a ticket to Berlin but only to the German border, as the money exchange rate with Germany was rather uncertain. When I came to the German border and asked for a ticket to Berlin, I was told that it would cost half a million marks. I had the forty thousand marks I bought on my way to Lithuania, which I thought would be more than sufficient for travelling expenses. Now I did not even have enough marks for a ticket. The exchange rate that day was one million marks per pound sterling. Luckily I had English money on me as well as some gold and silver. I was able to pay for my ticket in English money and found that one gold sovereign would do.

Boris met me at the station. His wife had died soon after I left Berlin some weeks earlier. He took me to his house at Hallensee a suburb in West Berlin. It was a nice little house and he had a good servant. I was very comfortable during the few days I spent there. Boris told me that things were very bad in Germany. One never knew what was happening. Everything was topsy-turvy. He advised me not to change any money because what I would get for my pound in the morning might not be worth anything in the afternoon. He would give me some marks for my immediate use and we could settle before I left.

Berlin was a strange sad place. Most of the big shops were shut. The smaller ones had removed their stock and their shelves were empty except for a few necessities. Wherever I went, I came across queues of people waiting to buy bread, milk, or vegetables, even postage stamps. Many of them would not have enough money by the time their turn came because of the falling mark. People committed suicide right there in the

queue. If I took the bus to Leipziger Street in the morning and paid fifty thousand mark for my ticket, I would have to pay a hundred thousand or more to come back. People walked about with bags full of notes, beggars were all over the place and would not accept less than a fifty thousand mark note. The maid in the house told me that the local shoemaker had gone off his head; she used to pay him three marks for a job and now he wanted three million. "Millions", she repeated. "Where should a poor girl like me get millions?" I gave her three shillings in English money. She soon returned with her shoes, fell on her knees, and kissed my hands. She said the shoemaker was very grateful as he would now be able to buy bread and milk for his family.

When I got on the train for Hamburg, I asked the porter how much he wanted for his tip. He said, "five hundred thousand marks." I gave it to him. When I came to Hamburg and offered the same amount to the porter there, he asked "*Was sol ich machen damit*?" (What can I do with that?) When I told him that the Berlin porter had asked only for this, he advised me to go back to Berlin. I gave him two shillings in English money. I still had about two pounds in silver with me. The taxi man who took me to the boat was also very grateful for two shillings in silver. A pound was now worth twenty million marks. Three days earlier it was worth only one million. I was glad to be out of Germany with all its misery.

The Greys were already on board the ship when I arrived. They too were glad to get away. Professor Grey said he heard that we would have a very rough voyage, and so it was. While we were at dinner, the weather became very stormy and the ship pitched and rolled. I felt sick and went into the companion-way where I curled up on a couch for the whole night. Professor Grey would also not go down to the cabin. He was the only passenger walking up and down the deck. In the morning, the sea

became quieter and the sun was shining as we reached Leith and then Edinburgh. I went straight on to Glasgow.

Fourth year of medicine

The autumn of 1923 was the beginning of my fourth academic year, the year in which we did practical obstetrics and clinical work in the hospital wards under the professors of medicine and surgery. We also attended the casualty and outpatient departments where we watched how the accidents and ailments of ordinary men and women were diagnosed and managed. We learned by watching doctors how to question and examine patients. Lectures on medicine, surgery, and obstetrics were not due until the following and final year.

Students could choose which clinics they wanted to attend first, medicine or surgery. Most of my friends who were back in the Hall when I returned from the continent, had already decided what they were going to do.

Sir William MacEwen[53]

I wanted to enrol in Sir William MacEwen's surgery clinic even though I was told that no beginner ever started there. In student circles in Glasgow there were always tales about Sir Billy. I first heard about him when I was taking a pathology course at Cambridge. Our lecturer Professor Corbett had mentioned that he regretted that he could not go to the annual conference of the British Medical Association that summer. He

53 Sir William MacEwen (1848 - 1924) was a Scottish surgeon and a pioneer in modern brain surgery. He also contributed to the surgical treatment of hernias, the surgical removal of a lung, and to bone graft surgery,

would like to have been there because Sir William MacEwen was presiding. Sir William had been a student in Lord Lister's[54] time and on graduation became the famous man's houseman. He realised that fighting germs with antiseptics was not enough and introduced the greatest innovation ever into surgery - asepsis.

I was accepted in Sir Willam's clinic. On the first morning, I had the shock of my life: I was the only woman in a class of twelve. Sir William was a tall good-looking man in his early seventies. He was serious, had a stately and upright bearing and with a lively smile. He spoke well and clearly, had charming manners, and was always interesting. He often spoke to us about his years as a houseman to Lord Lister. There was always a terrible smell of carbolic in the wards, he told us, and still a great number of deaths from gangrene.

Sir Billy emphasised that every student must know what a healthy body looked like. Before discussing some clinical abnormality of a patient's spine or chest, he would ask a student to pull off his shirt so that we could see the normal. At the beginning, when I knew what the case for discussion would be, I felt shy and would take a seat behind the blackboard. Sir Billy on entering the room would look round and ask, "Where is our lady today?" Then he would come up to me and, taking me by the hand, lead me out as if to dance a minuet and say, "Come away, my dear, sit nearer and you will see better". After it happened twice, I abandoned the blackboard for good.

From time to time, we were invited to watch him perform an operation. There were seats for the students some distance away from the operating table. Sir William and his assistants would scrub up and put on white

54 Joseph Lister (1827 – 1912) was appointed Regius Professor of Surgery at Glasgow University in 1861. He pioneered the use of carbolic acid to prevent wound sepsis.

overalls, gloves, and masks as is done today. This was not usually done in other theatres.

His greatest interest was neurosurgery. An old student of his had come back from the war paralysed and blind. Sir Billy kept him under observation for some time to find out the exact location of the trouble. X-ray imaging of the brain had not yet been well developed, if at all. When he was satisfied that his patient had a brain tumour, he operated. The operation took about six hours and was attended by many interested surgeons. It was a success and the patient's condition improved considerably.

Sir William also did research on tuberculosis. He experimented on pedigree cows on his farm at Rothesay. He built special stables with glass windows facing south so that the sun would penetrate the stables in winter. He correctly predicted that there would be chest surgery for some lung diseases. He believed cancer was an infection and said that a total cure would only be found when the causative germ was discovered.

I enjoyed every occasion when Sir Billy talked to us and was glad that I had the opportunity to join his clinic.

Mental disease

We also took small classes in medical jurisprudence, public health, and mental disease. Professor John Glaister Senior and his son and assistant Dr John Glaister Junior lectured on medical jurisprudence and public health. Medical jurisprudence was interesting but public health was dull. However, one had to pass the examination in both.

I found mental diseases the most interesting of the small classes. Dr David Henderson who was the superintendent of the big Glasgow Mental Hospital lectured to the students every Saturday morning at the hospital. (I believe he was the first to call an asylum a hospital). Patients sat on the platform behind him. As he spoke, he would call on patients with the particular diagnosis he was discussing to relate why they were in the institution. Some of the patients liked showing off their knowledge of their illnesses and talked quite sensibly.

There were several voluntary patients who had been in hospital many times. There was one man who worked as a clerk in the office and could be relied upon to work well for a time. Then without reason, he would start doing and saying strange things. His stories were very entertaining and he knew it. When I first heard him, he seemed normal. Once, however, when he had finished his story, he added that it was nice to be mad; if any of us felt like putting somebody's head in a bucket of cold water, we could not do it but he could because he was mad. There was a woman who wrote poetry about mad people. She enjoyed reading her poetry to the students but would sometimes unexpectantly start talking nonsense, become very abusive about everything and everybody, and work herself into a furious rage.

We were rarely taken round the wards. I had occasion, however, to spend a weekend with the matron of a small mental hospital in the country where a young doctor friend of mine was doing a locum. There I saw the patients in all kinds of moods and conditions and changed my mind about taking up this branch of medicine as my speciality. When the busy short term of the fourth year came to a close, I passed the examination in mental diseases with honours - the only one I ever got.

The little countess

As spring approached, the students had to arrange a place in a maternity hospital where they could do practical midwifery. Most students wanted to go to Rotten Row at Glasgow Hospital. There were over a hundred students and it was not possible for all of us to go there. It was decided that the students would go to the hospital and queue for admission. Some girls from the Hall went as early as four o'clock in the morning. I managed to get there only at eight. What seemed like hundreds of students, men and women, were standing in a queue outside the superintendent's door. The president of the Men's Union Mr Thompson was supervising the queue. He smiled when he saw me coming so late and whispered something to the man next to him. Then he suddenly called out, "Gangway for the little countess". I never knew I had a nickname, or perhaps it was made up on the spur of the moment. To my surprise, his friend took me by the hand and led me right up to the superintendent's door. Then Mr Thompson called out again, "Now you can return to the end of the queue". There was great laughter. Of course, I did not get into Rotten Row. When I got back to the Hall, I wrote to Dublin for admission to the Rotunda Hospital. I knew that three other students were going there. We were to go in April during the Easter vacation.

Rotunda Hospital, Dublin

It is difficult for me to describe this world famous maternity hospital. Doctors from all over the world came here to specialise in obstetrics and gynaecology and students from England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland also came to do their maternity cases there. The staff of the hospital con-

sisted of the Master Dr Gibbon Fitzgibbon[55] and several competent assistants. There was a lot of scope for learning as it probably was and still is the greatest baby factory in the world.

Hundreds of babies were born here every week. The babies were usually born in the wards under good supervision but occasionally on the stairs or in the lift when the mother arrived at the last moment. New students were immediately inspanned to see what was happening and to learn how to bring babies into the world. After having fully acquainted themselves with the rudiments of the process, the students were sent to do deliveries by themselves in the homes of poor mothers. The calls were mostly at night. Students generally went in pairs with a man always accompanying a woman. There were about fifty students in my time and some nights all twenty-five pairs were sent out. It only happened twice in six weeks that nobody went out "on district."

I remember the first case to which I went with a man from Edinburgh. I felt very nervous. It was a very dark night and we hardly knew our way. Many people were about in the streets and we heard gunshots here and there. There was fighting between the "Black and Tans" (Irish rebels) and English soldiers. Nobody, however, interfered with the couple carrying their little bags - "doctors" going to a confinement. Every soldier knew about it, especially the Irishmen. Both sides were kind and helped us find our way.

Our patient was a huge woman lying on a double bed. Women - neighbours - were there to help the "doctors". They had everything ready: hot water, basins, soap, and antiseptics. They knew what was required by the Rotunda "doctors". Every one of them was at some time a

55 Gibbon Fitzgibbon (1877 – 1952) Master at the Rotunda Hospital from 1919 – 1925. The Master combined in one person the roles of manager, coordinator and negotiator. Dr Fitzgibbon was the first to introduce antenatal care at the hospital - in 1922.

patient at the hospital and knew the procedure. They always helped the new "doctors" at the home deliveries. The women informed us that it was going to be an easy delivery as this was the patient's thirteenth child. The father was not at home; he was in the street fighting the English. Indeed, guided by the elderly women, we managed very well and helped a new little Irishman into the world.

Not all the cases were so easy. Sometimes my partner had to run to the hospital to get one of the doctors to come to our aid. The difficult and abnormal cases were delivered in the labour theatre by the Master himself or one of his senior assistants. All the students would be summoned by the ringing of the big bell. Whatever the time of the day or night, we would all come to the theatre. One or other of the students would be asked to assist. This meant that he or she would hold a leg or take away a scalpel.

On one occasion when Dr Fitzgibbon was delivering a very big woman, he called on me to turn her onto her side or to lift her. The students looked puzzled. I looked at Dr Fitzgibbon and said that I could not do it. "But you must," he shouted. I looked at the woman and then at him and repeated that I could not lift her. I did not know whether it was an Irish joke but I did not move and he had to call on someone else. I was a very small woman and the patient weighed at least two hundred pounds.

Dr Fitzgibbon was not the only strange person at the Rotunda. There was also the head cook Kate. She was an able and kind-hearted woman. She and her staff always prepared good meals for the seventy odd people - students and doctors - at the hospital. She used to keep a kettle boiling in the kitchen right through the night and have teapots and cups ready so that we could make tea for ourselves when we came back from a confinement in the middle of the night or early in the morning. One morning I came back to the hospital at six o’clock after a whole night's vigil on

a case of protracted labour (which eventually ended successfully with the birth of twins). I went straight into the kitchen for a cup of tea. Kate was already there. When she saw me, she said defiantly, "There is no tea for the doctors today, nor will they get tea again in the night. For the last two nights not a single doctor came for tea so I am not going to leave a kettle boiling any more". I tried to explain to her that it was a good thing that the students had some unexpected sleep and rest. She should be glad about it but she was not sympathetic and it was difficult to persuade her to give me some tea and something to eat.

