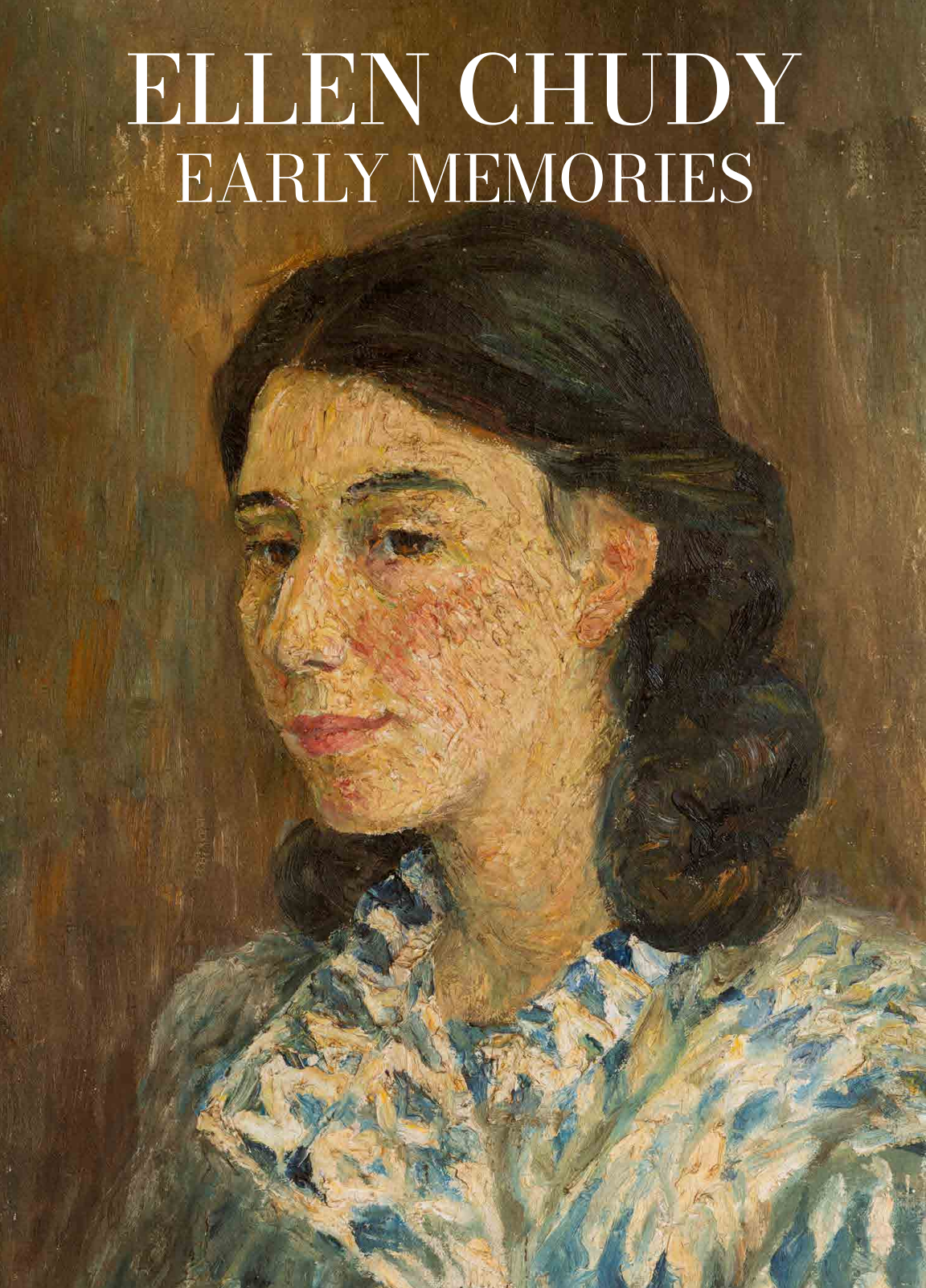
ELLEN CHUDY
EARLY MEMORIES



From Pre-War and Nazi Germany to Colonial Africa (1922-1952)

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Suddenly

Suddenly
they leap into the room
of unfinished dinners
and flowers
and fathers …
and then
on the staircase
the sound of the going
of those that are going
not wanting to go …
leaving the bread on the table
uneaten forever,
a fallen ribbon
from braids
undone
and on the carpet
a faint fragrance
of unfinished life.

Poem by Edith Columbine Hofman, Ellen's sister.

Introduction

Ellen Hanni Chudy - variously referred to here by her per-married second name, 'Rothschild', was born 1922.

Memories in this book only make reference to her life, following her birth in 1922, to 1952, She lived a further 42 years till her death in 1994.

This text does not cover the latter years of her marriage to David Chudy - namely the 15 highly eventful years, till his death in 1967. Nor, the rich life she enjoyed in a dramatically changing Africa, for 27 years, following his passing.

As per her own words - these memories were committed to paper (hand written) over a number of years, with the primary aim of describing her trajectory of her early life. This was for the benefit of her children - to be a reference after her death. Not that many of the events described were ever held back from them as adults (or others). It's more that the memories would eventually all be found in 'more or less one place'.

The texts were not composed to constitute a public memoir by Ellen. Hence some of it takes for granted levels of familiarity which are not readily available to third party readers.

Naomi Chudy transcribed the text - typing it 'warts, typo's and all', from her original note books. Very little editing has been done to the text to compensate for the above, in this current iteration. Hopefully the small amount of confusion which suffices, is a worthwhile trade for an overall atmosphere of intimacy and authenticity. The 'Name Reference' (page 7) might compensate where characters are 'unannounced'. This iteration of the writing has at least been formatted to be book-like in presentation with the addition of photos.

The following 15 years saw Ellen and David embark on adventures deep into Equatorial Africa and a massive year long road trip across South Asia to Japan and onward. There were firestorm years of creativity (artistically and otherwise). The rest of Ellen's life continued the intellectually rich seam. A similar text on David Chudy's life and art extends the date and scope of this collection of texts .

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March 6, 2008

My mother, born in 1922, died in July 1994 - 14 years ago. After her death I wanted to type up all her diaries and correspondence and possibly do a book about her or my parents life. It has taken me 14 years to now start working on this project. As there was no power today, I decided to empty out two of the three large boxes I have in my office - one is full of duplicate books with copies of letters my mother wrote to close friends. The other full of lever arch files full of letters to and from my mother. Some in German.

I realise now what a task I have set myself to get all this into the computer. I have typed up the diary of the Indian trip done in 1961. Now will do this of mother's memories, although she did not complete it. Maybe I can with all the correspondence that she had.

These memories were written in duplicate books

Naomi Chudy

Name Reference

The following are included for clarity. Listed are main characters, who may not have been formally introduced in the narrative.

Ellen Chudy	- né Ellen Hanni Rothschild
David Chudy	- husband
Naomi Chudy	- daughter
Philip Chudy	- son
Richard Rothschild	- father
Bella Rothschild	- mother
Fritz Rothschild	– brother
Edith Rothschild	– sister
Anna Eugenie Philippi	- childhood nanny
Flora	- aunt
Walter/ Doris/Wilma Hollander	- cousins
Meta Hollander	– aunt
Jacob Strauss	- grandfather
Helmut Rothschild	- double first cousin

3rd September, 1969

I left this page empty by accident but having written only about 17 pages I realise what a job I have undertaken even just to set down all I remember about my childhood, let alone my life up to date. I thought there was little to say and probably from a stranger's point of view it is all uninteresting, but I find myself carried away and taken to places and people that had faded almost completely and are now coming back to life. I wish it could evoke something that could be felt by Naomi and Philip (I hope long after I have departed) and recall to some extent a side of myself they may not have seen while we lived together. We give a lot away by talking of our past.

Ellen Chudy

Ellen as a toddler

Ellen, Bad Homburg - circa 1930

Bad Homburg - Childhood Memories

Our living room had a large table in it and served as a dining room for parents and grown-ups. In fact, my first conscious memory of it consists of my sitting at one end of this table and my grandmother (my mother's mother) at the other end. It is a picture, no more, I do not recall what the occasion was, nor do I really remember her features, with which later on I became familiar with through photographs.

Fritz and I, throughout the time we lived in Homburg (we left when I was 14), had all our meals in the kitchen where each jealously guarded his or her seat. My grandfather sometimes came in and always made for my seat and I felt he really had no right to be there at all.

Our living room was sombre and the furniture was entirely unrelated. We had a plush sofa, a dark oak desk, a school desk at which Fritz was supposed to do his homework, there was a table with all the bits and pieces which in those days represented a wireless including a loudspeaker. There was an old ugly safe in the corner too. There was a tiled stove next to which I remember my grandfather in an armchair. He was a little hunchbacked man with a white goatee and, I think, blue eyes. Over the sofa hung a ghastly landscape painting in an elaborate gilt frame.