Another time, I asked Kate for early supper for seven of us. We wanted to go to the Abbey Theatre to see an Irish play. As a rule she was kind and gave the students extra meals or tea whenever they asked for it. This time she protested. "For why should the foreign doctors want to go to the Abbey Theatre? The plays there were only for the Irish and surely the foreigners would not understand them and should not be allowed to see them either." However, she gave us early supper and we enjoyed the play and the evening away from the hospital. The seven of us, four women from Glasgow and three men - two from Aberdeen and one from Edinburgh - had become friends. After three weeks hard work, we were now seniors and could occasionally be absent from the hospital.

I also had time to see Dublin. I would slip out of the hospital and roam about by myself. It was a charming town. I would go to the main shopping street and look at the windows or visit the museum and the university or take a long walk in King's Park. I would take trams to their termini and in this way got an idea what outer Dublin looked like. With the others of our group, I went on a couple of picnics to places out of town. We enjoyed these and had snaps taken of all of us together. We promised to write to each other. However, I never wrote to any of the men and do not even remember their names. I had some letters of introduction to people in Dublin and paid a few calls. Once when I was invited to din-

ner, I was so tired that I fell asleep in a chair immediately after we got up from the table and had to be taken back to the hospital.

Back in Glasgow

The six weeks in midwifery at last came to an end and I was glad to return to Queen Margaret Hall. I was very tired; all I wanted to do was to go to sleep. Before I went to Dublin, I thought I suffered from insomnia. Now I was completely cured. At any time of the day or night, I would fall asleep as soon as I put my head on the pillow. I returned from Dublin after the term had begun and realised that I would be very busy with clinical work. There were also more lectures in medical jurisprudence and public health with examinations at the end of June.

The work in Professor TK Monroe's medical wards at the Western Infirmary was new. This was real medicine as it brought me in contact with patients and their diseases. Professor Monroe was interested in X-ray examinations and taught the students how to read the films. His two assistants Dr George Allen and Dr Douglas Adams showed us patients in the wards. Dr Allen was interested in diseases of the heart and Dr Adams spent a lot of time discussing disseminated sclerosis. There were several patients suffering from it on the ward as he was making a special study of it.

The most interesting course was on children's diseases under Professor Leonard Findlay.[56] I had heard of him from my friend Cecilia Shiskin who was his houseman during an epidemic of encephalitis lethargica.

56 Leonard Findlay (1878-1947) was the first professor of child health in Britain. He pioneered the fusion between clinical investigation and scientific research, established the scientific basis of infant nutrition and in his seminal work on rickets opposed the encroachment of biochemistry into chemical physiology.

She had investigated the condition for him at the Sick Children's Hospital. The most important work in the hospital now was the study of rickets. There were an alarming number of children suffering from rickets in Glasgow and Professor Findlay tried to find its cause so that it could be prevented. The feeding of children was quite wrong in those days and little was known about vitamins.

Going through the wards several times a week, I got to like the little patients. On the whole, they were sweet and good. It was distressing to see them suffer but their smiles during convalescence were touching and gratifying and made one feel like helping them. Towards the end of the term, I knew that I wanted to specialise in children's diseases. I approached Professor Findlay and asked him to take me on as his houseman when I got through my finals the following year. He said he could not promise anything so far in advance and that I should come to him again when I got my degree.

At the end of the term I successfully passed the examinations in medical jurisprudence and public health as well as in diseases of the ear, nose, and throat.

And so I was through fourth year.

Summer 1924

After the hectic two terms of work, I felt I needed a rest. A young teacher who had been staying at the Hall during June invited me to her home at Montrose for a couple of weeks as a paying guest. Her mother was a widow and depended on her daughter. She had another daughter who was still at school. They turned out to be a quiet family and I enjoyed being there. There was good bathing and places for long walks. My new

friend was an intelligent woman and we always found interesting subjects to discuss. From Montrose, I visited the charming old city of St Andrews where I spent the day walking round the ruins of the Abbey and visiting the famous golf course. On another day, I went to the third great city of Scotland Aberdeen. I was struck by its cleanliness and its fine buildings. The two colleges King's and Marshall were interesting - the latter reminding me of a wedding cake. The tearooms at Aberdeen were as good as those in Glasgow and I had tea at one and lunch at another.

Cambridge again

I spent the rest of the summer at Cambridge. I had written to my old landlady Mrs Welsh and found that she could accommodate me until the end of August. This suited me. I had my old rooms and, with Mrs Welsh looking after my comfort, could do some reading and revising for the finals. Another young lady Miss Knapp, who worked in Professor Rutherford's[57] laboratory on atoms, was also staying at Mrs Welsh's. She often spoke of her work but I did not understand much about it. I liked her company and we went on many outings together. We met again in London in September and went to the musical *Mme Pompadour*. Later Miss Knapp became a lecturer in physics at Bedford College.

Of my old acquaintances in Cambridge, only the Parsons were still there and I often dropped in to them for tea. They had a small daughter now whom they called Pauline. They told me that they had named her after me. Mr Parsons was busy writing a small physiology book that he dedicated to his daughter. He sent me a copy of the book for the following

57 Ernest Rutherford (1871–1937) who was born in New Zealand, is known as the "father" of nuclear physics. He was responsible for a series of discoveries in radioactivity and was the first to deliberately transmute one element into another. His theory of atomic structure is still valid.

Christmas with a note that he had accepted an appointment as professor of physiology at Toronto University. When the girls at the Hall saw the book, they said they understood why I liked Cambridge. But they were wrong. I liked Mrs Parsons much more than her husband but was friends with both of them.

From Cambridge I went to London. My brother's daughter Esther Luba was getting married to a young Swiss man. She had met him when she was at a Lausanne boarding school. They were both good-looking and made a handsome couple. After the ceremony at the big Hampstead synagogue, there was a reception in a well-known hotel in the West End and in the evening, a dinner at home for relatives and intimate friends. Amongst the friends, were many Russian refugees who livened up the affair by singing old Russian wedding songs after every toast.

Becky, as usual, treated me to two lovely frocks: one of gold-coloured charmeuse for afternoon wear and an evening dress of black charmeuse with Spanish lace. Those frocks helped me to look well dressed on many special occasions in Glasgow and on the continent.

When the wedding celebrations were over, I went to see my friend Nina Boyle who was back from Russia. She had many a tale to tell about the pitiful conditions in that country. The winter she spent there had been very severe. People had no food and children were starving and dying by the hundreds. The new Bolshevik government did not seem to be in a position to look after its people. The food brought by *Save the Children* helped to lessen the people's suffering.

1924 – 1925

Final year of study

The final year course began in October 1924. The work proved strenuous. Some lectures were given at the university and some clinics were held at the Western Infirmary near Queen Margaret Hall but other lectures and clinics were held at the Royal Infirmary at the other end of town, miles away from the university. Much time was wasted travelling to and fro by tram.

I had to start early every morning from the Hall to be in time for the surgery lectures at the Royal by the popular Professor Peter Patterson. His lectures were interesting but I rarely had a chance to see him operate or to work in his outpatients' clinic. Professor TK Monroe lectured on medicine at the university from two to three in the afternoon. Then we went to a surgical clinic at the Western where the doctor in charge taught us minor surgery and we had a chance to treat the occasional patient.

After the Christmas recess, I joined a medical clinic conducted by Dr John Cowan. He, to my mind, was the finest teacher in medicine I ever knew. He taught the students how to observe a patient, how to notice what the patient looked like, the expression on his face, the colour of his skin, and the position in which he lay in the bed. From every one of these observations the student had to draw a conclusion on the patient's condition and complaint. Then there was the most thorough examina-

tion of the whole body, and particularly of the heart. Finally the diagnosis was discussed.

Few reliable drugs were available. Sulpha drugs had not yet been discovered and there were no antibiotics or X-ray treatments. The doctor or student had to think and do the best he could to help the patients recover from their illness. In most cases this proved successful and the patients recovered.

All through my thirty years of practice, I was grateful to Dr Cowan for his teaching. I appreciated him while I was in his clinic and felt very proud when he said I would make a good diagnostician. In the last three months of clinical medicine, I studied under Professor Hunter whom I appreciated for different reasons. He discussed interesting cases with the students as with equals and he guided our diagnoses in a learned way.

In the last two terms, there were also lectures in obstetrics and gynaecology by Professor Munro Kerr[58] and his assistant Dr McIntyre at the Royal. I had a fairly good idea already of the work, lectures, and operations in obstetrics and gynaecology as it seemed a continuation of what I had done at the Rotunda in Dublin.

With all the lectures and clinics from morning till late in the afternoon, I was very tired in the evenings. There was, however, still swotting to be done. I would go to my room soon after dinner and, though it was still full daylight, being summer, I would lie down on my bed and sleep until eleven or twelve at night. I would then get up and while my mind was clear, work until about four in the morning before going back to sleep till seven. The classes broke up in July.

58 John Martin Munro Kerr (1868-1960) was Regius Professor of Midwifery at the University of Glasgow from 1927-1934, a Foundation Fellow of the College and its first Vice President

Last Scottish holiday

The final examinations were to be held in the middle of September and we had two and a half months vacation to prepare for them. I was very tired after the strenuous past year. It would have been almost impossible to start swotting straight away so I decided to go for a fortnight with a fellow-student to Corrie on the island of Arran. I had been to the island at Lamlash and to Whiting Bay but was told that Corrie was the best of all. The hotel we stayed at was comfortable and not far from the beach. We bathed every morning and rested on the sands as we watched the graceful yachts gliding up and down in the vicinity of the island. They were there for a summer regatta. The sea and the sky were clear and blue and the whole scene reminded me of Brittany. We also climbed the big Goatfell Mountain, from the summit of which we had a marvellous view of the whole island. While we were there, a herd of deer rushed past us in a mad gallop. They were beautiful creatures and I was sorry that they were in such a hurry to get away. On another day we joined other visitors for a motor drive right round the island.

Final examinations and graduation

Being refreshed by that short but pleasant holiday, my friend and I returned to Glasgow and to swotting. We found only a few students in the Hall when we returned. The rest had gone away for the long vacation. It was very quiet and it was easy to concentrate. Some clinics were open and in the mornings. I went to one or other to see cases and to make notes. I attended a revision class on surgery given by Dr Jack MacEwen, son of the late Sir William, hoping it would complement my insufficient knowledge on that subject. The rest of the time I spent swotting.

The examinations started in the middle of September and lasted until the end of the month. When the results came out, I was overwhelmed to find that I had passed in all three subjects. I heard that I had obtained very low marks in surgery; in fact I had almost failed it but was pulled up by the good marks I had obtained in obstetrics. Professor Murdoch Cameron[59] of Caesarean section fame, whom I had never met before, examined me in the orals. He congratulated me on writing a good paper and on knowing how to deal with emergencies. I do not remember what the emergencies were.

So, I was through and I was very happy. The graduation was to take place early in October. While waiting for the great occasion, the women of the final year made arrangements for the traditional final year dinner. There were to be speeches and toasts. To my great surprise, I was asked to reply to the toast to our Alma Mater by the senior woman of the year. I certainly did not expect this honour. I had not distinguished myself in any of the subjects throughout the course. However, I had acquitted myself quite well. From my heart I was able to say how much Queen Margaret College and Glasgow University had done for me. I could also point out how fortunate the women of the university were in having the same privileges as the men. This was not the case then at the universities of Cambridge, London, or Edinburgh.

Before graduation, I went to see Professor Leonard Findlay with regard to obtaining an internship. He told me that he had already filled all the vacancies and suggested that, if I was keen on taking up paediatrics, I should go to Vienna. There, he said, were the best places in the world to learn about diseases of children. He would give me a personal letter of

59 Murdoch Cameron (1845-1930) was responsible for the revival and development of Caesarean sections and turned it from a rarely used and frequently fatal procedure to a routine operation.

introduction to Professor Clemens von Pirquet,[60] the professor of paediatrics and head of the University Children's Hospital in Vienna. As I knew German, Professor Findlay's suggestion was attractive and the idea of working in one of Europe's famous capitals gave me quite a thrill. As for money, I thought I would be able to manage as well in Vienna as in Glasgow, especially since the exchange rate was in favour of the English pound.

The graduation ceremony took place in the magnificent Bute Hall where its ancient-looking columns and lovely stained glass windows added a special air to the occasion. As soon as the ceremony ended, I hurried with the roll containing my MB ChB[61] degree in my hand to the Murrays. All three of them - Dr Murray, Miss Sylvia and Eunice - were at the ceremony and they all congratulated me heartily on my success. Other friends - Miss Melville, Miss May, and the Brennans - were also there. They were all glad of my attainment and expressed this in the most kindly of ways.

It was a great day for me and I was very happy. The culmination of my greatest wish since I left school had come at last. I was looking forward to the work I would be able to do. I was glad that I had decided to spe-

60 Clemens Peter Freiherr von Pirquet (1874–1929) was an Austrian scientist and paediatrician known for his contributions to bacteriology and immunology

61 Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery abbreviated to MB BChir, MB BCh, MB ChB, BM BS, MB BS and others.

cialise in paediatrics and would work with children. What hopes I had for the future!

After the graduation Dr George Allen enlisted me as a member of the British Medical Association that was to send me the British Medical Journal every week wherever I happened to be.

Farewell to Scotland

The years that I spent in Scotland were happy and full of interest. I came to love the country and the friends I made there. My happiness in getting my medical degree was tinged with sadness at the thought that I had to part from them. I paid my farewell visits. I spent the last weekend at Moore Park with the Murrays and promised to write to them from wherever I should be; and I did for about forty years.

In town, I called upon Miss Melville the Mistress of Queen Margaret College. She enrolled me as a member of the British Federation of University Women a branch of the International Federation. She thought it might be of use to me in Vienna. She also said she would write to the president of the British branch who would introduce me to the Viennese one. Miss Melville was the only one of that circle that I met again. She came to Johannesburg in 1929 for a Congress of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. I had the privilege then of introducing her to the National Council of Women and to some of my friends.

I felt very sad when I said good-bye to dear Miss May who had done so much for me when I came to Glasgow and applied for admission to the University. She was also a friend. We promised to write to each other, which we still do. She now lives in Cambridge and the last letter I had from her was for Christmas 1960. I spent the last evening in Glasgow

with the Brennans and Alec Werth. I corresponded with Mrs Brennan for many years up to the time she died. Another person with whom I corresponded until her death in 1958, was the warden of Queen Margaret Hall Miss Jeannie McGregor. Her letters were always interesting as she wrote about the students of my time with whom she kept in touch.

All these people were kind to me in many and various ways. I was glad years later to be able to repay them for what they had done for me with gifts from South Africa of fruit and other things that were not available in Britain during the Second World War.

Interlude in London

Before leaving Scotland, I wrote to Vienna University to enlist for post-graduate work in paediatrics and had an answer informing me that the course would start in November. I had less than a fortnight to get ready and decided to spend the time in London. Phillip and Becky were pleased with my success and gave me a very hearty welcome.

A young niece Fay, Golda's youngest daughter, arrived from Lithuania a few days after me. She was on her way to South Africa to join her brother Mark. We were both given a good time and were taken to the theatre and to two concerts. The great Russian singer Chaliapin sang at the Albert Hall. We had never heard him before and it was a great treat. The other concert was a violin recital by Yascha Heifetz whom I had heard in Glasgow about five years earlier and who was now even more wonderful. We also did some shopping. Fay needed an outfit for the South African summer and I for the continental winter. Becky was wonderfully generous to both of us.

Miss Nina Boyle was in London and I of course had to see her to tell her about the good outcome of my studies. It was through her that I had met the Murrays and the other friends who helped me get into Glasgow University. She was very pleased that I had successfully obtained my degree in medicine.

With Miss Melville's letter of introduction, I called on the secretary of the British Federation of University Women Miss T Bosanquet at Crosby Hall. It had only recently been acquired by the British Federation of University Women and was being rebuilt and redecorated to serve as a residence for visiting university women from all over the world. She took me round and explained what they intended to do. She advised me to write to Dr Hedwig Kuranda who was the secretary of the branch of the International Federation of University Women in Vienna. She was sure that Dr Kuranda would help me find accommodation and would probably also meet me at the station on my arrival. She too would write to Dr Kuranda about me. When Phillip booked my seat to Vienna, I wrote to inform Dr Kuranda of the date of my arrival.

Vienna

I crossed the Channel from Dover to Ostende. From there I took the express train to Cologne. This train was attached to the Orient Express, which travelled from Paris to Constantinople. It was the most comfortable and luxurious train in Europe. Booking me on that train was a lovely and most generous gesture on Phillip's part.

The train travelled parallel to the eastern shore of the river Rhine. The scenery was beautiful, making the journey delightful and interesting. There were old medieval castles on top of hills with forests and picturesque towns in the valleys. We came to Cologne late in the evening and left shortly afterwards. Regrettably, this meant missing the scenery of Switzerland and the Alps.

After Cologne I went to the dining saloon to eat. The carriage was full but the steward found me a small table. A dark-looking young man joined me and addressed me in French but on getting no reply, changed to good English. I was not very sociable and, finishing my meal quickly, went back to my compartment and to bed. The coupe that I had all to myself was small with a comfortable bed and a little washroom attached. The following morning at breakfast, I was again joined by the young man. I did not mind his company so much in the day and let him talk. He informed me that he was going home to Bucharest, which was a wonderful place - he thought I should see it. He offered to take me round but I told him I was getting off at Vienna where I was being met by a friend.

On the platform in Vienna, I saw a well-dressed young woman looking rather anxiously at women passengers stepping off the train. I thought she might be Dr Kuranda looking for me so I addressed her. It was indeed Dr Hedwig Kuranda and she had come to meet me. She welcomed me to Vienna and said she would be glad to be of service to me during my stay there. She had arranged a room for me with a widow who lived in her neighbourhood and who took paying guests. It was a little out of town but there were trams that would take me to the hospitals and the university. She promised to look me up soon and take me to meet her mother.

The Kurandas

Dr Hedwig Kuranda, true to her promise, came the very first Sunday after my arrival and took me to her home where she introduced me to her mother. Mrs Kuranda must have been in her early fifties, a very elegant lady who looked more like a sister than a mother to Hedwig. The latter seemed to be about thirty. They both made me feel very welcome and from that day onwards, I spent every Sunday with them.

They lived in their old home in a good residential suburb of Vienna. They were allowed to keep their house in spite of new laws that stipulated only one room per person. They had two old servants living with them who, they claimed, were their tenants. It was not a very large house but a cosy one. Apart from their two personal bedrooms and a dining room, they had a study cum-music room and another little room with paintings by famous Dutch and Flemish masters. The walls of the study were lined with shelves of books and in the middle stood a grand piano with a table for crystal sets and earphones. Comfortable easy chairs completed the furnishing. All the rooms had fine oriental carpets and everything in the house showed good taste and culture.

The Kurandas belonged to an old Viennese Jewish family. Hedwig's father had been a director of the *Wiener Bank Verein* (Viennese Banking Corporation). His brother was still alive and was a member of the new democratic parliament. They had many interesting intellectual friends, some of whom I later met.

Both mother and daughter were great music lovers. Mrs Kuranda was a good pianist and I loved to hear her play. On Sunday afternoons, they attended concerts given by either the Philharmonic Society or the Symphony Society orchestra. They were members of both. I generally went with them. The local conductors were Felix Weingarten and Bruno Walter but often there were guest conductors like Wilhelm Furtwängler. With the Kurandas, I went for the first time to the Vienna Opera House where I heard *Boris Godunov*. I had never before heard a Russian opera. I knew the theme well from history and was thrilled by the acting, the music, and the singing.

The opera house itself was a wonderful place. I found the foyer particularly beautiful and interesting. It was very wide and long with thick carpets covering the floors. There were life-size portraits of famous actors and singers, men and women, on the walls, with long mirrors between the portraits. One could imagine how in the days of the monarchy the mirrors reflected the old Austrian aristocracy promenading along the foyer - beautiful women, covered in priceless jewels, wearing magnificent gowns with long trains trailing after them and men in their splendid military uniforms. Now in the new democratic republican regime the reflections were of another kind of people who came straight from work in their ordinary every-day clothes to listen to good opera and promenaded munching their sandwich suppers.

Soon after my first evening at the opera, Hedwig took me to a meeting of the University Women's Federation where I was introduced to many of

the members. Among the women at the meeting were personalities well known in various spheres of life who were interested to hear about South African and Scottish women. Later I received invitations to all their monthly meetings.

The University Children's Hospital

The morning after my arrival, I made my way to the University Children's Hospital. I was going to see Professor Clemens von Pirquet who was the head of the hospital and to whom I had a letter of introduction from Professor Leonard Findlay. Professor von Pirquet was, however, not in Vienna. He was away in Karlsbad, presiding over a conference of paediatricians. I was directed to his senior assistant at the hospital Dr Richard Wagner. He read Professor Findlay's letter and said he knew of my application and that I could start attending lectures at once. The class had begun a few days previously and there were a number of English-speaking doctors in it. Dr Wagner introduced me to Dr Edmund Nobel who lectured every morning. He was a tall, good-looking, fair man whereas Dr Wagner was short and dark with a longish nose.

I could easily follow Dr Nobel's lectures as they were given in German. His subject was the development and feeding of infants using the von Pirquet method. This method was rather unique and it took me a few lectures to get the hang of it. Babies were examined and assessed not according to their age or weight, but according to their *sitzoehe*, that is their length from the head to the end of the spine measured in a sitting position. The feeding schedule was worked out according to the *sitzoehe*, not in calories but in items of food, each of which had so many mixed nutrients. It was a most complicated system and not easy to put into practice. I very much doubt if any of the postgraduates who attended these classes ever used this method.

The class rarely had a chance to examine infants. The ward was kept under very strict hygienic control. When students were taken there, they had to put on sterile gowns and wear masks as if they were entering an operating theatre. Students were not allowed to touch a baby unless they had first scrubbed their hands thoroughly. Yet the students, particularly the Germans, were expected to know how to handle, bath and feed the infants. When specialising in paediatrics, the students had to work as interns. Foreigners were rarely taken on but I got a chance to work there for a couple of weeks during the Christmas vacation.

Dr Wagner lectured twice a week on diabetes in children. He concentrated on diet. A third senior doctor Dr Hans Wimberger was in charge of the wards for children suffering from diseases of the chest, particularly tuberculosis. There were many tubercular children in Vienna at that time. It was only a few years after the First World War and the population of Vienna was very poor and ill nourished. The Americans had established many feeding stations for children but still the outpatient departments of every hospital were full of emaciated infants and youngsters.

Professor Von Pirquet did a lot of research on tuberculosis and developed the tuberculin test. While it did not cure the disease, it was useful for diagnosis. A scratch with tuberculin produced a reaction almost immediately[62] if the patient suffered from tuberculosis. Every patient coming to the hospital was invariably given the test. There were special wards for patients suffering from tuberculosis. They were on the top floor of the hospital. The wards did not have outer walls but were surrounded by open verandahs so that the patients were always in the open air, summer and winter.

62 Today the immediate reaction is not considered a true positive reaction

Dr Wimberger did not rely only on the tuberculin test and a physical examination for diagnosis. He had every suspected case X-rayed and taught us how to read the films. He was a great favourite with his young patients. He spoke to them in their own Viennese dialect and always had a kind word and a joke for each one of them. They looked forward to his visits and he certainly did all he could for them. They did not even mind his gold injections, even though they were very painful. We, the post-graduate students, also liked this big, athletic-looking, almost young man and we learnt much from him. It was because of him that most of us stuck out the *Kinderklinik* as long as we did, while we waited for Professor von Pirquet who had met with an accident during the conference in Karlsbad. He had broken his ankle and did not come back to work until Christmas.

Christmas in a Kinderklinik ward

In the middle of December, I was given permission to work in Professor von Pirquet's infants' ward while the resident doctor was away on leave. It was an interesting as well as a useful experience. I had to be in the hospital at six o'clock in the morning. Fortunately, I now lived not far from the hospital. My pension was only about ten minutes walk from the *Kinderklinik*. It was still dark when I got up on a winter morning but the white snow covering the streets made it easy to find my way and reach the hospital in time. One of the nursing sisters generally had a hot cup of coffee waiting for me.

The routine of the ward started at six-fifteen. The infants were washed on tables following a special procedure and then taken back to their cots. Then the bottles with the food mixtures were taken to them. I had to go round and see how the babies were sucking. When the bottles were empty, the heads of the cots were lifted by a spring for fifteen minutes to

allow the food to be digested and the children to be winded. Then temperatures were taken. At eight o'clock I had breakfast in the doctors' little room. At half past eight the house doctor on duty listened to my report on each baby as we walked round the ward and examined the more seriously ill. I usually went to the pension for lunch and was back in the ward from two to five. I learned a great deal about infants in those two weeks and was grateful to the nurses for their help.

My duty coincided with the Christmas festivities that were celebrated in the traditional Catholic manner. There was a big Christmas tree in a large ward cleared for the occasion. All convalescent patients and those who were not too ill were brought here and given presents. Some of the convalescents performed a Nativity play and then everybody joined in singing *Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht*. It was tremendously impressive. Afterwards, the children gathered round the tree for their gifts and refreshments.

On Christmas morning some of the nurses went to mass. Before they left, they speculated on which doctors they would see there. They were very sure that Dr Wagner would be there as he was a devout Catholic. I was much surprised as I thought he was a Jew. Dr Nobel, on the other hand, was a Jew and kept himself as such in spite of the fact that he was likely to miss promotion in a state appointment. I sometimes wondered what happened to both these men when Hitler came.

The American Medical Association of Vienna

Many doctors from outside Vienna were doing post-graduate work with Professor von Pirquet at the University Children's Hospital. Some were from Germany, one was from Switzerland, a couple were from Britain, but the majority were from America. At the pension in Koch Strasse I

also met American doctors who were working in other specialities. Some were in general medicine or surgery, others in ear, nose and throat, or eyes. There were also classes for these specialities at the Children's Hospital.