We had a much pleasanter living room which was set aside as the 'Gute Stube' parlour and which was used on those very rare occasions when we had visitors for a liqueur with sweet biscuits before lunch, or afternoon

Most of my childhood memories are of the kitchen where we spent a lot of our time especially if it rained and where often we did our homework. It was 'home' with Eugenie and whoever was the 'nanny' of the time. The living rooms were to some degree foreign territory and I hated the dark brown wall paper with faint elliptical shapes outlined in gold.

The other places were the cobbled yard, the garden, the 'Presse' which stood in a shed and which swallowed up all the paper off cuts of the bookbinding workshop that belonged to our landlord.

This was a real treasure house and we used to sit inside the press

(before everything was packaged and tied up with hoop iron) and look for unexpected things such as samples of paper napkins, samples of wall paper, little boxes, the odd pencil or clip. We never tired of this search and spent many wet, cold afternoons there. I can still smell the raw paper, the new print and everyone once in a while a dusty bit of fruit or vegetable that got swept into it all by accident.

The book binding workshop held great fascination for us. Firstly the thickly encrusted glue pot from which rose a smell I shall never forget and which one of the apprentices once threw at the foreman, narrowly missing him. There was the press with the guillotine which cut paper so perfectly that the edges were like knives and we often used to cut ourselves on the paper strips we collected when they fell on the floor. Best of all I liked to watch gold lettering being pressed on to leather bindings. This was done under a glass dome. The gold leaf was so thin that a breath would have blown it away.

There was an iron winding staircase in the yard that led to our 'veranda' which really was just another room facing the garden and overlooking the neighbouring beer garden. At night we could hear the sound of the skittle alley, the roar of the wooden ball along a hollow sounding corridor and the clink of the falling shuttles and grunts and shouts of the man playing (a mug of beer in the hands no doubt).

The winding staircase was our fortress, castle, ship, igloo or whatever we needed for all our games. There were many people in the apartments and therefore quite a variety of children. In the attic was a postman with the name of Rumpf, his wife and their one daughter Erma. Below that was Herr Lüdeche and his rather thin wife and son Wilhelm whom we all hated but still always played with. He once knocked one of my front teeth lose. Father was not only a piano teacher (they lived right above us so unmusical scales were an accompaniment to our daily living) but he was also the leader of the Band of the local voluntary fire brigade. He had moustaches and used to wear a device called a 'Bartbinde' to get them into the right shape after a bath. Whenever there was a fight or a dispute, he always supported his son, who just never could do any wrong. Later on, Wilhelm was killed on the Eastern Front. On the same floor as the Lüdeche's lived our landlord and his wife. I called them Granny and Grandpa and I loved them.

Their living room was full of magic. Frau Becker once in a while

would treat us to going through an old chest in which she kept the dolls of her childhood and a stereoscope with pictures of Paris and London which we never failed to admire. The 3-dimensional effect made them so real we never got over the mystery of it. Frau Becker used to play a lot of patience which was pronounced the French way and still remember the colours of the two packs she had. She had another thrilling device which in German was called a 'Spion' - a spy. It was a series of mirrors fixed to face in many directions, fastened outside the sitting room window. There on icy winter days one could sit and watch all that went on in the street up and down even just below without opening a window. One, of course, also was completely unseen which lent an even greater thrill to it all. I can see the old lady sitting by the window on a sort of raised dais with a step leading up and entirely surrounded by a wooden fence and a gate, on which was her chair and her needle work table.

On the floor below was our flat. Our entrance hall seemed very spacious to me until I returned to Homburg after a few years and had a peep into the front door. It had shrunk to a minute scale and I even now wonder how it managed to contain all the red lacquered furniture it did and, on the days, when Fraulein Wahl came to do the ironing how it held the table and basket with all the damped washing. I always admired the expertise she employed ironing my father's starched collars which with one deft manoeuvre emerged not only shiny like glass but perfectly circular.

From the 'hall' one could enter the sitting room and the Gute Stube on one side and the kitchen on the other. To get to the bedrooms one had to go through the kitchen from which led a long and crooked corridor, the bathroom (which was used once a week) and my sister Edith's bedroom were off the corridor. At the end one entered Fritz and my room and beyond, my parent's bedroom.

Beyond that was the 'veranda' which till I was about 9 or 10 years old was used as a shoe storage. It was a very long way from day rooms and the silence always frightened me even in broad daylight. I would sing on top of my voice if I had to go there to frighten my own fears away. Once Erna, who was about 2 years older than I, took me behind the shelves where the shoes were stored and told me the hair-raising facts about menstruation, which I didn't understand (she probably didn't either) but which sounded pretty gruesome.

Below the veranda there was a chicken run and next to it a peach tree which was a cloud of pink in the spring. On the same floor as ourselves lived the son of our landlord. His wife was always very kind to me (though her servants always confided in me as to how bad a mistress she was to them). The Bechersjan had a daughter Margot who was about 2 years younger than myself and a son Horst who was about 4 years younger.

I once got into serious trouble telling her that the stork did not bring babies. Although I didn't know the facts of life myself and believed God put babies in mothers' beds during the night, this was considered outrageous and demoralising.

Horst was the youngest of all the children in the block and we used to tease him to tears. We would play hide and seek and one was only found if the 'seeker' touched one. We, who were bigger and older would climb over our neighbour's fence into his garden and Horst could never win although he knew exactly where we were.

One of the neighbours had a hat factory at the other end of his large garden. From there came the original 'Homburg' hat which Edward VIIth then Prince of Wales, made fashionable in England after returning from 'taking the waters' and doing some gambling at the Casino. There was a little lattice work summer house in which on very special occasions we children were allowed on summer evenings to take our supper. Above it was a white lilac tree and, on every April 21st, Eugenie's birthday, when it was in flower, old man Becker would pick a bunch for her.

Below our flat was my father's shoe shop which went under the name of Schuhhaus Strauss, named after my grandfather from whom my parents took it over. Also next to it was the stationery shop of the young Beckers. I spent quite a lot of time in our shop. It had a little red motor car (fastened to the ground) with a yapping blow hooter and a wooden elephant for restless children while their mothers shopped.

The little stools for trying on shoes when turned over made excellent little rockers (when no one was looking). I loved to talk to the shop assistants who all seemed to be with us for years and years. Eva, Eugenie's cousin was there for 20 years and only left because her husband, rather a simpleton, was an old Nazi and could not have a wife working for a Jew. There was a red head Kathe Hanbeil and Elfredchen who was our apprentice. I used to

feel sorry for her, because I felt she was treated too harshly.

Once or twice a month Karl (Schwartz) came to do our window dressing. That, I adored and I spent every free minute with him. He was a very temperamental man and never came on time and preferred to work at night. Our father threatened to dispense with his services as long as he worked for us but was always delighted with Herr Schwatz' handiwork and relented for 'another chance'.

In my memory he was a lean, angular man, straight blonde hair and a bit like the tap dancer (who teamed up with Ginger Rogers) - Fred Astair. He had a lifelong faithful relationship, did no harm to man or beast (except get my father into hysterics over his unreliability) and I've often wondered where he ended up. I have a feeling he wouldn't have become or for all I know, remained if he ever got out

Elizabethnbrunnen, Bad Homburg

of Buchenwald or Sachsenhausen.

The shop windows had to be lined with material liners or felt and sometimes crepe paper. I had several summer dresses that were made of a kind of linen left over from the windows. Karl, later on, was put into a concentration camp for being a homosexual. My mother who'd had 3 children did not know what that was. Karl taught me to dance the Charleston and shimmy and always had new ideas. He nearly drove my father to drink with his unreliability.

But because he was so good, father with much threatening always got him to come back again.

There was a sort of twin to the house we lived in and combined, it formed or less the letter E. On the other side on the top floor lived a taxi driver (Kilb) with one daughter Hilde. She was plump and I was not allowed to play with her. I think it was because her father lived

Kurpark, Bad Homburg

with a woman he wasn't married to. This, of course, sweetened the clandestine meetings with his very harmless daughter. Once we both ran away and went 'imagine it, without escorts' to the park that surrounds the former German Kaiser Wilhelm's Castle. We found in a dark part of the park a small cottage, covered in ivy or Virginia creeper, with all the shutters closed and the atmosphere so evil we speedily ran back only to be me by my furious father who put me across one of the trying on stools in the shop before a shop full of customers and gave me a terrific hiding. This in itself did not worry me much. Father had a very itchy hand and used it and a wooden kitchen spoon far too often to be of value. What hurt me was to be punished in public with all the customers looking on.

Below Hilder Kilbs fathers flat lived a family who were quite beyond the pale. I never entered their flat and never dared to play with

their children. I heard that they were dirty and full of vermin and many were the times when I lingered on their landing in the hope of seeing their door opened and seeing all those terrible creatures like bugs, lice and fleas walk around. Never having seen any before I am sure I felt they would be large, perhaps not as large as dogs, but that I could see them wandering about. Alas, I was not meant to be disappointed and only found out their relative size when I first arrived in Northern Rhodesia where I found the first bed bugs.