There were so many American doctors in Vienna after the First World War that they founded a club and called it the American Medical Association of Vienna. Other English-speaking doctors also joined the club. It was in Alser Strasse not far from the hospital and near the Ring. The club arranged courses and lectures for its members. The lectures were given in English and in German. They were usually accompanied by case demonstrations or visits to hospital wards. The lecturers and demonstrators were members of the University of Vienna and all of them signed their names on the certificates given to us when we completed our courses. I joined the club and attended courses on nervous diseases in children given by Professor D Zappert and on skin diseases given by Dr Edmund Helmreich.

A young man who sat next to me at the lectures used to copy my notes. I could follow the German lectures easily and automatically translated them into English. Later, as I became accustomed to the German, I wrote in a mixture of both languages and in the end, I simply wrote in German. The young man said this was a mean trick as now he could not copy my notes. He was the son of Professor Apt of Chicago.

When I joined the association, I wrote to the secretary of the British Medical Association to tell them of the change in my address so that the British Medical Journal could be forwarded to me. ln reply, I was asked to tell them about arrangements in Vienna for post-graduate work. I gathered the facts and sent them a full report.

With other members of the association, I attended meetings of the Viennese Medical Association and listened to lectures given by most of the famous professors of the time. The paediatric group of professors also held monthly meetings at the University Children's Hospital. I remember one of these meetings at which many psychiatrists were present including Dr Alfred Adler who had worked with Freud. The majority of these clever men were applying Freud's theories to child psychology. Their theories did not appeal to me at all.

The Club was a meeting place for doctors. We would go there in the afternoon after clinics or lectures for a cup of coffee and to meet friends. There was an American doctor Anne Martin who had a sanatorium for tubercular children in California. She came to Vienna to see how tuberculosis was treated there. We became friends and she invited me to have Thanksgiving dinner with her at the Hotel Bristol where she was staying. Though she invited me to visit her in California, I never heard from her after she left Vienna at the end of the year.

Social life

I did most of my sightseeing of Vienna during the first month of my stay when I worked in the hospital only in the mornings. When I found that I would also be busy with lectures in the afternoons, I decided to leave my room in the suburb and move to a pension in Koch Gasse near the hospital and the university. Many American doctors were staying there and I could go out with them as well as with the Kurandas. I also met several other doctors and their wives at the pension. We became friends and corresponded for several years after I returned to South Africa.

Now and then, there was a dance at the club or the whole group would go to a play or the opera. I still went with the Kurandas to symphony

concerts but more often I went out with my new friends. It was so much easier to make arrangements, especially at the last moment. The first show I saw with the Americans was the musical comedy, *Die Graffin Maritza*. Everyone in Vienna talked about it and whistled the tunes in the street. It was a lovely show and I enjoyed it immensely. I hoped to go again but just could not manage it. Grand Opera was more of a "must". We went to Wagner's *Siegfried* and *Tannhauser*, to Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*, Verdi's *Aida,* and Johan Strauss' *Die Fledermaus.*

Die Fledermaus was usually performed in Vienna on New Year's Eve. Weeks before the show, several Austrian people asked me if I had booked for the New Year's Eve show. I did not know what opera was being performed. Everyone was surprised when I asked what it was to be. "There is only one opera on that evening - *Die Fledermaus*." It was a most remarkable performance. All the well-known singers in Vienna were in the cast. Everyone seemed drunk and merry and we all – artists as well - enjoyed the show.

When we came out of the Opera House after the performance, the streets were so packed with people that it was difficult to move. It reminded me of the New Year's Eve that I spent in Edinburgh when all good Scots men and women were on their way to St Giles Cathedral. Here all good Viennese were trying to get to St Stephen's Cathedral for the end of the service when the church bells would proclaim the arrival of another year - 1926. The pandemonium outside the cathedral was quite indescribable. Our party tried to keep together and to get into a café for refreshments but it was not possible. In the end, we found each other at the Club where we celebrated until almost breakfast.

Professor Clemens von Pirquet

At about Christmas time, there was a rumour that Professor von Pirquet had returned to Vienna. We were all looking forward to meeting him. There were many legends about him and the Viennese adored him. His return livened up the whole hospital. He was good-looking with a small dark beard and he always smiled. He was dean of the medical faculty of the Vienna University and was largely responsible for the organisation of the post-graduate programme for foreign medical doctors. He was interested not only in those who came to study paediatrics in his hospital, but also in all the other doctors doing post-graduate work in other specialities arranged by the university.

At his first lecture to our group, he took the roll call and had a good look at us as we answered to our names. After that he seemed to remember every person. He made us feel that he knew each of us and we liked him for that. He was a genial and friendly man. He would stop one in the corridor and say a few words or would address one during hospital rounds and have a more personal chat.

A departmental outing

One of the first events Professor von Pirquet arranged on behalf of the Medical Faculty of Vienna when he returned to Vienna after his accident in Karlsbad, was a week-end outing to the Austrian Alps at Semmering. All the foreign doctors were invited. Early in January, several hundred doctors of all nationalities attended the event. Most of the professors of the medical faculty were also there.

On Saturday morning all the guests met at the station to catch a train. Though we had had snow in Vienna, we were totally unprepared for the winter beauty that opened before us as we left the town and came into the open country. We entered a lovely white world. Everything was covered with snow and the trees were dressed in a transparent white lace of

frost. In the not far distance were the snow-covered mountains. As the train climbed up the mountain, the view became more and more enchanting. We got out of the carriages and walked up and down the platform, chatting to friends and strangers at every station where the train stopped. We bought hot Vienna sausages with fresh rolls from young boys. Everybody was in a holiday mood.

At Semmering we were taken to two of the best hotels. I was placed at the *Panhans* together with some friends. A Swiss woman doctor and I were given a double room with its own bathroom. From the window we had a magnificent view of the valley and the mountains. After lunch,

which was served in the best Viennese style in the large hotel dining room, we went into the little town and from there to the place below the hills where we watched people skiing. The scene was really lovely. There was to be a banquet that evening in the *Panhans* for all the doctors, so we hurried back for tea and a rest before dressing for the evening.

Professor von Pirquet was the principal host at the banquet. He stood at the door of the big drawing room where we all gathered before the banquet and greeted every member of the party. There were several Viennese professors with him. Everyone was in evening dress and looked festive. I chatted with my American friends and we compared notes on the events of the day. There were more men than women and every woman was partnered by a man when entering the dining room. It was a big hall with the top table at one end of the room facing the other tables. Professor von Pirquet presided over top table. With him sat professors and senior visitors from different countries. I was with the Americans and was having a good time.

In the middle of the dinner and before the speeches began, a gentleman from the adjoining table came up to me and introduced himself as a South African. He said that he and his friends had heard that I too was a South African and they thought that I should be at their table. I thanked him for the invitation and told him I would be glad to meet my fellow-countrymen and would join them after the banquet. I knew there were some doctors from the Union among the post-graduate students and had met an ear, nose, and throat man at the American Medical Association Club but I had no idea that there were many more.

During the banquet, while we were enjoying the choicest food and wine that the famous hotel could offer, Professor von Pirquet addressed us on behalf of Vienna University. He said he was glad to see so many foreign

doctors in Vienna specialising in different branches of medicine. He hoped we would benefit from the teaching we were receiving and would come again, and that we would also send our friends. Several senior visitors replied expressing appreciation and thanks on behalf of all of us for the opportunity to learn from the great men in this centre of medical science.

After the banquet, we adjourned to another hall where there was dancing. Professor von Pirquet, who evidently had recovered from his accident in Karlsbad, opened the ball with his wife and then danced with most of the other women present. When my turn came, I found him to be a good dancer and a very pleasant partner. I also danced with other Viennese professors. One, Professor Schlesinger, I was to meet again as he often came to the Club. Some of the South Africans also partnered me.

I thoroughly enjoyed myself. I felt that I looked attractive in my simple black evening dress and was not in the least embarrassed by the attention paid me.

The South Africans

When I entered the ballroom after the banquet, I was surrounded by the South Africans. There were more than twenty. Two were from Johannesburg - Dr Pienaar, the ear, nose, and throat man whom I had met before and Dr Groenewald who had taken his degree in Heidelberg. He had his pretty wife with him. The chairman of the South African group was Dr Ackerman from Cape Town. He had taken his degree in Holland and came to Vienna to specialise. He also had his wife with him. She was a friendly woman and I liked her very much. When I knew her better, she told me that she did not like Holland or Vienna much. She wanted to go

back to South Africa. The only country in Europe she had felt at home in was England. This made me smile as the whole group, and Dr Ackerman in particular, was so very anti-British and spoke only Afrikaans to each other. They tried to teach me Afrikaans too.

Another man from Cape Town was young Mike van Niekerk. He had also taken his degree in Heidelberg and came to Vienna to do extra work before returning to South Africa. With him was a German girl Dr Anna Noll. She was doing paediatrics. She had worked at the Heidelberg Kinderklinik with Professor Moro[63] and came to Vienna for further experience. She first went to Professor von Pirquet's unit but found his methods impracticable. Now she was a *hospitant* (intern) at the Vienna Municipal Children's Hospital run by Professor Knoepfelmacher. She thought the work there was very good and that she was gaining valuable experience.

More on the outing in Semmering

Anna Noll came to see me on Sunday morning and said she was sent to fetch me to go with the South Africans to watch more winter sports. I had hardly recovered from the events of the night before. The dancing had gone on until the early hours of the morning and I was rather tired. Still, there was so much to see that I hurried and got ready to go with her. It was a lovely sunny morning with crisp frosty snow underfoot. The mountains were covered with snow and seemed like part of a wonderland I had dreamed of in my childhood. Young people with skis and skates, dressed in winter sports' clothes, were moving in the direction of the winter playground. We followed them to find a charmed place where

63 Ernst Moro (1874-1951) was a famous paediatrician and researcher.

it was thrilling to watch the skiing and the ballet-like skating. We returned to the hotel for lunch.

During tea, before we left for the station, someone proposed a vote of thanks to Professor von Pirquet and the other members of the Vienna University for their hospitality and for bringing us to this beautiful Alpine winter resort. It was indeed a most pleasant and successful affair and we talked about it for days afterwards.

Professor Knoepfelmacher

With Professor von Pirquet's return, there was more work to be done and more to learn. The first thing, an innovation to me, was the *Grosse Visite* (grand round). This was a ward round of the professors with all the doctors and students. The diagnosis and treatment of serious and interesting cases was discussed from every angle. These rounds were certainly most instructive.

The post-graduate students, however, still had little personal contact with patients. This was not the case at the hospital where Dr Noll worked. She persuaded me to join her there. I did this when my four months' course at Professor von Pirquet's unit came to an end. At Professor Knoepfelmacher's ward in the Vienna Municipal Children's Hospital, the post-graduate doctors were *hospitants* and were assigned patients to look after. This included the examination of urine and blood in the side room laboratory. Professor Knoepfelmacher was a good lecturer, able to highlight the most important points of the different diseases from which the patients suffered.

Cousins in Vienna

Among the postgraduate doctors I noticed a young woman who spoke Russian to a young male *hospitant*. This interested me so I asked her whether she had come from Russia recently or whether she had been living in Vienna since the revolution. She said she was a Russian doctor who was commandeered to Vienna to specialise in paediatrics. She would not tell me anything about life in Russia. In fact, she avoided me altogether after discovering that I spoke Russian. A few days later, to my surprise, however, she came up to me and asked if I knew that I had cousins in Vienna. "No", I said, "I do not know of any cousins here". She said that when she mentioned my name to some friends, they said that if I was a Podlashuk, I must be a cousin. Their name was Yablonsky. The name was familiar to me. I remembered that once, when we lived in the Ukraine, an uncle called Yablonsky visited us. She said she had promised her friends she would bring me to them.

There was a mother and two daughters. They had escaped from Lodz, which was then in Russian Poland during the revolution. They lost everything in the revolution. Their clothing factory was confiscated, their father died, and their only brother now worked for Schering in Berlin on insulin production. The two girls, who spoke Russian, German, and French as well as English, worked in an American office in Vienna.

My newly found cousins were glad to meet me and I made time to visit them at least once a week. They were cultured people who had seen better days and were making the best they could of life. Everything was very cheap in Vienna and with their American salaries, they managed to live fairly well. They were fond of the theatre and I went with them to several plays at the Burg Theatre. I paid of course for my own tickets as I always did with my friends in Vienna.

Esther and Pesach

In March I had a visitor. Golda's second youngest daughter Esther had left Shavli to study in Prague. Fay, the youngest, had gone to South Africa six months earlier so Esther also decided to leave home. With the financial assistance of a brother in South Africa, she went to Prague. Esther wrote to me and said that she would like to visit Vienna for a week. She came for the Easter week and was my guest in my room at the pension. I took her to the Kurandas and to the Yablonskys and then naturally to see something of Vienna. One of our outings was to the little Royal Theatre, which had been part of the palace in Imperial days. Now it belonged to the state and special plays and operas were performed there for the general public. In the cosy plush atmosphere of old red silk, Esther and I enjoyed a production of *The Barber of Seville*.

It was *Pesach* (Jewish Passover) and the Kurandas asked if I would like to go to a morning service in the big Vienna Synagogue. They had a box there and gave me the key to it. The synagogue was quaint and interesting. It was a round hall with boxes like in a theatre, rows of seats in the middle and the Arc at the front. The service was conducted by a famous rabbi Dr Hayek. The theme of his sermon was the Marranos. These were the Jews of old Spain who were converted to Christianity by the Inquisition but practised Judaism in secret. I wondered if there were Marranos in Austria as the Jews there also had to become Catholics in order to obtain positions in state services, universities, and other places of importance.

The American Jewish doctors organised a *seder* (Passover dinner) at an hotel. They invited a well-known professor who they thought was a Jew. When he was asked to conduct the Passover service, he got up and with

tears in his eyes, said, "I knew it all as a child in my parent's home but alas I cannot do it now. I am no longer a Jew".

Contrasts in Vienna

After Easter, Vienna - always gay - assumed an even gayer look. It was carnival time. For days there were young men and women in fancy dress in the streets, on the trams, and in the cafés. The Viennese liked to enjoy themselves. They loved music and dancing. In some of the bars people would dance at any time of the day or night. The theatres, the opera, and the concert halls - of which there were three or four - where famous artists performed were always full. Tickets had to be obtained well in advance.

The large shops in the main streets of Vienna had lovely goods in their windows. Once, standing in front of a well-known shop where women's silk underwear was displayed, I heard two women saying that it was a shame to see such luxury when so many people had little or nothing to eat. The population of Vienna were on the whole very poor. One had only to look round the hospital clinics to notice that the majority suffered from malnutrition. However, even within the few months that I was in Vienna, the position seemed to improve. Working people had more work, blocks of flats were being built for them and, with the help of the Americans, food was being distributed to the needy.

Everything was very cheap if one used American or English money. The American doctors bought many things to take back home. I too, bought a few things. My allowance of twenty pounds a month enabled me to buy food and pay for my lodgings, hospital and lecture fees as well as for visits to the opera, theatre, and concerts. I even managed to keep back a few

pounds for an intended visit to Budapest by steamer on the Danube. This, however, did not come off.

I leave Vienna

When working in Professor Knoepfelmacher's unit, I often saw Dr Anna Noll. She repeatedly told me how much more one could learn in Heidelberg with Professor Moro. Then one day she told me that Professor Moro was in Vienna and would certainly visit Professor Knoepfelmacher. I was with her when Professor Knoepfelmacher brought him to the ward. He recognised her and stopped to chat. She introduced me. On the spur of the moment, I decided to ask him if I could come to Heidelberg to work in his Children's Hospital. He told me that he had no foreign students or doctors working there but that, if I really wanted to come, I should send in an application and that it would be considered. Some weeks later, I sent in my application and received a favourable reply: I could start work at the beginning of May.

I told my friends and acquaintances that I would be leaving Vienna for Heidelberg. They suggested that I did not leave before the first of May. That day was now the chief holiday of the Austrian Republic and I should stay to see the processions and decorations. Professor Schlesinger, whom I had met at Semmering and who often came to the American Medical Association Club for coffee with Dr Noll and me, said that he would give me a letter of introduction to his mother-in-law who lived in Heidelberg. She was a very interesting woman, he said, and through her I could meet the cream of Heidelberg intelligentsia.

I booked to leave on the 1st of May. It was a glorious spring morning. Before going to the station at midday, I went to Ring Strasse to see what was happening. The telephone poles had baskets or pots of flowers at the

very top. From them streamed multi-coloured ribbons - a most wonderful sight. Masses of people, like on New Year's Eve, were milling about the streets and band music could be heard in the distance. I tried to get a taxi to take me to the station but it looked as if I would not be able to get away. At last I managed to get a taxi and had only a matter of minutes to get to the train before it was due to leave. The taxi man asked for his money and was off. There were no porters. Strangers just threw my things into the compartment.

As the train steamed out of the station, I looked through the window and felt sad that I was going away. Vienna remained in my memory as a most wonderful city with kind people and good friends. For years I corresponded with the Kurandas and with several of the American doctors. Before the Second World War when Hitler invaded Austria, I felt very anxious about the people I knew there. I never heard from any of them again.

Prague

When making arrangements to go to Heidelberg, I realised that I could go via Prague at little extra cost. Prague is a very old city and was at the time the capital of the new state of Czechoslovakia, previously part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The population were Slavs. For centuries almost, they had to speak German, the language of the Austrians. After gaining their independence, they reverted to their own language.

Esther was still studying in Prague. She took me to see places of importance and interest. There were many old palaces and churches and a famous old bridge over the river Vltava with an inscription in large Hebrew letters. We saw an old synagogue that was built in the tenth century. It was almost underground; only the roof was visible on the

ground. We visited the big museum and the old Prague Castle on the top of the hill in the centre of the city. Esther introduced me to several Russian refugees many of whom had moved there after the revolution. We had a couple of meals in a Russian restaurant where real Russian food was served.

I spent two days in Prague and then left for Heidelberg. The train on which I was travelling passed Karlsbad, the famous watering place, and Pilsen, famous for its beer, which was sold in bottles on the platform. This train took me as far as Nuremberg where I had to change for Heidelberg. I had five hours to spend there before catching a connection and so had time to see something of the town. It was a beautiful place. There was a park with flowering chestnut trees, lilacs, and beautiful flowerbeds. I went to the old castle with its medieval wall and drawbridge. It somehow did not seem quite real. The business part of the town also looked old-fashioned and rather sedate. It was getting dark when I got back to the station and boarded the train that took me to Heidelberg.

Heidelberg

The University Children's Hospital

I arrived in Heidelberg on a sunny morning on the 4th of May 1926 and went to a small hotel recommended by Anna Noll. It was a pleasant place that stood in a lovely avenue of chestnuts but it proved to be too expensive. I stayed there only a few days and then took a room in the Pension Hindenburg.

I did not waste any time after my arrival. As soon as had I put my things down, I went to the University Children's Hospital. There I was interviewed by Dr P Gyorgy chief assistant to Professor Moro. He was a man in the middle thirties, I thought. He was very attentive and told me that I could start right away. He took me to a ward where I was to begin my duties and introduced me to the doctor in charge.

The following day I was initiated in the duties of a *hospitant*. The work began at eight in the morning with a ward round. I had to get the nursing sister's report, look at the charts and the patients and be prepared to report to my immediate chief with all the particulars when he came in later. With him I again examined the patients and he discussed with me their diagnosis and treatment. I also had to examine specimens in the laboratory.

Every month I moved to a different ward. The infants' ward was very interesting. Professor Moro's infant feeding system was based on com-

mon sense and it was easy to follow. It was eventually adopted by all paediatricians – early feeding with vegetables and semi-solids in addition to milk mixtures.

About twice a week, after each doctor had finished in his or her ward, the staff would meet to go round other wards with Professor Moro or Dr Gyorgy. This was the *Grosse Visite*. In each ward interesting or serious cases were presented by the doctor in charge and then discussed by the chief. Everyone could take part in these discussions. In this way, every doctor knew what was going on in every ward in the hospital. When the grand round came to the ward where I worked, I was occasionally asked to present a case and give my view of the diagnosis and treatment.

Amongst the unusual cases were two cases of vaccinia and two of tetanus. Vaccinia resembles smallpox but it is not infectious as it is caused by the smallpox vaccine. These two patients survived but the tetanus patients could not be saved since there was no anti-toxin for tetanus then. New sulpha drugs, antibiotics, and anti-toxins make medicine easier today than in those days when only uncertain drugs were available for treatment.

Twice a week I attended Dr Gyorgy's outpatient clinic. He was very thorough in his examinations and I learnt a lot from him. After hearing and recording the patient's history, a tuberculin skin test was always done. If the child had no vaccination mark, the child had to be vaccinated immediately. Swabs were taken and slides prepared and examined under the microscope. Blood counts were also done by the hospital staff. I got so used to doing these examinations myself that, when I started in private practice, I continued in this way for quite a few years. Eventually, however, I followed the example of other doctors and sent blood samples and swabs to the laboratory of the South African Institute for Medical Research for examination. Dr Gyorgy also had a ward of healthy children

where he carried out experiments. This ward was in a special house separated from the main hospital building by a wide lawn. There was a school for these children, to which some of the convalescents were also sent.

Another interesting outpatient clinic was that of Dr Homburger, a psychiatrist. Every Friday he would come to the Kinderklinik to see patients. There were many abnormal children in Germany after the First World War. The children were brought directly by their parents or sent by other doctors. They came not only from Heidelberg but, it seemed, from the whole of South Germany. Many doctors from the Kinderklinik and from outside attended this clinic and Dr Homburger would demonstrate cases. He taught us how to approach children to gain their confidence whatever their state of mind.

All the staff members at the Kinderklinik were genuine and friendly. Professor Moro himself would often stop in a corridor during a grand round to tell a joke or a good story. He was a friend of Thomas Mann author of *The Magic Mountain*. The book was in fact inspired by Professor Moro's sanatorium for tubercular patients at Davos in Switzerland. Whenever Professor Moro received a letter from Thomas Mann, he would read us extracts from it.

Everything I learnt at Heidelberg was of great help to me in my subsequent practice. It was the finest conclusion to my work in Vienna. One learnt here that, in addition to theoretical knowledge, one had to use one's common sense and treat every child as an individual.

Professor Moro's Party

In the middle of June, I received an invitation from Professor and Mrs Moro to an *Einfachen Abendessen und Tanz in die Stiftsmuhle* (a simple supper and dance at the mill) on 30th June. The mill was on the river Neckar. Dress was *Sommeranzug* (summer dress). Everyone in the Kinderklinik received a similar invitation. I was told that it would be a party for the South German branch of the Medical Association, of which Professor Moro was the chairman or president.

Several hundred doctors turned up for the occasion. There were name cards at every seat. I found myself amongst total strangers and wondered what kind of a time I would have. However, we were soon in conversation, introducing ourselves and saying where we came from.

A young man, on hearing that I came from Johannesburg, wanted to know if I had ever met his uncle, Dr Talmessinger. It so happened that I knew his uncle socially and professionally. He had given me an anaesthetic when I had an operation for appendicitis. The young nephew told me about Dr Talmessinger's death and what had happened to his family. Then he told me about himself. He was a doctor in the German army during the First World War and was taken prisoner by the French. For over two years he lived as a prisoner of war in a monastery in Brittany at Treguier. I said I knew the place. When I holidayed there in 1921, I used to watch the monks from my window across the river as they walked round their garden morning and evening, chanting prayers. This strange coincidence gave us something to talk about. When the dancing started after supper, I danced with him as well as with my Heidelberg friends. It was a lovely affair and lasted till the early hours of the morning.

Meeting an old friend

I called on Professor Schlesinger's mother-in-law Mme Lacqueur with his letter of introduction. The old lady was an important person in Heidelberg. She entertained well-known professors from several universities, as well as authors, bishops, and cardinals. I felt rather nervous about calling on her but after some weeks at the *Kinderklinik*, I decided to go.

She was a tall, well-built woman of over seventy. She received me in a room crowded with books and old-fashioned furniture. It was a hot Sunday afternoon and as the blinds were drawn, it was rather difficult for me to see. She took her son-in-law's letter and asked me how well I knew him. I told her that I had met him only a few times and knew very little about him. This evidently pleased her. She did not seem to like him very much or approve of him. I told her that I had not met his wife and she was not surprised. She said she had several daughters, all married to professors of medicine attached to different universities in Germany and Switzerland. The one at Berne was the most important. I forget his name but she said that I should meet him when I go to Switzerland. Mme Lacqueur's husband had been a professor at Strasbourg University and died soon after the First World War. As Strasbourg, together with the whole of Alsace now belonged to France, she came to live in Heidelberg.

Having told me about herself, she turned to question me. When she heard I came from South Africa, she said she knew another South African lady who lived in Heidelberg with her husband but she thought I would not know them. He had been professor of Arabic at Madrid University for a time and now he was doing private research on the Koran in Heidelberg. It struck me that I knew the people Mme Lacqueur was telling me about and I waited to hear their name. I did in fact know who

they were and what is more, Ethel, the wife of Professor Yahuda - this was the name Mme Lacqueur used - was an old friend of mine from Johannesburg. I had never met her husband. I was invited to their wedding in London but was busy with my studies at Glasgow University at the time. I was pleased to hear that Ethel lived in Heidelberg and straight away asked Mme Lacqueur for her address. The old lady suggested that we both write to her on the same postcard telling her that I was in Heidelberg. The answer to this postcard came a few weeks later from London. Ethel wrote that they would be returning to Germany in July and she would get in touch with me then.