Below their flat lived a Taylor and his very bitter looking wife. He had two grown up daughters who all later on became fanatical Nazi's and never married. Maybe they became fanatical Nazi's because no one married them? They spread rumours about my father being a Communist and having orgies at our flat. They had a younger daughter Heliette, who had long thick plats and who at the age of about 10 or 12 contracted rheumatic fever. She was in pain for a long time. I remember seeing her shortly before she died. Pale, thin, just large bewildered eyes and changed even more by having her heavy hair cut because it hurt her. Her parents had to stop the clock in her room because the sound hurt her. She also had her hair cut short as combing it and the weight caused her pain too.

The flat below that which was over a grocers shop was occupied by a house painter, his wife and twin sons, Ludi and Otto. We were very friendly with them and for some reason our parents, who must have been snobs, more than anything else, allowed us to spend a lot of time with them. Otto and Ludi were very good at drawing and had books on popular science, zoology and exploration. They were very good with their hands and built wonderful things with Fritz's Meccano set, a thing he was quite useless with.

The garden at the back of the house had gravel paths and flower beds edge with bricks in a zig zag style. Nothing was ever changed. A large bed in the centre was full of Hydrangeas that had been given to my grandfather for a Jubilee (20-30-40-50? Years of his shop. Another very regularly angular U shaped bed was full of roses and I grew up thinking that 'tea roses' (Teerosen) were the delicately beigy\yellow ones were meant by that. They had the sweetest scent. There also were carnations on one side and I never liked them. They smelt of cloves and in German called Nelken which is used for both the flower and cloves. They also were rather straight and staid and in all my live I have never been able to like them, though I came to terms and ultimately came to like the smell of

cloves. There were lilies of the valley (Maiglöchen) that flowered in May and were usually overhung by flowering Morella Cherries which we called sour cherries and used only for tarts and stewing and bottling. The delicate white blossoms covered the leafless branches that fell down like snow and where, when I was small, I could walk under this cascade of delicately perfumed blossoms. There were gooseberry bushes with green and dark red fruit which we used to crack without teeth and ate, hairs and all. Also red currents that I loved just before they turned a bright red as I always loved tart fruit not completely ripe. I can to this day feel the way held in one hand I stripped to little round berries and then popped them all in my mouth - smooth and crunchy to the bite. I had to wait over 50 years to eat them again in London when I went over with Sheila Lazarus.

Although we were devout Jews, we were allowed to spend Christmas Eve with the Schröders nearly every year. We usually went over to the flat fairly early but of course it was dark already (about 4pm). We would sit in their small kitchen with the lights off, only the flicker of the fire in the kitchen auger\stove lit up odd objects around us. Outside the window was a low roof which always seemed to be covered in thick pure snow like an eiderdown.

Whether it was moonlight or reflections from other windows, I do not know, but the snow could always be seen glistening and sparkling. We would all sit very quietly waiting for the little bell that summoned us into their 'parlour' where the tree was lit with flickering candles, giving off a tangy smell wherever a flame licked a bit of fir tree. It was hung with glass baubles and spun glass (Engelshaar), silver 'Lametta' and a star on the top. We would walk in very sedately, though really dying to storm in. Before the presents were opened, we all sang Christmas Carols which even today fill me with a nostalgia for that mysterious atmosphere which was Christmas. Then the presents were opened and I suspect that our parents contributed ours, as the Schröders were poor.

Altogether Christmas appealed to me really as no Jewish holiday ever did. Of course Christmas was all around for weeks and weeks. The Advent candles that were lit the four weeks before Christmas. Fat red candles set into a wreath of fir branches wound into a wreath with red ribbon and hung from the ceiling. The shops full of toys and tinsel and gifts of all kinds. Lit up in the afternoons which turned into night about 4 o'clock. Snow and icicles, hoar

frost and moonlight nights bringing to magic life the snow-covered landscapes. At school the classrooms were decorated and we usually did a play. I was an angel once and out of 5 actors 3 were Jewish children. Father bought a galvanised bath full of 'Lebkuchen' a sort of honey cake, with pictures of St. Michael or hearts with icing on them every year. To this day the smell of tangerines takes me back instantly to Christmas when the only fruits available were oranges, tangerines apples and all kinds of nuts. The citrus fruit was imported from warmer climates. The apples stored in the cellar from Autumn when they were harvested. We were within hearing distance of two churches and on Christmas Eve they rang with a special quality which I must have imbued them with. Years later visiting Homburg, I was told that the church bells, one lot from the Catholic Church, the other from the Protestant were actually tuned and arranged to harmonise with each other (the only way these two faiths did in those days). One lot would start, then both together and then the other lot on their own! The bells tolled to tell the time and range more musically to call people to church on Sundays and other religious holidays.

Talking of the Churches; one had a clock on the tower and standing on our lavatory seat we could look out of the top window and tell the time. Herr Lüdeche incidentally used the same method one floor up to spy on us children. We could always tell though, because his bald patch became visible.

Where does one really begin, when memories only unfold as others, like petals of a rose are gently removed. This, of necessity, will be a hotchpotch and I may never get round to sorting it all out.

Coming back to Christmas. The market square, which during the year, except for fairs, was empty, just surrounded with vegetable stalls with umbrellas and old fat country women, would be transformed into a forest of fir trees, all sizes all for sale but meanwhile a little maze of forest in late Autumn. Fat peasant women used to sit by small wood or coal fired drums in which they roasted chestnuts and which we bought and cradled in our arms to give us warmth and which we used to crack to get them out of their shells, steaming hot and floury-sweet- while we walked in the streets.

We spent a lot of time with the Becker children who had a toy farm, a toy kitchen with running water and a tiny electric stove. Margot

Ellen, Fritz and Edith

also had, from her grandmother, a perfect Victorian drawing room with all the draped and tasselled details down to the flower stand with the aspidistra. They had a huge tree set into a stand that

turned around and played several Christmas carols. On the very top was a beautiful angel with wings of spun glass. My brother Fritz had a toy shop with drawers for rice and sugar, coffee beans, rough baskets with marzipan potatoes and packages of coffee, soap powders etc. It even had small shop windows which I took great delight in dressing. Every year the shop would be stocked with new sweets and marzipan dressed chickens, loaves of bread, cheeses and vegetables. Fritz hated marzipan and kept all these things to play with year after year. I felt very envious because to this day I adore marzipan. The drawers held not only real sugar etc but had chocolate coffee beans and other sweet things we could scoop out with proper little shovel - like scoops to put into small paper bags that we could weigh on a little pair of scales (even had weights) and then ring up on the cash till that opened with a push. I used to enjoy filling small baskets as food hampers with hams (I'd never tasted any) made of marzipan, wine bottles and fruits.

The custom of bringing out all these things for Christmas was kept by us, except we got them for Chanukah. I had a kitchen for which I embroidered tea cozies, towel covers, table cloths etc. Once the New Year had come around, we would be tired of playing with dolls houses and shops and gladly let them be packed away only to emerge ever new, each Christmas or Chanukah.

Chanuka always seemed a second-hand Christmas. One tried to imbue it with the same spirit. Religious though we were we never had a Menorah (seven-armed candlestick). Our candles were stuck to a rough wooden board which as the week grew more and more encrusted with candle wax. You lit one candle the first day, two the second etc till the 7th we sang 'Moans zur Jeshnosi' very lustily and played trendel, a spinning top with sides marked in Hebrew letters. One win or lose sweets nuts and dates.

There was the Passover about the time of Easter. That was full of excitement. First the flat was spring cleaned. All the mattresses put into the garden to be aired, the curtains taken down, the chimneys swept etc. then on Passover an old chest in the attic was opened and all the special crockery and cutlery was taken out because nothing we used during the year could be used. The Passover

stuff was a collection of odds and ends and that made it much more exciting. The cups were the most varied, from forget me not covered ones to one with the Austrian Emperor - Franz Joseph

together with Kaiser Wilhelm with oak leaves and flags intertwined with a ribbon that bore the legend 'wir halten fest und treu zusammen' loosely translated 'we stick together through thick and thin'. During Pesach, of course there was no bread in the house and nothing made of flour. We got huge cardboard rolls about 2-3 feet tall filled with Matzos made by the local baker. They were much more delicious than the machine-made ones today. Some were a bit burnt and I always chose the darkest ones.

The 'Seder' was an impressive ceremony with all manner of symbolic things on a special stand, eggs for mourning (I think, or was it fertility?), horseradish for bitterness (the Jews had suffered as slaves in Egypt), grated apple to present the mortar used in building, salt water and several other bits I have forgotten. I had to say a string of questions - they were specific questions we had to learn by heart such as 'Why on this day do we sit upright?' Later on, the answers were given. 'Because our forefathers were freed from slavery'. Usually, I burst out into giggles in the middle. Father had to read from the Haggadah - the story of Exodus from Egypt and we dipped our fingers in wine for every one of the ten plagues God punished the Egyptians with. This, I found out later, was to reduce the joy of freedom of our forefathers, a little to reduce the amount of wine in order to show compassion for the severity of the punishment. Dinner was a rich affair (on holidays we dined with our parents) but the ceremony that was to succeed the dinner, father usually refused (much to my relief). When Fritz got older he conducted the whole thing and did the second part too, for which I was far too full and tire and bored.