One hot July afternoon after work at the clinic, I went shopping to buy cakes and strawberries and cream for a little party I was giving for my friends from the *Kinderklinik*. I had to pass a nearly empty square. There was only a woman carrying a red parasol at the far end. Suddenly I heard my name reverberating through the square. I looked round and could not see anyone I might know and continued to walk to the shop at the other side of the square. Still "Pauline" continued to be called by someone and then I saw the red parasol waving at me. I stopped, looked more closely, and recognised Ethel Yahuda. After that I saw a lot of her and met her husband. He was tall and broad shouldered and looked more like an Arab than a European. Ethel told me that he was not a friendly person and she did not know what his attitude to me would be. He seemed, however, to like me, which delighted Ethel and I was often asked to their house where I met the intelligentsia of Heidelberg, Jews and Gentiles. I often went walking through the forests on the outskirts of the town with the Yahudas. They knew all the picturesque places with restaurants that served good food. We also went to two plays in the grounds of the old castle. One was *Midsummer Night's Dream* with music by Mendelssohn and the other *Uhr-Faust*, an old play written long before Goethe's *Faust*. The play was in old German, which I did not eas-

ily understand. Ethel and I went rowing on the Neckar a few times and enjoyed the beautiful panorama of the hills and valley.

It was good to have someone from home, so to speak, with whom I could talk. Ethel had a lot of common sense. I appreciated her opinion and was glad that she thought that I did right to study medicine and that I would go back well trained to practise my profession. The Yahudas were going to stay in Heidelberg for the whole month of July and then they intended going to the Engadin valley in Switzerland. Ethel advised me to visit Switzerland too as I was so near. This I did when the term at the *Kinderklinik* ended.

Friends in Heidelberg

The doctors on the hospital staff received very little pay but were all devoted to their work. At the same time, many of them also had outside interests and they would tell me when there was an interesting lecture or play or concert to attend.

My best friends at the Kinderklinik were Dr Brehme, a radiologist at the hospital, and two women doctors Else Garfield and Friede Wagner. The first was a very fair Jewess with blue eyes and the other a pure Aryan German, tall and thin with a rather sallow complexion. I went places, as the Americans say, with them. We went to lectures at the university when the Professor of Medicine spoke on a subject that interested us and when the brilliant young lecturer Dr Gundell spoke on Shakespeare and his influence on German literature. We went to the play *Old Heidelberg* and a musical *Wine, Women and Song* by Johann Strauss, the Younger. On weekends we wandered about the old town or went up the hill to the castle. The most picturesque place was the *Mocken Kur*, a lovely cafe

high up in the mountains above the castle with tables in the open. From there one could see for miles.

Dr Brehme was a busy man who, in addition to his clinical work, was developing a new branch of radiology, encephalography. He used every opportunity to take pictures of the brains of children. In fact, he was one of the first radiologists - that was in 1926 - to study encephalography. Dr Brehme was a very congenial man and fond of music. He would tell us well in advance of concerts and get us good cheap seats. In August a Brahms festival was held in Heidelberg. People came from all over South Germany. The concerts took place in a large concert hall, which was always packed. The Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Wilhelm Furtwängler performed. The music was wonderful and Furtwängler was a favourite conductor. He and the orchestra received long and tumultuous applause. At the end of every concert, bouquets of lovely flowers were given to him and women rushed onto the platform to embrace him. I never saw anything like it before or after in all my years of concert going.

One day, Dr Brehme asked me if I would like to join him and two others, Dr Else Garsfield and Dr Keller, at a charity performance of chamber music at the *Bruchsal Castle*, an old Ducal castle some distance from Heidelberg. We took a train at five in the afternoon and arrived there at seven. It was a lovely June evening and still light enough to explore the castle grounds and gardens before the concert started at nine o'clock. Bruchsal Castle was built in 1726 in the Rococo style. The gardens were beautifully laid out with fountains and statues. When we were admitted to the concert, we seemed transported to the time when the castle was built. We were greeted with curtsies and deep bows by young men and women dressed in period costume. The entrance hall, the stairs, and the large concert hall were deeply carpeted and lit only by candles. At first it was difficult to see but when one got accustomed to the lighting, one saw old-fashioned furniture and paintings and tapestries on the walls.

The hall was filled to capacity. Mozart's music on strings and harpsichord took the audience back to the composer's time. The concert ended very late and when we came to the station, we found that the last train to Heidelberg had already left. There was only one thing to do - make oneself as comfortable as possible on a bench on the platform of the small station and wait for the milk or workmen's train at four in the morning. There were only fourth class carriages with wooden benches for seats but we enjoyed it all and got back to Heidelberg at six o'clock.

Anna Noll, who had persuaded me to come to Heidelberg, was also on the staff of the hospital but was now not as friendly with me as she had been in Vienna. She once invited me to her house to meet her mother and brothers but I found the atmosphere leaning towards National Socialism, which I did not like.

Heidelberg and its people

Heidelberg is a very picturesque place. The Neckar River runs through the city. There are forests and restaurants in the lovely wooded hills and cherry gardens in the valley below. The ruins of the old castle were illuminated on many occasions and open-air concerts and plays were staged in the grounds. One could not help liking it. As a university town, however, it was somewhat disappointing. Having spent two long summer vacations in Cambridge, I expected an old university town as famous as Heidelberg to have the same grandeur and awe-inspiring atmosphere. This was not the case. There were no colleges in ancient buildings - not even an old university building. Teaching took place in a group of uninteresting-looking houses. The houses where the students lived were also nothing more than ordinary.

The students, of whom there seemed to be hundreds, strutted about the streets dressed in strange uniforms. They wore a kind of riding breeches with tight military-looking jackets and caps displaying the colours of their fraternities, known as corporations. They seemed full of their own importance but to me they looked rather funny. The women students, if there were any, were not visible at all. The men were not only seen but were also heard all over the place, holding forth in loud voices in restaurants, cafes, and open-air beer drinking places. Many students were said to be increasingly interested in politics, particularly in the new National Socialist party. Some of the professors, however, were against it and uneasy about it.

The Jewish intelligentsia whom I met at the Yahudas, were also not happy with the new movement. There had always been anti-semitism in Germany, they said, but it was not racial. When a Jew changed his religion to Protestantism or Catholicism, he was no longer barred from senior appointments in state universities. But the National Socialists were preaching race hatred in a new way. In the *Kinderklinik*, a very clever woman doctor, a personal assistant to Professor Moro, told me that she had "stepped out" of the Jewish religion - whatever she meant by it - and could hold a senior post. I wondered if she retained her post when Hitler came. I also wondered about the fate of liberal Professor Moro[64] and his assistant Dr Gyorgy.

End to a most pleasant course of study

As August was nearing its end, Professor Moro and most of the senior staff prepared to go away for their long vacation. The summer illnesses

61 In 1936, after the Nazis came to power, Professor Moro resigned from his chair at the University, alleging reasons of health. It is thought that his motive was that his wife was Jewish. He started a private clinic and retired in 1948.

had subsided and the winter epidemics were still far away. This meant a quiet time for the hospital as there would be only routine work and no teaching. I had to make up my mind what to do. I could still stay on the continent for about two and a half months. My two friends were going home. I decided to end my job at the *Kinderklinik* and leave Heidelberg.

The four months I spent there were the most strenuous, instructive, and interesting I had ever experienced.

Holiday in Switzerland

I wanted to see my sister Golda and her family before leaving Europe. I had to pass Berlin to go to Lithuania so why not put in a few weeks' work there in a hospital post-graduate class? However, being rather tired after ten months' continuous work, I needed a break and thought of taking a short holiday in Switzerland first. With this in mind, I consulted a travel agent. I was given an itinerary for a trip through German Switzerland with addresses of inexpensive but respectable hotels. The agency also undertook to send my luggage to Berlin to await my arrival there. I took only a small suitcase containing extra blouses, underwear, a change of shoes for the evenings, and some small necessities, which I could easily carry. I was wearing a navy tailor-made English costume with a white silk blouse and good Scottish walking shoes when I left Heidelberg for Switzerland on the 30th August 1926.

Basel

I arrived in Basel on a Sunday morning. Having travelled during the night, I missed the scenery of the Black Forest and passed the town of Baden without seeing it. However, I was in Switzerland and the very thought of being there filled me with exaltation. After breakfast at a little hotel, I hurried out with guidebook in hand to see the town. I did not realise at first that many places would be closed on a Sunday and was disappointed that I could not get into any of the museums. I felt particularly sorry not to be able to see the famous Hans Holbein collection. I wandered about going into the old cathedral for the Sunday service, then

to a park and to a terrace overlooking the Rhine where this grand river turns from a westerly to a northerly direction. The views of the town and of the river with its many boats were beautiful. I had lunch at a restaurant from where I could enjoy the scenery and after a rest, continued my wanderings.

I returned to the hotel in time for dinner. At the table I met an Englishwoman. We chatted and exchanged impressions. She told me there was an open-air theatre not far from the hotel. She said she was going to a play there that evening. I was glad to have company and joined her. The play was a musical comedy by Oscar Straus[65] called *Teresina*. It was about an incident in the life of Napoleon Bonaparte when he was in exile on the island of Elba. The play was funny and the music was light and melodious. I thoroughly enjoyed it. The following morning I left for Berne.

Berne

While in Berne I was supposed to visit a doctor whom I had met in Vienna. I also had a letter of introduction to a professor of physiology, a son-in-law of Mme Lacqueur, but I decided not to waste time visiting either of them. I left my things at the hotel and went sightseeing instead. Berne proved a quaint and fascinating city. The Alps behind the city were shrouded in cloud and although it was a bright sunny day, could hardly be distinguished. Ancient buildings and monuments stood among modern blocks of flats. The old business part of the city seemed to lie below the ground and could be seen from the streets above. I saw the beautiful ancient cathedral built in 1421, the city hall built in 1406, the university, and the houses of parliament and went into the city museum.

65 Oscar Straus (1870 – 1954) was a Viennese composer of operettas, film scores, and songs. He was not a member of the famous Strauss family.

I stopped only for lunch at a restaurant. By the end of the day, I was very tired. I was glad to be back at the hotel to have dinner and go to bed. Early the following morning, I caught the train for Thun and Interlaken.

Interlaken and Murren

The train journey from Berne to Interlaken was most exciting. The mist had lifted from the Alps and the giant mountains were visible on all sides in their full glory. The train passed through the valley along the northern side of Lake Thun. It was early September but it was warm and the only sign of autumn was the brown colour of the leaves. People in the train were friendly and readily offered advice on what to see in a short time.

We reached Interlaken by lunchtime. It was now very hot. I took off my coat and carried it on my arm. My white silk blouse was still clean and I looked quite respectable. I left my suitcase at the station and set out to see the town. It was a most remarkable place; very modern, bright and clean. The buildings were many storeys high, light in colour and dazzling in the bright sunlight. The shops displayed women's clothes that were as fashionable as in any of the great European capitals. The streets were wide and there were lovely promenades with chestnut trees and flowerbeds. The people in the street were well dressed. It did not seem at all like a holiday place, but it was.

By five o'clock I felt tired and ready to leave. I was going to Murren to be in the Alps at the foot of the famous Jungfrau. I collected my suitcase and was in time for the funicular train, which rose to six thousand feet above sea level. The climb and the stations we passed were picturesque and the scenery was magnificent. As we neared our destination, the red

rays of the setting sun reflected on the high snowy peak of the Jungfrau. It was a most glorious sight.

At the station, I stood gazing at the glacier and the scenery and was reluctant to go into the hotel, which was nearby. I stayed outside until it was dark. After a wash, I went to have dinner. The other visitors greeted me and showed much friendliness. We talked about the magnificent scenery and after dinner, we all went onto a balcony facing the Jungfrau. The moon was coming up and the view of the mountain with white snow coming down from the peak and covering the slopes was like a fantastic fairyland. I could also see this from my room window and fell asleep looking at it.

I must have slept very soundly for, when I woke up early the next morning, I did not know where I was. I could hear the ringing of bells and some musical sounds as if someone was playing a kind of flute. When I remembered that I was in the Alps, I eagerly looked out of the window next to my bed expecting to see the Jungfrau. To my great surprise, there was no snowy mountain in front of me. I felt quite mixed up. There were hills with grassy slopes, a herd of cows with tinkling bells, and some cowherds playing on their pipes. I looked round the room and saw another window from which I could see the mountain peaks. It was most enchanting. I hurried to dress and went down to coffee and rolls and then into the open. A kind lady volunteered to take me round Murren. It was a lovely place and I would have liked to spend more time there but had to be satisfied with the one day, every minute of which I enjoyed. The following morning, I took an early funicular train back to Interlaken to catch a train for Lucerne.