Easter was a joyous feast and we always painted hard boiled eggs and got chocolate bunnies (which in Germany laid all the Easter eggs). When we were on holiday with Eugenie in the little village of Plaffenweisbach, which incidentally was far from a railway station and had no bus service (we had to carry our luggage from Wehrheim which was at least 1½ hours walk. We used to go out into the meadows where in the early spring the new grass was short, and threw our hard-boiled eggs high into the air. You did this until the egg cracked beyond repair and he whose was thrown most often, won the contest.

Pfaggenwiesback was a very small village, I suppose Hamlet would be the right name. It only had about 100 or 150 inhabitants. All, except one family were devout Catholics, this family being looked on as foreigners. On a Sunday morning when the first bells rang all the villagers started to walk to the little church which was on a knoll on the edge of the village. Only the old and infirm and the very young and odd nursing mother stayed behind. All the old and elderly women, elderly one became at about 30 then, were in black carrying their prayer book and prayer beads, mostly made of mother of pearl. I often used to go along too and knew quite a lot of the hymns by heart. I never knelt down or took any part in it all as that would have been terrible for a Jewish child. However, I always enjoyed it and loved to hear the organ and the monotonous chant of the priest, his rich garments that he changed during the service and the smell of incense. Next to the church was the graveyard

Edith Rothschild, Bella Rothschild, Julius Ackermann, Fritz and Ellen Rothschild

Edith, Fritz and Ellen

and Eugenie took us there quite frequently. It was on the slopes of the hill and had nothing morbid about it. It was surrounded by a low stone wall on which we walked all around and had a view of the village below and the hills and fields beyond. There were lots of wild strawberries which we never picked thinking it was wrong and also fearing they might be poisonous because of all the buried bodies. But we got the lovely scented smells on warm afternoons. We knew nearly every grave and most of the names were family and we knew who was Schmidts - Adam's father or grandfather. The few wealthier people had larger stones, one with a marble angel with outstretched wings on it and a blue glass roof over it all. In lieu of flowers there were sealed glass domes about 12' or more in diameter with artificial flowers inside. They intrigued me though even then I thought them horrid. But mainly it was a peaceful place and a friendly one.

We went on lots of holidays to Plaffenweisbach. I expect it was convenient for mother to get rid of us and Eugenie did not mind the extra work we provided, too much (special kosher food etc) because it made it possible for her to go to what she considered her home. She was born in a town or village in the Westerwald mountains but lost her parents early and was brought up by the Fischers in Plaffenweisbach. It was with her aunt and uncle Herr and Frau Fischer we stayed. They occupied the first floor of their house in the Luntergasse a cobbled street that led from one end of the village in a slightly crooked way up to the church. On the ground floor lived their son Johann a carpenter, who owned one cow, a few pigs (one of which I once let out of the sty and that chased after me and I, fleet of foot, ran shouting down the road till eventually someone rescued me from the snorting heavy beast) some chickens and a large compost heap which gave the place its typical smell. The Fischers were too poor to live off the few fields they possessed, each one in a different direction outside the village. Johann had to cycle to Wehrheim where he caught the train which took him to Frankfurt (which seemed terribly far away) to go to work. He was a nice man, tall and broadly built with good useful hands. His wife I recall as a tiny shrivelled up woman (not with age, but I expect hard work and child bearing) who seemed to me nothing but a beast of burden who could not possibly get any joy out of life. It seems to me now (I am sure I was wrong) that she never smiled and did not speak very much either. Up in the attic lived a maiden aunt who was old and blind at least on one eye and

I think was not right in the head. She once put out her hand through the dormer window and touched the electrical wires that ran along not far from the roof. Whether this was the result or the cause of her queerness I do not know. All I know is that we were intrigued and a bit frightened by her. To get up to her room one had to walk what seemed more like a glorified ladder than a real staircase. That lead into the loft where only her room had been built quite separately.

Frau Fischer junior did all the housework, look after the animals, turned the compost and went out into the fields to harvest the oats, wheat etc. I think her husband did all the ploughing after work and at weekends. This was all done with the aid of the one cow and possibly a borrowed one from Frau Fischers sister's husband across the road. No one could afford horses or even bullocks to pull their carts or ploughs. People grew a lot of clover and we always looked out for 4 leafed ones, which brought luck to the finder. The fields of clover in the heat of the day smelled of honey which we used to suck out of the individual hollow flower petals. To sit on of a load of hay or even oats was sheer heaven no matter that the cartwheels were wooden with hoop iron around them and the cobbled streets bumpy. We sat up there like Gods. On the clover we were never allowed to ride. Supposedly because the fresh green plants would overheat and might cause fires? Compost? I don't know.

After a lot of rain during the summer we would go out into the woods and gather Pfiffferlinge - a yellow fungus which Eugenie would cook for us. Mother was never told as she would have been worried lest we got poisonous ones. This, at least was Eugenie's idea, I dare say my mother would not have minded. In fact when we grew up we told her and bought Pfiffferlinge in the Fruit and Vegetable shop across the road. It was a very fancy shop, we thought, that sold Strawberries when they were early and very expensive, imported fruits and sweets and chocolates too.

Once when I was seven, Fritz and I were taken on a holiday to the seaside. We went to Belgium, I found out later, because the exchange of currency was favourable and we could have a cheaper holiday abroad then at home.

Edith and cousin Helmut and his mother went on quite a

few holidays together with our mother. Fritz and myself were considered too young. Edith after all was 9 years older than myself. When I first saw the sea it was a complete surprise. I had never imagined it so vast and yet, I was amazed that it wasn't like a pond or a river, with steep banks and deep straight away. It was exciting to be in a foreign country where people spoke a language I couldn't understand. It was at the Hotel PrimaVera that I saw a magician for the first time. He did all the usual tricks, pulling rabbits out of a hat, pouring coffee over the audience, which turned into confetti. In Middlekerke, where we stayed the Belgians had left several shells of bombed and burnt-out houses from the first world war. It was a grim reminder of German shells and kept alive the hatred many Belgians had for the Germans. We, in those days were Germans and being Jewish was merely our religion. We had several incidents where people were rude to us and once found the words 'Bosche' in a heap of sand in front of our little wooden hut (rented) in which we kept our swimming things, umbrella and deck chairs etc. Mother was very indignant when the Hotel proprietor's wife called her 'Madam Allemande' which in another country would have meant no insult. It was like later on in Germany the word 'Jude' (Jew) which was an insult in itself.

Until I was six, I went to a Nursery School which in German was called 'Kindergarten' and which for reasons I could never fathom, the English took over to describe the first years in School proper. I loved 'kindergarten'. We did lots of things, weaving with paper strips, painting and drawing, blowing soap bubbles which, oh waste, our teacher coloured with hundreds and thousands. The soap froth would turn mainly pink. We learnt to embroider lazy daisy stitch and cross stitch, I have to this day a bed side table mat that I never finished or has Naomi completed it?

On Sundays the whole family usually went for a hike in the Taunus Mountains. Sometimes a short walk of about 2-3 miles to the Gotisches Haus where we sat in the gardens and had coffee and cake and we children played on swings etc. A little further was the 'Hirschgarten' (Garden of Stags) which was much larger and kept wild. It had a little stream in which we played. We dammed it up, built little water wheels etc. There were wild deer roamed and were of course quite tame and could be fed by hand. The next farthest were up the mount - the Herzberg and Feldberg - both had stone observation towers on top were for us children quite a climb. We would eat heartily once arrived. The speciality on the Herzberg

Restaurant was 'Handkäse mit Music'. A pretty smelly yellow slightly translucent cheese with caraway seeds with vinegar and onions on tasty rye bread. We always had it with dry Cider which was very cheap because apples grew all over the district. We went to other places beyond into valleys with little villages with water mills and streams bordered by forget me nots,buttercups and where it was boggy the lush succulent marsh marigolds (Sumpfdotterblume) during the summer. We went out in nearly all weathers - in deep winter when there was a leaden sky and a huge blanket of snow over all the fields and meadows. Only the fir trees provided the contrast to this quiet white wilderness. There would be sunny days with deep blue skies and we would lie in the snow and feel the golden warmth of the sun. In the autumn we would gather the shiny polished conkers that lay all about the huge chestnut trees still with some of their yellowing leaves. We made little baskets and large necklaces and other things from the conkers, that, once handled that sheen one first saw, when picking up a bristly chestnut that had just burst exposed. The Road that lead to the Gotisches House was dead straight from the outskirts of Homburg right up to the foot of the mountain. It had been built by the Romans who had planted the huge horse chestnut trees that arched and closed above the road and further on the immensely tall poplars in dead straight lines.

There was a pass over the mountains the 'limes' which was protected by a large fortification ruined but rebuilt by Kaiser Wilhelm to its former state. It had a moat all around and draw bridges. Castellated walls all round, deep wells within the castle walls and huge stone-built halls. There were exhibited the arms and armour of the Romans, also many statues of gods and goddesses. There was a temple dedicated to the sun God Osiris. One could wander in the vicinity, around remains of houses that were centrally heated, large heated baths etc in those far off times already.

The changing of the seasons was a delight and on looking back I appreciate how much more precious every day was and what one had missed I was gone, if not forever, at least until the season came around again. At the outset of spring, one could notice within the space of a few days that the days were getting a little longer and in Autumn a little shorter. I remember loving spring best of all when nature awoke from complete barrenness, when a little wind, maybe while there was still snow on the ground, brought air a shade warmer and woke up the feeling inside one, that Spring

was coming. It is an exciting time during which not only the grass comes through the ground and the buds on the trees burst open. It is a time when instinctively one feels at one with nature and goes through a kind of rebirth oneself. I remember the sudden feeling of being actively glad I was alive and new that the future would hold exciting things, new experiences and I felt impatient and full of energy to go ahead. On my birthday the snow was still on the ground but the first messages of spring broke through the snow, the snowdrops so delicate yet strong enough to break through the snow. Next came the crocuses which came after the snow and ice had melted, golden yellow, white and purple. The birch trees would cover themselves overnight with delicate lace shawls and the chestnuts with their fat sticky buds would unfold their pleated fans. We would collect Maikäfer (May beetles) brown hard covered beetles with black antennas with little brushes at the end. They could be found in any beach forest feeding on the delicate succulent leaves. Poor beetles, they nearly always died in the end though we started by feeding them every day. During the spring the long Tannenwald Alle (the Roman road) would be alive with baby frogs. Fritz had an absolute horror of them, and I loved them and collected the miserable creatures by the dozen and put them into my coat pockets and clutched them in my hand. They came to a sticky end, though really it was more like a 'dry' end as they need a lot of moisture to keep alive. Then came the blossoms on the fruit trees, the white cherries first and later on the almonds and peaches and at last the apples with their blush of pink on the white and the pears. We lived near a valley that for reasons of geographical features was protected against cold winds etc. which was famous for its fruit trees that blossomed much earlier than in the rest of the country. Even though apple blossoms have a very delicate perfume, once over the hill down to the valley one was greeted by a scent that permeated the air.

May brought Lilies of the Valley, which I always associate with my mother's birthday in May (14th), they also grew wild in the forests and smelt just the same as the garden variety. May was a mild month, not like April which was always true to its reputation - a very temperamental one. It would rain and the sun would come out, there would be snow and the sun again. Winds and calm, violent hail and warm quiet blue-skied moments. Then came summer, which I liked least of all seasons although the days were delightfully long, mind you we still had to go to bed early which was

much more miserable because the sun used to be still high in the heavens and we had to close the shutters to simulate night in order to go to sleep.

I never really liked the summer heat and since I did not like to learn to swim, even the water often was spoilt by father ducking me, after promising me he would not. We had a wonderful swimming pool in Homburg which was filled with the salty mineral water from the springs that Homburg abounded in. We had a huge artificial beach with real sea sand, in which one could hunt for shells even. I remember the hot smell of the wooden changing huts that gave off the scent of the not too seasoned wood, the damp, the salt and wet sandy costumes and wet hair. Summer brought fruits such as strawberries which we would get with sugar and milk and rye bread for our suppers. Gooseberries whose hairy skin I loved and which went pop when one bit into them. Red currents, I can still feel the sensation of stripping them between the thumb and forefinger, the smooth round balls the rough stem and then a handful popped into my mouth.

We used to have quite a lot of thunderstorms and Fritz and I would get into trouble if we were found late at night leaving out of the window watching the lightning which strangely enough did not frighten me, although I was scared of almost everything that wasn't familiar or friendly. Summer also was the time of the long holidays which lasted 6 weeks and of which we never tired. There was so much to do and the whole gang of children from the flats to play with. Some summers we went on holiday with mother and Edith.

Schmitten was a favourite, a small village in the Taunus mountains where apparently our great grandfather came from. We usually stayed in a pension but always had how own meals at a small Kosher Hotel which we all hated heartily. Helmut and his mother (Aunt Flora, mother's sister) used to come with us too. Helmut always maintained that the stewed apricots tasted of carbide. We found the very orthodox people that lived there most amusing. The men had long beards; the women wore wigs (Shitel) which a pious Jewish woman wears from the day she gets married. Today that might sound exciting but then wigs were primitively made and I remember one woman whose parting showed a particularly nauseating shade of yellow which ought to have looked like her

skin.

From Schmitten we went for walks, played in the streams, collected wild strawberries and bilberries. We picked heather and amongst the rocks found a wild variety of dark red minute carnation (Steinnelken).

I recall Tante Flora coming one holiday armed with the latest in umbrellas. (She was always buying the latest gadgets - had a collection of tin openers that she never used.) It was a gusty day with occasional showers of rain. When the rain started while we were walking on the side of a mountain, Tante Flora proceeded to uncurl this new umbrella that folded up small and was going to

be so useful. It took her some considerable time. Meanwhile she was getting wet. At last, it was open, but then the sun decided to come out so she decided to fold it up very carefully. No sooner had this lengthy operation been completed, when the rain came down again and sun alternated and the umbrella would be open for the sun and shut for the rain. Edith came up with a brilliant idea. 'Auntie, why don't we just carry the umbrella open, then it will be all ready for the rain'! Flora agreed and since Edith had the brilliant idea, she was picked to carry it. The weather remained fine. Then a sudden gust of wind and the umbrella was torn out of Ediths hand and we

saw it disappear down into the valley. The rest of the afternoon was spent looking for it and we eventually found it, none the worse, near a little stream. I can't remember whether Tante Flora used it again during that holiday?

Autumn, although it filled me with deep melancholy, I found muchmore interesting than summer. First the harvest of apples and pears - many of the main highways were bordered by apple trees and from a bicycle in passing one could literally pick them off the tree and being 'stolen' they tasted twice as good. My parents would buy apples by the sack full and they were carefully laid out on racks in the cellar and they lasted through the winter right into spring. The russets might look wrinkly but were crunch, juicy and sweet all the same. Then the leaves on the trees turned yellow and red and the creeping vines (Virginia Creepers) that covered many old houses were brilliant shiny crimson. The horse chestnuts with their fan like leaves would turn a golden yellow and shed their prickly fruit. The eating chestnuts would ripen and during winter we would roast them on the stove where they performed acrobatics as they burst with the heat. Then the trees would be bare and it would get damp and cold and misty, but not before some golden warm days - Indian Summer – a literal expression that does not exist in German - with the damp and bleakness came the mists that lay over the fields and meadows, no longer green. The meadow came alive for a short while when the Autumn crocuses came through the ground. 'Autumn timeless ones' they were called in German and looked especially through the mist like dozens of pale mauve flames. On sunny autumn days one saw streamers of lose spider web fronds that in German were called Altweibersommer. Then winter would come. Maybe the hoar frost first, that would transform the world into a crystal covered fairyland. Every blade of grass, every bare tree branch would reflect the colours of the rainbow as the crystals would break the rays of the sun. After that would come the snow that made the world into a silent place - all noises muffled by the soft quality of the pillows and blankets on window sills and roofs, roads and trees. I could tell that snow had fallen during the night by the strange light through the window. Though the sky would be a uniform solid slate colour, the white everywhere gave off its own light which one could recognise immediately.

We loved the snow. We made snow balls and built snow men. Their eyes were always made of coal and their noses of carrots, it was almost a tradition, the hat was usually a one handled pot. I suffered

from poor circulation and always came home with feet like ice that had to be rubbed with snow to get the circulation back. The large pond, almost a lake in the park, once frozen over was open to skaters. There is a feeling of freedom as one glides effortlessly over the smooth ice and we spent many afternoons under the eagle eye of the current nanny. Sleigh riding, we did a little although I was always scared of falling off. Father once took us

the Saalburg (the Roman fort) from which a very steep road led into the valley. Half way down we all ended up in a ditch with snow inside our clothes which melted and felt distinctly uncomfortable. A kindly couple stopped and pulled us out, brushed the snow off us as best as they could. The lady offered us some delicious looking toffees. We had been brought up never to accept any gift, sweet, fruit, drink or anything, the first time it was proffered. In our circle this was a well-known tradition and one was offered whatever it was at least twice again. The third time we were allowed to accept. The woman who helped us out of the snow obviously was not familiar with this custom and on our first refusal put the bag of toffees back in her bag. All my life I have felt I had been cheated out of that toffee and no matter how many toffees I will ever eat, this toffee I shall always feel deprived of.

In winter the days were short and lights were lit at about 4pm in December. It did mean that one had to get up in the dark and in a bitterly cold bedroom where often the water in the bowl on the wash stand was frozen. The windows used to be covered in what we called ice flowers - a sort of galvanised iron effect in translucent ice patterns. To look through we used to breath against the window and thaw out a round peep hole. In the afternoons we had to be in early and had to amuse ourselves by playing Black Peter, 'Mensch ärgere Dich nicht' a game similar to snakes and ladders. We would also draw and paint, knit of sew. Indoors was a cosy place and coffee time we would devour large slices of bread and jam or rolls with jam (which I hated when they had butter on them. Without, the ram or rather jelly would sink into the soft part of the bread which was my idea of heaven).