On the train to Lucerne

The carriage on the train was almost full when I entered. There was an aisle seat next to a man reading a book. He did not turn round or move when I sat down. I had to look sideways to see the scenery, which seemed even more magnificent than on the journey from Berne to Interlaken. The train was travelling along the bank of Lake Brienz and on the other side, were the Alpine peaks. I was enjoying the scenery when a voice interrupted me, saying, "*Karten bitte*" (Tickets please). It was the train conductor. I showed him mine but my neighbour, engrossed in his book, did not take any notice. I looked at his book and seeing it was English, thought he did not understand German so I told him that the guard wanted his ticket. He seemed to wake up and produced his ticket. Then turning to me, he asked, "You speak English?" "Yes", I said without further explanation and thought he would continue with his reading. However, he put his book down and turning to me, started a conversation.

"Lovely scenery", he said. "I am never tired of seeing it. " And I thought he did not even look at it. "I've been here before. I am going to Lucerne for my vacation". Later he told me that he worked in Geneva for the League of Nations and represented Great Britain. This sounded rather interesting and I had a good look at him. He was in his late thirties or a little older, short and stoutish, wore spectacles, and had a baldish patch extending from his forehead. He seemed glad to chat and I did not draw away as I usually did when meeting strange men on my travels.

I told him that I too was on vacation and was taking a short tour through Switzerland. I planned to be in Lucerne for a day or two. "But that would not be enough for Lucerne. I know it well and like it better than any other place in Switzerland. If you will permit me", he said, "I would be glad to help you see all the interesting places." I made no reply. He con-

tinued to talk about Switzerland in general and then about Geneva and the League of Nations. He told me his name and gave me his card with addresses in Geneva and London. I remember his surname was Jones but I do not remember his first name or the second, which was attached with a hyphen to Jones.

When we neared Lucerne, he asked me where I was going to stay and I gave him the name of the hotel. He suggested that the hotel where he usually stayed might suit me better. It was inexpensive and gave good service. He repeated that he would be glad to be my guide. All the while, he named the various Alpine peaks we saw from the train and pointed out the places we passed, telling me something of their history. He did not seem to be forward or fast and, as I could very well take care of myself, I thought it would be nice to have such a good guide. So, why not go to the same hotel?

Lucerne

I was given a pleasant room on the third floor with a magnificent view from the window. When the porter was ready to take me to it, Mr Jones asked whether he could join me at dinner, to which I consented. I had a wash and changed into a fresh white silk blouse and thin light shoes. This made me feel smarter. Mr Jones was waiting for me at the bottom of the stairs. We had a small table at a window with a good view. The dinner was good and I was quite ready for it. Mr Jones suggested that, if I were not tired, we might go to a nearby café in a park for coffee and to listen to music. There was a big crowd in the park and at the café. It was interesting to watch the people.

Before we started sightseeing, I told my guide that I must pay all my own expenses. After hesitating for a while, he said, "all right." I was pleased with this arrangement and enjoyed our outings all the more.

The following day, Mr Jones took me to see the town of Lucerne - the main shopping centre, a museum, and a lovely old church with beautiful stained-glass windows. The church stood in a narrow pebbled street that reminded me of Robin Hood's Bay in North Yorkshire and of Morlaix in Brittany. In the evening we went to some bay, the name of which I do not remember. On the second day, we took a steamer to Fleulen, which was on the other side of the *Vierweltdstattersee*, also known as Lake Lucerne. The water was intensely blue, the weather was fine and sunny, and the shore with its many trees looked very green. Above and behind the trees were mountain peaks covered with snow. The trip by steamer was most enjoyable. We passed several interesting-looking villages and Mr Jones told me some of the legends connected with them. At Fleulen, we went on foot through grottos and caves to the William Tell chapel. This was a quaint and picturesque spot. Inside the chapel were lovely frescos depicting scenes from the drama *Wilhelm Tell* by Schiller.

Every day there was some other place to see or another mountain to climb. The two days that I intended to spend at Lucerne stretched to five. I had to write to a friend from London whom I was to meet in Zurich to say that I would come two days later. We were to visit her home not far from there. Mr Jones saw me off at the station at Lucerne when I left for Zurich. He said that he had very much enjoyed my company and was sorry I was leaving. He hoped I would let him know when I was in London and he would take me out. I too had enjoyed his company and thanked him for all he had done for me. I intended to communicate with him when I was in London but when I got there, found that I had lost his card and did not know his address.

Zurich – last stop

When I arrived in Zurich, there was no one to meet me. My friend may not have received my note and returned to her farm after coming to meet me two days earlier and not finding me. It was rather disappointing. I had no plans for this place so I decided to leave the same evening for Berlin. I spent the day looking round Zurich. It seemed a large and dusty city. Even the lakeshore where I sat on a bench after walking about for an hour or two was not interesting.

The only thing I did enjoy in Zurich was the flower market to which I was directed when I was having breakfast in a café near the station. There were stalls and stalls of exquisitely beautiful flowers. It seemed more like a flower show of the best blooms of the whole world than a market where flowers were bought and sold. There were magnificent roses, gladioli, and orchids as well as glorious small lilies of the valley, violets, and all the other flowers one could think of. There was even a stall with mimosa blooms. I stopped at most of the stalls to admire and to watch people buying. It reminded me of the flower market I saw many years before in Brussels on the *Place Royal.* I wished I could take some flowers with me and bought a small bunch of violets.

With Zurich, my trip to Switzerland ended. I hoped that one day I would come again to see the French part of the country but unfortunately I never had a chance. I spent only ten days in this fairyland of Europe but it seemed much longer. I enjoyed every hour and every minute of it. In that delightful atmosphere my over-wrought temperament completely relaxed and I forgot the anxieties and worries about work and examinations that had so troubled me during the past years. I felt happy and refreshed.

Last months abroad

From Zurich to Shavli

Early in the evening, I was on the train for Berlin and Lithuania. I had much to think about, both the past and the future and could not fall asleep for a very long time. In no time, morning came and with it Berlin. There was no one to meet me as I had not let my cousin Boris know that I was passing through. I collected my heavy luggage, which I had sent on from Heidelberg only a fortnight earlier though it seemed so much longer. A taxi took me to another station where I boarded the train for Lithuania.

The journey was not interesting. We passed the same places I had passed three years earlier. Carriages were sealed off when we went through the Polish Corridor, then we were back in Germany again, and then at the Lithuanian border where they spoke a language I did not understand.

Lithuania 1926

In Shavli I was met by Golda and Hirsch and their eldest son Shmuel-Behr. He was now the only one of all the children who remained with his parents. Golda had not changed much and was delighted to see me. There were many things to talk about. She missed her children but was glad they were out of Russia and even Lithuania. Fay, the younger of the two girls who were there in 1923, was in South Africa and the other,

Esther, was still in Prague. Golda hoped that she would leave Prague and travel with me to South Africa where she now had two brothers, Mark and Norman, and two sisters, Zillah and Fay. Chaim and Lipa were in Palestine. Lena, the eldest daughter whom I visited in Strasbourg in 1912 when she was studying medicine, had died in America in 1923.

Lithuania and Shavli had not changed much since 1923. Lithuania was a very poor country and Shavli had deteriorated since the first German invasion and the Russian withdrawal. There was no future for young Jews and the majority emigrated to South Africa, America, and even Australia. Golda and Hirsch had no desire to leave. They hoped to live out their lives in their native town in peace. They did not, of course, expect that the Germans under Hitler would invade Lithuania again, nor did they anticipate the concentration camps and the terrible deaths the Jews and others would suffer. Golda and Hirsch were shot by the Germans on the outskirts of their own town soon after the invasion. Shmuel-Behr and his wife and two children were sent to a concentration camp and were never heard of again.

In 1926, however, there was no presentiment of the future tragedy and for the last time I spent a very happy week with my dear relatives. From Shavli I wrote to my cousin Boris to let him know that I would be in Berlin for about two months and to ask him to arrange suitable accommodation for me in a pension.

Berlin

Boris met me at the station and took me to a pension in the Kaiserallee in West Berlin, not far from Kurfürstendamm. After introducing me to the proprietor, he left for his business and promised to come back later

in the evening with his wife. He had married for the second time about a year earlier.

I was put at a table with English-speaking people. They told me that there were several American doctors at the pension and that I would meet them at dinner. This was good news and I looked forward to asking them about clinics and hospitals. In the meantime, after settling down in my room, I went out to explore the neighbourhood. It was not far from Boris' house where I had stayed on my return from Lithuania in 1923 and I knew it fairly well. It looked quite different, however.

Berlin too was very different from what it had been in 1923. There was no trace of the inflation look. People in the streets were well dressed and cheerful and seemed to have money to spend. A café, which I entered for a cup of coffee, was full of chattering women dressed in the latest fashion; refreshments were plentiful and good. The shops were full of expensive goods. Those on Kurfürstendamm and Tauenzien Strasse had splendid window displays. The theatres, opera houses, and concert halls were always full and seats had to be booked well in advance or bought from agents at double the price. What I saw on my first afternoon was, on the whole, cheering and promised a pleasant time in Berlin.

At dinner in the evening, I met the American doctors who were doing post-graduate work in the hospitals. They told me where the clinics for children's diseases were. There was the Children's Department of the University Hospital of Berlin known as the Charite where Professor Tcherny was in charge. There was another clinic for children in a poorer part of Berlin where Professor H Finkelstein was in charge. I decided to join both. I found out about lectures and clinical work that could be interchanged so that I could go to one in the morning and to the other in the afternoon.

It was rather late after dinner when Boris and his wife came to see me. This new cousin of mine was much younger than Boris' first wife and also much pleasanter. I liked her straight away. She had spent a large part of her life in London and spoke English without an accent. I saw a lot of them during my stay in Berlin. They were kind and attentive and took me out often. I went with them to several plays staged by the famous Max Reinhardt at the Kurfürstendamm Theatre.

The two American doctors, with whom I became friendly in the pension, were fond of music and together we went to philharmonic concerts conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. We also saw two operas at the Kroll Opera House, *Fidelio* by Beethoven and *Ariadne of Naxos* by Richard Strauss, both conducted by Bruno Walter.

Hospital work

Professor Finkelstein was the superintendent of the city's children's hospital, the *Kaiser un Kaiserin Friedrich* Hospital. It was located in the poorer part of Berlin in a modern building with spacious wards, a well-equipped laboratory, and a splendid library.

Much consideration was given to the appropriate feeding of infants and children of all ages in the hospital. This was probably because there was so much malnutrition during and for years after the First World War. It was not a teaching hospital for undergraduates but many post-graduates, German and foreign, worked there. One heard a lot of Russian spoken by young doctors who were commandeered to study abroad.

I was fortunate to have the chief assistant to the Professor *Privat Dozent* Frankfurter take an interest in me. He often took me on ward rounds and allowed me to assist him in some procedures such as lumbar punctures -

which always meant an interesting case - and blood counts. He anticipated the current use of blood transfusion as a treatment for anaemia and some other diseases. Blood, taken from the child's mother or father, was used.

There were lectures for post-graduate students at the University Hospital in the afternoons and I joined the class. There were doctors from America, Russia and, of course, Germany. Professor Tcherny, the Professor of Paediatrics, lectured occasionally but the class was mostly taken by young Professor Schick an assistant to Professor Tcherny. He had recently come back from America where he had lectured for a year. Before that, he was in Vienna. He was brilliant and attracted many students. Sometimes he invited the class to visit a ward where there were cases that related to the topic of his lecture.

There was an epidemic of infantile paralysis or poliomyelitis in Berlin. Professor Schick gave a lecture on the disease and took us to a ward with more than twenty children aged between two and seven years suffering from different stages of paralysis. He told us that the majority were recovering well from his new treatment - injections of convalescent serum. At the time, the virus had not yet been discovered and there was no vaccine.

I went a few times with two of the American doctors to lectures on general medicine given by Professor Krause a famous authority on internal diseases. To get a seat for his lecture, one had to arrive before eight in the morning. It was well worth the trouble. Professor Krause made his subject so clear and understandable that it imprinted itself on the memory without further effort. He reminded me very much of the late Sir William McEwen.

A reminder of Ilya Schtrum

One morning, when I was in the library reading a new medical journal, some young doctors entered the room. It looked as if they were going to hold a meeting. They spoke in Russian and I could not help but listen to their conversation. They were discussing news from home. The subject of their talk was Dr Schtrum who, they said, was transferred from his position as Rector of Charkov University to that of superintendent of the Workmen's Hospital in Yalta in the Crimea. They were pleased about it. Someone said that Dr Schtrum, though a communist, was a very respectable and respected man and he would be glad and proud to get a post in Dr Schtrum's hospital. I wondered what the young doctors were - not communists?

Could Dr Schtrum be the boy with whom I was friendly when I was at school in Niejin? I decided to find out. I could not very well go up to them and start asking questions but I meant to get the answer somehow. The following morning I recognised one of the young doctors in a corridor. I stopped him and asked him if I could speak to him. He looked somewhat taken aback when he heard me speak his native tongue. "I thought you were English", he said. I explained who I was and said that I only wanted to know if Dr Schtrum's first name was IIya. The young doctor said it must be the same man as his first name was indeed Ilya. When I wanted to know to what address I could write to him, he told me that it was quite simple as a letter addressed to Dr Ilya Schtrum, Superintendent of Workmen's Hospitals in Yalta, would certainly reach him.