Eugenie took us shopping and would have to stop every few yards to shake hands with a friend even if just to say 'how do you do' and then shake hands again for goodbye. Shopping was much more

exciting when it was dark and the street lights, which were still gas lights and shop windows were ablaze. At dusk the lamp lighter would walk up the road with his ladder, climb up to the four-sided lantern with a metal roof, and would open the one side which was hinged and, plop, with a funny explosion the lamp would be lit.
In the mornings the procedure was repeated only to put all the lights out again. When a lot of snow had fallen, every house holder had to clear the pavement in front of his own property. A flat plant with a handle was used to shovel the snow onto the edge of the pavement where it piled higher and higher. Sometimes the snow would melt and then freeze and then the roads were treacherous. One would strew sand all over so that people wouldn't slip and break their bones.
Another sign of Autumn, mentioned before is how the air would be afloat with wispy spiders' webs threads that would float along, God knows where those Altweibersommer as we called them (old wives' summer) would go. I still wonder what that term meant, but it 'spelt out autumn' without any doubt. I just remember the gossamer.

I have often wondered why I liked autumn and spring best. Was it because spring was the 'looking forward' to things not yet ready to be done and autumn to look back what had already been? Both situations which do not call for action and of action I was basically frightened. For years I enjoyed to look forward to events that when they happened often were disappointing or I relived the past, all safe situations. I have learn t late and the hard way, that we live 'now' and yet, why am I writing this if not to 'live in the past'? I do not think this is the motive, I only feel that my life won't go out like a flame with nothing left to show I ever existed. I obviously am not content to think that you my children have enough of me or through me, to make me immortal. I want you, long after I am gone, to be able to look at this, and be reminded that I once was and perhaps for a brief moment become real to you again like a dream I had of my mother two nights ago, when for the first time in the 30 years that separate me from her. I felt her real presence and the following day was lit up by this queer feeling that I had seen her and I had experienced what I could never cough up at will, what she was like.

What do I remember about school? I recall my new dress on my first day and vividly the many bright colours it had on square patters. I can feel the 'feel' of the cloth and my satchel which was handed down from my sister sitting on my back. I can see the pearl

like sheen on the pink silvery paper that covered the large cone of cardboard that was filled with sweets which most children, whose parents could afford it, had for the first day at school, the wide part at the top of the cone had pink crépe paper that was tied with a ribbon and one the side of the cone was a picture of a little girl on a swing. I was terrified to go to school and once mother had left me alone amongst strange noisy children in the classroom, I vomited violently all over the desk which made me feel even worse and alone and odd.

I was taken to school by the nanny every morning, and was quite convinced I'd never be able to get there or home (by myself). I vomited every morning for a year before leaving for School. Then one day the nanny wasn't there when I came out of the school gate. First I was dismayed and wondered what to do and then I made what to me was a momentous decision. I was going to go home by myself. It was so simple, so easy and I was unbelievably happy and proud because secretly I had always felt a bit ashamed that I had to be taken and fetched. From then on, everything went better and if I am not mistaken my vomiting stopped after that. Our class was made up of a very mixed bunch. Poor dirty children from slum homes, pathetic ones from the local orphanage and a few who came from working class homes who were clean and keen. There was only one other Jewish boy, Ernst Sommer in my class, who in years later, jumped off the desk with joy at the end of our private religious instruction and landed on my nose, which from then on had a lump halfway down the middle. When we had to line up for anything we always were arranged according to size. I was always the shortest and therefore always the tail end. Until Stefan Ehrlich came to our class, he was also Jewish, very lively like a little rubber ball, always doing cartwheels in the school yard. I loved him from the moment he came - because he was shorter than I was and henceforth had to be the last. Our Teacher Frauline Schell was a kindly person who wore rimless glasses and spoke with a nasal sound. She had light brown hair and a large bun fairly high. I was not afraid of her.

There was, however, the groundsman and general supervisor who had pitch black hair and of whom we all lived in awe. If we made a noise between lessons, he'd sneak into the classroom and grab the first child and give it a hiding. We knew that he had locked children into the cellar and we all hated and feared him. We were a mixed class and half were boys.

There were twin brothers whom no one could tell apart. They wore brown and beige Fair Isle jumpers that their mother had knitted for them. They were extremely naughty and could seldom be identified individually and therefore got away without punishment. Later on the teacher managed to tell them apart and then the light cane was used on their bottoms nearly every day.

The other twins were as different as could be. The boy was thin and fairish, the sister black curly hair with red cheeks and ample shape. Her name was Rosi, which suited her with her pink and white complexion. On our first day at school a boy called Schäfer cried and couldn't be pacified. The teacher told him to go home and bring along a favourite toy to have something familiar. He came back dragging and pushing a wooden rocking horse on which he sat the rest of the morning.

I remember very little how we were taught to read and write or add and subtract, which just about all I ever profited from 8 years of school. Every day I wandered to school with my satchel on my back and little leather case which, aluminium lined held my sandwich and usually one banana. At one stage in my school career, I noticed a piece missing from the top of my banana. This happened day after day and when I asked Eugenie why she always cut off my banana, it was discovered that a pretty tough and dirty child behind me, bit off a piece every day. I felt quite nauseated because she so revolted me. Later on I also got head lice from her much to the consternation and shock of my mother. I was kept at home, had my hair doused in Lysol and all was bound up in bandages for several days till all including the 'mits' were dead. I was to sit next to several more children who harboured vermin and mother must have lived in a constant state of fear that I'd 'catch' them again. Once in a while a state nurse came to examine our hair, which she did with two small sticks. She probably was too revolted to touch all the filthy heads. I think nearly half the class, certainly half the girls mainly had long plaints, were found to have lice and were then disinfected.

About the third year in junior school, I used to go to School hand in hand with Edmund Ackermann one year my junior. He wore glasses to correct a squint, had a head of curly hair and with whom I played often because our parents were friends. His father had a little store in which he sold shoe makers accessories. I loved the smell of the

large sheets of leather for soles and the rolls of kid and 'box calf' for uppers. The rubber heels 'Continental' which we pronounced with the accent on the continental had a smell and feel of their own.

There were tacks , blue black, there were hob nails for boots and chip for skiing boots, laces and inner soles, special hammers with one rounded end. Pincers and awls for sewing soles, sharp pointed knives. All held great fascination for us. I suppose the smell of the

Ellen Rothschild, Edmund Ackermann, Julius Ackermann, Edith and Fritz Roth-

flax, twine, wax and shoe polish all added to the smell that in its entirety was peculiar to Ackermanns leather shop.

The Ackermanns also lived in the same house as their shop, only they owned it themselves. In the back of the cobbled yard was a large, pretty wild garden in which it was great fun to play. We did not have to be careful to stay on the paths and could eat of all the fruit we could reach.

There were two boys Edmund the curly headed younger one and Julius the elder by about 3 - 4 years. Julius was a lazy chap who

was his mother's favourite - he had charm and I presume had the gift of the gab and talked himself into jobs he was entirely unsuited for. Later on he emigrated to America and I think became a good for nothing. Edmund went to Palestine when he was about 15 and lived in a Kibbutz. He died at the age of about 30-32 only a few months after David and I visited Israel in 1954. Frau Ackermann I always found very intriguing. She was a very fashionable woman, who used make up and wore the 'latest'. Salomon, Her husband was a small completely bald man who never had very much to say. Frau Ackermann was very adventurous compared to my parents.

When you went to their pretty large flat you never knew which room was which. What had been the dining room last week might be the master bedroom next and so on. Each of the boys had his favourite grandmother - Edmund had his father's mother 'Grossmutter Ackermann' while Julius was loved best by his mothers mother 'Grossmutter Götz'. I thought they were very fortunate to have two grandmothers when we had none.

The Ackermann family wound through our childhood like a ribbon. We went into the mountains together and they and Herr and Frau Mainzer were the best friends our family had. Despite all that, they addressed each other as Mr and Mrs and 'Sie' as in French 'Vous'

I think my mother would have preferred more stimulating friends, but father, who had little education and a very large size inferiority complex through it would not have fitted in or would have even tried to fit in. It is of course easy to judge people by today's standards, when home background etc is not so important, where we are more prepared to take people for what they are.

To have grown up in a very large family, with a difficult eccentric father, a stepmother who had a horde of her own children, could not have been too conducive to self-confidence. Father was good looking and easy going and must have felt a complete outsider when he married our mother. She was well educated and intelligent, her parents had a shop father took over and that could not have been too easy to swallow. The marriage was 'arranged' my mother 'not so young' any more (in those days if you were 25

you were practically on the shelf. How narrow people's outlook was then. The man my mother loved and who loved her was not allowed to marry her, she was not considered good enough for him so both had to marry someone their parents chose. Those social differences were so trifling probably his parents had a slightly larger business than my grandparents. So, father and mother were condemned to a life together without love, without any interests in common. What a terrible sentence and then my mother presumably had to end in the Nazi gas chambers.

As long as I can remember, there were rows in our house. Father would shout and then stomp out of the house, leaving my mother trembling behind. He so often threatened to kill himself and yet mother always feared that 'perhaps this time he was going to do something to himself'. In the meantime, Papa would go next door to the little pub (with the bowling alley) perhaps drink a beer and joke with the bartender or barmaid, while mother lived in fear, he'd have forgotten it all, or at least, so it seemed to us.

Father and mother always had my grandparents (Strauss) living with them, from the very beginning of their marriage. So, they never even had a chance to get closer to each other as Grandpa and Mama were always there and no real intimacy could ever develop. Fritz and I were very fortunate to have the complete love and affection of

Eugenie who though never anything but the cook and housemaid, was the one stable factor in our home. Nannies came and went, but Eugenie always remained. She spanked us and loved us in the most natural way and we could not visualise life without her. Mother was a remote, superior and kind person, who never laid hands on us ever. She would light the two candles traditionally on Friday night, the beginning of the Sabbath and would place her hands on our heads and bless us. I wonder how she felt about never being a real and red-blooded mother to us? I remember two songs she sang to us in her not very steady voice.

'Sonne geht den Westen zu, hat sich mütgeschienen'Vöglein fliegt dem Nestchen zu, Hat sich müd' geflogen; Schifflein sucht im Hafen Ruh' Vor den wankenden Wogen.

Sonne [denkt nun auch, sie]1 hätt' Lang genug geschienen,
Legt sich in ihr Himmelbett Mit den roten Gardinen.
Vöglein [sitzt] im warmen Nest,
Schifflein liegt im Hafen,
Sonne schläft schon tief und fest, Auch mein Kind will schlafen.
'Leise zieht durch mein Gemüt'
Leise zieht durch mein Gemüt Liebliches Geläute.
Klinge, kleines Frülingslied, Kling hinaus ins Weite.
Zieh hinaus, bis an das Haus, Wo die Veilchen sprießen.
Wenn du eine Rose schaust, Sag, ich lass' sie grüßen.

Mother was not tall, had a very white skin, that freckled during the summer. It was so delicate that any slight pressure left black and blue marks on her. She had a funny upturned button nose, that always shone and which was the only part of her face where she compromised and used a little powder. She had long thick auburn hair and to the horror of all, one day she came home from the hairdresser, with it all cut short. I think we all cried. She had round brown eyes and delicate white, carefully looked after hands. Here hands were known to be beautiful and when someone told me one day, I had my mother's hands I was overjoyed since I wasn't beautiful and had to count the compliments.

We grew up pretty remote from our parents. I don't mean that we never saw them, but mother was to me a very kind, very superior person who never punished me - but for whom I don't think I ever had that spontaneous and warm feeling I had for Eugenie.

Eugenie both smacked and loved us and when we aggravated her to much, she used to hand us over to father who was quick to smack and if he wasn't so furious that he'd have no time to think, he'd go to the kitchen drawer and get the 'kochlöffle' - an old almost black wooden spoon that had been worn down to a stick with very little spoon left. Father beat us far too often for it to have any effect. In fact, Fritz and I often giggled and couldn't contain ourselves when he became furious, which must have inflamed his wrath even more. I can't remember bearing him any grudge, though and remember it more with amusement than anger. He did, however, sometimes make me very afraid. I remember when he hit Fritz in the face and he started to bleed, that absolutely horrified me and I cried, although I imagine the damage wasn't much. But to draw

blood that was cruel. Later on, first Edith and then Fritz too opposed father and it became rather uglier and fathers anger came from much deeper than did his hot headed and quickly overcome furies when he would just get stuck into anyone who got closest to him. There terrible undercurrents which I never understood, but which made me cold with fear.

Edith was the most emotional and rebellious while Fritz was more coldly condescending and bitterly critical. Father probably got rid of all his frustrations on his children, who Edith and Fritz being very intelligent and better educated than he, once more threw into greater focus his own back ground and lack of education.

They were not aware of this, but soon must have sensed it, even if they didn't perhaps understand it. They were unhappy both father and mother but only father with his hot temper could after accumulating resentment, get rid of it all by a shouting bout, directed against any one (maybe his staff too?) or a good hiding to one of us, empty himself and almost start from scratch again.

Mother, probably by nature but also by upbringing, could not rid herself of the piling up unhappiness. She was passive and would still smart under insults etc long after Father had probably forgotten them. Although rows were part of our parents' relationship and later Fritz and Edith's too, I cannot remember at all what was ever fought over. I know that it is not what you fight over, but why you fight that matters, but I cannot recall a single argument and they always were bitter, that I could say was about food, money, jealousy, business or anything like it. It was just a sort of leitmotif that was part and parcel of my childhood. I remember cowering in a corner just terrified, I never knew of what. I was too young to be rebellious and too dependent and afraid. I also often did not understand what Edith and Fritz really disagreed with so violently and I am sure it wasn't that they did not tell me what it was all about. All I know is that Edith in particular and later on Fritz too, expected me out of loyalty to them, to take sides to enter the argument on their behalf. I could never understand that, because I certainly did not fully understand 'why' they were so at loggerheads with father. Edith used to accuse me of being disloyal and a coward. Probably I was the latter but I was too young to accept the language in which she spoke to father which I considered rude and without respect. Of course, she did

not respect him but I feel the fault must have been on her side as well. Father smacked me too, but for simple things, that very often did not seem fair, but Edith and Fritz quarrelled over and because of much more fundamental things in their relationship. I had not begun to 'judge' father as they did and that is why I could not comprehend their deep resentments.

To me he was hot headed, light fingered or handed but I also remember the 'Salzbretzel' (salted Pretzel) which I found on my pillow in the morning, after he had been to the skittle club. It was a large Pretzel about 6-9' across and the thinner part was always crunch right through, while the thicker bit was soft inside and that contrasted nicely with the rough large salt crystals on top of the shiny brown surface and the caraway seed that opened up when you bit into them and made your mouth feel cool.

I remember him carrying me hunchback or on his shoulders when I got tired on our many hikes. Then again, we all anticipated his ordered 'stop' to look at a view or something that struck him. He never pointed out views for you to behold and enjoy, he ordered you to see what he considered he'd discovered and expected you to share. He spoilt many beautiful things for us, because we felt irritated and embarrassed. I am sure he did not mean to be like that. I think he wanted us to understand that he too, had an eye for beauty and that it wasn't only the well- educated and 'clever' who had that privilege. Mainly I expect he wanted as we all do, to share with us and through that get a little closer to us. But alas, neither love nor affection nor the appreciation of beauty can be ordered.

I feel deeply sorry for both our parents now. For a long time, I could only see the wrong he did to mother. I did not understand that he too suffered and felt an outsider. My grandparents (mothers' parents) lived with us from the day father and mother got married. During the day there was business, father having to work for old Jacob Strauss, who, while more successful, was an old fogy in father's eyes - who wanted to modernise things. He had had too little experience to impress my grandfather and therefore never succeeded. When grandfather got older, he pulled out of the business. Our grandmother had a serious gall bladder operation and remained a pretty helpless invalid for long after. Then grandfather got ill and died too. But by that time the relationships

had already settled and they found no other way to love each other. Father told me, when was an old man already how he longed to be with his children and be a friend to them.

Maybe time and old age had Romanticised his memories, but there must have been a grain of truth in it. Father, as so many fathers, didn't really have the children he'd dreamed of (he never said that himself). He wanted a son who was an outdoor type, full of life and spunk, whom he could impress with the pranks of his childhood. Instead, he had a dreamer who, apart from being a good swimmer, was not the athletic type and never got into the sort mischief he had wished to see him get into. I remember father offering Fritz one Mark if he would smash someone's windows. Alas that was not Fritz's idea of fun, not even for one Mark. Not that Fritz didn't have somewhere a desire for adventure, which he satisfied to some extent by proxy. The Schröder twins did a lot of things he admired and by saying 'we did this and that' he got some of the reflected glory. Perhaps, though, this was partially to satisfy fathers craving for an adventurous son. I do not know, what, after all do we know? How would all this look or read if it came from Fritz or Edith? We do not deliberately falsify records of the past, but by the very fact that I tell the story from my point of view, I probably distort the truth but then again, what is truth. It is an immutable set of facts, or is truth, that which is true to one, but not necessarily to another?

I think father never resented me as much as the others, that does not mean he favoured me. Firstly, I was the youngest and therefore not an intellectual rival and later on turned out not half as bright as the others and despite my cowardice the one that might have been a Tomboy. With Hitler terminating my school career, I was the only one in the family with as little schooling as he had had. Also, too many outside things happened as Hitler came to power when I was barely ten and one had to concentrate on other things. All this did not make us friends, but left our relationship less strained than the others.

I spoke of the Ackermann family and lots of events spring to mind. Edmund and I were firm friends throughout our childhood and walked to junior school together every day. But when the other children teased us on arrival, we decided to part just before we

turned towards the school. We exchanged curtain rings that had to be wound with wool to make them fit our little fingers. We were betrothed. Edmund would share things with me and gave me an old Teddy bear, who was eyeless when he found him in his parent's attic, which I still have today and which might easily be 100 years old. Now he is without feet, eaten off by a bouncing puppy when Philip was small. But I still treasure him for he crossed the ocean with me to Africa and the sentiment for Edmund who was kind and good natured and who was my friend.