Some time later, I wrote to him and told him what I had heard about him and congratulated him on his fame as a good and able man. I received an answer when I was back in South Africa. He remembered me well and described me as a pretty, blonde schoolgirl. He was interested to hear

that I also remembered him and that I had qualified in Medicine. He seemed rather suspicious about my motive for writing to him and asked twice if I had any special reason for approaching him. When I replied, I assured him that my motive was only to get to know more about him as I had been rather fond of him when I was at school. I never heard from him again though I wrote a second time at the beginning of the Second World War when Russia was our ally and I thought letters would get through.

Return to London

The two months in Berlin passed very quickly and pleasantly. I was going back to London and from there to South Africa. Phillip had already booked my passage for the middle of December. He had also booked a passage for Esther. She had left Prague and was to visit her parents before meeting me in London.

I had a pleasant send-off from Berlin by my relatives and friends. I was never to see any of them again. I do not know what happened to them during Hitler's terrible time. Golda once wrote that Boris had gone to Riga but I know that my relatives there were exterminated. When I think of all my dear friends and relatives in Vienna, Heidelberg, Berlin, Lithuania, and Latvia who fell victim to the Nazis, my blood runs cold and I hate all Germans who seemingly approved of what was happening.

The fortnight in London passed much too quickly. I was pre-occupied with preparing for my return to South Africa but still managed to see Miss Boyle a couple of times. Esther arrived from Lithuania and Becky and I helped her buy clothes and see something of London. She and I were also taken to some shows before we left. The most spectacular was Rose Marie. What struck me was the rich attire of the principals and the

chorus. In Vienna, even in the foremost musical comedy of the year, all the members of the cast were dressed very poorly. I thoroughly enjoyed the show and was glad to be back in England once more, if only for a short time.

Phillip and Becky came with us to Southampton where we boarded the *Kenilworth Castle* sailing for Cape Town and South Africa

Appendix

Tolstoy's letter to Gandhi

KOTCHETY*
RUSSIA

September 7, 1910

I have received your journal *Indian Opinion* and I am happy to know all that is written on non-resistance. I wish to communicate to you the thoughts which are aroused in me by the reading of those articles.

The more I live—and specially now that I am approaching death—the more I feel inclined to express to others the feelings which so strongly move my being, and which, according to my opinion, are of great importance. That is, what one calls non-resistance, is in reality nothing else but the discipline of love undeformed by false interpretation. Love is the aspiration for communion and solidarity with other souls, and that aspiration always liberates the source of noble activities. That love is the supreme and unique law of human life, which everyone feels in the depth of one's soul. We find it manifested most clearly in the soul of the infants. Man feels it so long as he is not blinded by the false doctrines of the world.

That law of love has been promulgated by all the philosophies—Indian, Chinese, Hebrew, Greek and Roman. I think that it had been most clearly expressed by Christ, who said that in that law is contained both the law and the Prophets. But he has done more; anticipating the deformation to which that law is exposed, he indicated directly the danger of such deformation which is natural to people who live only for worldly inter-

ests. The danger consists precisely in permitting one's self to defend those interests by violence; that is to say, as he has expressed, returning blow by blows, and taking back by force things that have been taken from us, and so forth. Christ knew also, just as all reasonable human beings must know, that the employment of violence is incompatible with love, which is the fundamental law of life. He knew that, once violence is admitted, doesn't matter in even a single case, the law of love is thereby rendered futile. That is to say that the law of love ceases to exist. The whole Christian civilisation, so brilliant in the exterior, has grown up on this misunderstanding and this flagrant and strange contradiction, sometimes conscious but mostly unconscious.

In reality, as soon as resistance is admitted by the side of love, love no longer exists and cannot exist as the law of existence; and if the law of love cannot exist, therein remains no other law except that of violence, that is, the right of the mighty. It was thus that the Christian society has lived during these nineteen centuries. It is a fact that all the time people were following only violence in the organisation of society. But the difference between the ideals of Christian peoples and that of other nations lies only in this: that, in Christianity the law of love had been expressed so clearly and definitely as has never been expressed in any other religious doctrine; that the Christian world had solemnly accepted that law, although at the same time it had permitted the employment of violence and on that violence it had constructed their whole life. Consequently, the life of the Christian peoples is an absolute contradiction between their profession and the basis of their life; contradiction between love recognised as the law of life, and violence recognised as inevitable in different departments of life: like Governments, Tribunals, Army, etc., which are recognised and

praised. That contradiction developed with the inner development of the Christian world and has attained its paroxysm in recent days.

At present, the question poses itself evidently in the following manner: either it must be admitted that we do not recognise any discipline, religious or moral, and that we are guided in the organisation of life only by the law of force, or that all the taxes that we exact by force, the judicial and police organisations and, above all, the army must be abolished.

This spring, in the religious examination of a secondary school of girls in Moscow, the Professor of Catechism as well as the Bishop had questioned the young girls on the ten commandments and above all on the sixth "Thou shalt not kill". When the examiner received a good reply, the Bishop generally paused for another question: Is killing proscribed by the sacred Law always and in all cases? And the poor young girls perverted by their teachers must reply: No, not always; killing is permitted during war, and for the execution of criminals. However, one of those unfortunate girls, (what I relate is not a fiction but a fact that has been transmitted to me by an eyewitness) having been asked the same question, "Is killing always a crime?" was moved deeply, blushed and replied with decision "Yes, always." To all the sophisticated questions habitual to the Bishop, she replied with firm conviction: killing is always forbidden in the Old Testament as well as by Christ who not only forbids killing but all wickedness against our neighbours. In spite of all his oratorical talent and all his imposing grandeur, the Bishop was obliged to beat a retreat and the young girl came out victorious.

Yes, we can discuss in our journals the progress in aviation and such other discoveries, the complicated diplomatic relations, the different clubs and alliances, the so-called artistic

creations, etc., and pass in silence what was affirmed by the young girl. But silence is futile in such cases, because every one of this Christian world is feeling the same, more or less vaguely, like that girl. Socialism, Communism, Anarchism, Salvation Army, the growing criminalities, unemployment and absurd luxuries of the rich, augmented without limit, and the awful misery of the poor, the terribly increasing number of suicides—all these are the signs of that inner contradiction which must be there and which cannot be resolved; and without doubt, can only be resolved by acceptation of the law of love and by the rejection of all sorts of violence. Consequently, your work in Transvaal, which seems to be far away from the centre of our world, is yet the most fundamental and the most important to us supplying the most weighty practical proof in which the world can now share and with which must participate not only the Christians but all the peoples of the world.

I think that it would give you pleasure to know that with us in Russia, a similar movement is also developing rapidly under the form of the refusal of military services augmenting year after year. However small may be the number of your participators in non-resistance and the number of those in Russia who refuse military service, both the one and the other may assert with audacity that “God is with us” and “God is more powerful than men”.

Between the confession of Christianity, even under the perverted form in which it appears amongst us Christian peoples, and the simultaneous recognition of the necessity of armies and of the preparation for killing on an ever-increasing scale, there exists a contradiction so flagrant and crying that sooner or later, probably very soon, it must invariably manifest itself in utter nakedness; and it will lead us either to renounce the Christian religion, and to maintain the governmental

power, or to renounce the existence of the army and all the forms of violence which the state supports and which are more or less necessary to sustain its power. That contradiction is felt by all the governments, by your British Government as well as by our Russian Government; and, therefore, by the spirit of conservatism natural to these governments, the opposition is persecuted, as we find in Russia as well as in the articles of your journal, more than any other anti-governmental activity. The governments know from which direction comes the principal danger and try to defend themselves with a great zeal in that trial not merely to preserve their interests but actually to fight for their very existence.

With my perfect esteem,
LEO TOLSTOY

* Castle of Tolstoy's eldest daughter.

Article in Sunday Chronicle

Sunday Chronicle 5 July 1964

A JOHANNESBURG woman who translated correspondence exchanged early this century by Gandhi and Count Leo Tolstoy is still living in Johannesburg.

She is Dr. Pauline Podlashuk, a retired medical practitioner admitting only to being an "early octogenarian" who lives in seclusion in a Hillbrow hotel.

Her help to Gandhi was revealed as a result of a reference in Peter Blandish's column of literary gossip, **Writing of Books** in Sunday Chronicle last week.

Discussing the period when Gandhi led a passive resistance campaign of South African Indians from 1906 to 1914, Peter Blandish said he had been told that Gandhi had conceived his principle of passive resistance from a chance reading of a work by Tolstoy, translated for him by a Russian-speaking Johannesburg woman "now dead."

Last Sunday Dr Podlashuk was a patient in the Johannesburg General Hospital, under treatment for failing eyesight. The ward sister was reading Peter Blandish's column to her when she exclaimed, "Why, that is me!"

A tiny, wrinkled, alert old lady, Dr. Podlashuk recalls clearly her acquaintanceship with Gandhi.

"Gandhi had absorbed the germ of his passive resistance idea from Tolstoy before I came into the picture," she told Sunday Chronicle.

"He encountered it in a book of Tolstoy's entitled **My Belief** published in Russia before the turn of the century.

"During the campaign in South Africa, which drew the attention of the entire world, Gandhi sent an account to Tolstoy of the application of his ideas in South Africa.

"It was Tolstoy's reply to Gandhi that I translated."

The translation is preserved in the Africana section of the Johannesburg Public Library, in a publication called, **The Golden Number of Indian Opinion — Souvenir of the Passive Resistance Movement in South Africa, 1906-1914.**

SUFFRAGETTE

Dr. Podlashuk was born in Russia and came to South Africa while very young. Proficient in four languages, she still reads Russian when her eyesight permits.

"I was fair and pretty in my youth," she recalls, "and full of the reformer's zeal. I was the first secretary of the suffragette movement in South Africa, when women were campaigning for the vote.

"I met Gandhi at Tolstoy Farm, the experimental community set up on what was originally Lawley Estate, belonging to Sir Arthur Lawley, on the railway line to Krugersdorp.

"I went there with other sympathisers with his campaign and found him and Mrs. Gandhi already practising their regimen of austerity and self-denial which became part of the principle of civil disobedience in the great struggle for India's freedom.

"I could have told from that meeting that Gandhi was destined for his great role in shaping history."

...

"Tolstoy", said Dr. Podlashuk as she remembered her role long ago in conveying these thoughts to the man who became the Mahatma, "died soon afterward — too soon."

Bessie Chapman's letter to Fay

7th May 1971

12a Kilburn Lodge
Kilburn Av. Berea - Durban

Dear Mrs Beitz

Mrs Bullock wrote to me, saying you had asked her to do this in order to let me know that dear little Pauline was sinking + unconscious. It was good of you to think of letting me know. It is well over 50 years since we first became friends + we have remained firm friends always. All my family welcomed her when she came to see us + of course she was our doctor too. My husband too liked her because of her fine intellect. I will not write that I hope she will pull round + get better, because her life since she became blind has not been happy but I hope her passing will be peaceful

You will all feel her loss + I send, to you particularly, my sympathy. I know how good you have been to her With very kind regards

from
Bess Chapman

Time Line

1881	Born in Shavli, Lithuania	
1890	Deborah marries Abraham-Leib Schwartz	
	Sam goes to South Africa	
	Pauline and family join Father to live in Mena, Ukraine	
1891	Phillip and Abraham-Leib go to South Africa	
1893/94	Pauline attends school in Nezhin	
1895	Father goes to Palestine	
1896	Easter - Mother dies	
	Charlie and Pauline go to live with Deborah in Shavli	
1898	Charlie and Pauline visit Father in Palestine	
1902	Pauline goes to South Africa with Deborah and sons Chaim and Alec	
1902-1903	Lives in Cape Town	
1903-1912	Lives in Johannesburg	
	Joins the SA Women's Federation	
	1903	Visits Deborah in Bloemfontein
	1907	Becomes honorary secretary of the Women's Enfranchisement League
	1910	Visits Deborah again in Bloemfontein
	1910-1912	Works as a typist
	1910	Translates Tolstoy's letter to Gandhi

1912 April	Visits Phillip and Becky in London	
1912	Visits Lena in Strasbourg	
1912/13	Visits Shavli and Riga	
1913 April	Returns to South Africa via London.	
1913-1919	Lives and works in Johannesburg and Pretoria	
1919	Admitted to Glasgow University to study medicine	
1919-1925	Medical studies at Glasgow University	
	1921	Summer holiday in France
	1923	Visits Golda in Shavli
1925/26	Works in Vienna and Heidelberg	
1926	Holidays in Switzerland	
	Visits Golda in Shavli	
	Works in Berlin for 2 months	
	Returns to South Africa via London	
1960	Completes writing her memoirs	
1971	Dies in Johannesburg	