When we grew into adolescence we grew apart or perhaps the awareness of our not being children anymore (we met after a one, or two-year break) made us awkward and I remember thinking that Edmund was in love with my mother to whom he came for English lessons when we lived in Frankfurt after I left school in 1936. We said the most unkind things to each and about each other only many years later, in fact after the war, when I was engaged or married to David, did he write to me that he had been in love with me but hadn't the courage to show it. David and I visited him on a Kibbutz where he went at the age of 15 and grew up and got married to Chedwa who hailed from Czechoslovakia. Then they had

Elisabethenbrunnen in Bad Homburg's Kurpark

one little boy. He (Edmund) was to die suddenly a few months later and Chedwa had twins just after that.

Julius, who was older, had less to do with us. He wasn't Fritz's type, but we still saw quite a lot of each other on our weekly hikes into the mountains. He was never any good at school, probably just because he was lazy. He gave me several pendants for a bracelet. It struck me later that he had probably pinched them. For reasons I could never fathom, he got, for a short while I presume, a job as tutor to the children of a wealthy family. He took the greatest delight in telling this to one of his former teachers, who must have all but fainted at this news.

The Ackermanns had in their flat a Sukkah. The Jewish festival of Sukkot takes place in the Autumn and I think amongst other things (or maybe solely) a festival of Harvest thanksgiving. All religious Jews build a little summerhouse which either had no roof or the roof could be lifted up (I forgot the reason for this). The little house would be decorated with leafy branches and fruits and children enjoyed this a great deal especially in the sort of society we grew up in where there was little, if no, informality. Now the Ackermanns had gone one better. One large room in their flat was built over a workshop or store room and had no one above. This they turned into a 'permanent' Sukkot with a flat roof that could be lifted with a pulley or such like. It always amused me - In the back yard on the top floor lived a carpenter, his wife and their only son. They were warm hearted nice people and we spent quite a lot of our time with the Neidlingers and Karlchen their son. Downstairs facing the street were several shops. I only remember the one that sold everything to do with needlework. It was run by two elderly Jewish spinsters and always smelt of wool and stiffened canvas. I loved the place with the multicoloured stranded cottons, the balls of wool of all colours. The two ladies knew everything there was to know about knitting, embroidery, lace making, crochet work, tatting, weaving etc. I wonder what happened to them. Their name was Duikelspül or Duikelspüler. I think they also died in the gas chambers in the end.

There were many quaint places in Homburg which dates quite far back and which was, I think, a small duchy. The Duke lived in a castle of which a tall white tower still stands above the old part of the town. The subjects lived right below in little houses with crooked streets which seen from the bridge that leads over it -

looks like the work of a child that has placed toy houses higgledy piggledy all over with little or no plan. By the bridge are old stone towers that flanked what must have been the old gate through the wall into the old town. Near the 'White Tower', a building was later constructed—not by Wilhelm II, but originally built as the Duke's Palace. This later served as the summer residence of the German Kaiser (at least, I think that's the period when the palace originated).

In fact, it was originally the palace of one of the dukes but well before Germany was united under Bismark at the end of the 19th Century, with a lovely park and pond with swans and weeping willows. The Park was surrounded by a wall and beyond it was a narrow street where the old retainers of the Kaiser lived. Once a week I went to a tiny little house that belong to two old spinsters who taught me weaving and other crafts. Their little house was old and crooked but inside it was spotless. The floors were so glossy you could see yourself in them. I recall that these two ladies had worked at the court of the Kaiser and used to recall little incidents from this time, of which they were so very proud.

In what was called the 'Albstadt' old town which, unless one lived there, one only saw from above, lived an elderly couple, a brother and sister. I don't think either of them had ever been married. Sophie was short with a small pointed nose and round dark eyes that always looked surprised. She had her hair drawn back severely and kept their funny little house. The front door led into the small kitchen which was oblong. Next to the coal stove were 3 steps that led into the parlour (in which we never sat. Upstairs were the bedrooms). The steps were my favourite seat and had the advantage of being the warmest spot in the kitchen, which was the living room unless very illustrious visitors came. Frau Staubitz was a friend of Eugenie's and I went there many times. Old Mr Staubitz had a round little face that was very red with white hair and China blue slightly protuberant eyes. His nose was also pointed and he looked a little like a radish or gnome. He used to sit next to me on the steps and tell me stories of the days when he was a master shoe maker and made the most beautiful shoes for the wealthy ladies of the town. I heard about the kinds of leather he used and how he cut it and stitched in, all by hand, and how satisfied the ladies were with his handicraft. I spent hours listening to him with bated breath, while Eugenie and Sophie exchanged gossip. I thought the old man so kind to tell me, a small child, all these exciting things about his life. Today having grown more cynical I am

more or less convinced that all his friends had heard all his stories before and he was glad to have someone who was so interested, to listen to them. All the same to me it was fascinating to hear about a craft that even then had all but died out. The Staubitz's had a small allotment\garden outside the town and Fritz and I, with Eugenie would visit them there during the summer and autumn. They had a large cherry plum tree in the middle and we could eat to our hearts content of the little, round, yellow fruits. There were tomato bushes from which we ate fruit and unwashed (if mother would have known). From the garden it was not far from the cemetery and Eugenie took us there many times, in fact any place we went to with her, her first visit seemed to be the graveyard.

Homburg during my mother's youth must have been a fascinating place. Because of the Kaisers summer residence combined with it being a spa and having one of the few gambling Casinos in Germany - nay Europe, it attracted foreign visitors, Royalty the lot. Mother often told us of the visit of the King and Queen of Siam (the Queens name was Rambai Barnie, the King Chula longhorn). They are the couple of whom is written in 'Ann and the King of Siam' and later on the musical 'The King and I'. All the Eastern Kings and Princes were fabulously rich and this King once invited the whole population of Homburg to celebrate his birthday. Drink was free and the Homburger's swiped most of the glasses and mugs as well. At night there were the most magnificent fireworks the town had ever seen and they were used to pretty good displays. All the trees in the park were decorated and on his return to Bangkok the King despatched a little Siamese temple that was put up in the large park belt that ran the whole length of Homburg. It was all delicate, colourful and gold and must have seemed strange to a newcomer in this very European setting. The Tzar of Russia was the Kaiser cousin as was of course one of the Kings of England. So, Homburg had a very small, very delightful little Russian Chapel complete with onion top, gold filigree work and Byzantine colourful paintings. For the English there was a little Anglican Church. The Prince of Wales (Edward VII) Once came to my grandfather's shop (this was before World War I), and bought a pair of red bathing trunks (outsize). It was he, who brought back felt hats to England and made them fashionable. Hence the name 'Homburg Hat'.

The one he took to England came from the factory at the back of our garden - when Fritz and I were about 2 and 4 or 3 and 5,

a Sindhi Maharajah from a small Indian State Came with his wife and 12 daughters to 'take the waters'. The girls with their English Governess, came into father's shop to buy black patent leather shoes for all of them. Except for one, the sales girl found the right size and style but the twelfth didn't like any. Father heard of this and said that he would put away one pair for my sister Edith, who was going to have her birthday shortly. Of course, they were the right ones and they all departed happily, but not without asking the date of Edith's birthday. When that day arrived, the Governess and two girls turned up at our shop with a gift in the form of a very good manicure set all with mother-of-pearl handles. There was great excitement. When the Maharajah of Sind—a very small desert region in the northwest of India, as we later discovered during our travels east in 1961—left Homburg, Fritz and I, standing in for Edith (who had to go to school), went to the Ritters Park Hotel with little Victorian posies. I was completely overcome. The Maharani wore a diamond in her nose which I had never seen before. She bent down and kissed me and I didn't want to wash the spot when we got home. Fritz declined the honour of a kiss, which I thought very stupid. After all one didn't get kissed by a Kings wife every day?

Many famous people came to Homburg in their time, either to gamble and mix in society of blue blood or to take the healing mineral waters. Dostoevsky nearly lost all his money there and wrote 'The Gambler' which is set in Bad Homburg. Goethe wrote about Homburg. Höderlin went and Homburg has, so I am told, the only monument for him.

Bad Homburg had a population of about 15000 people. Through being a spa it had quite a few amenities that other towns of its size would not have. It had a theatre which was also used as a concert hall. It had large and attractive parks and perhaps a few 'better class' shops because of the visitors. The Ritters Park Hotel was very posh and it must have a long list of Royalty and titled and famous people who had stayed there including Julius Ackermann, who, after the war, came to Germany on a visit, stayed there and then disappeared without paying his bill.

During the season, the Kurhaus was the scene of fashionable ladies who went there for 'Five O'clock Tea' named thus in English for the snobs. This was taken on the wide-open Terrace while the band played and people danced too. In the Kurgarten, surrounding it, during the height of the summer were organised fine fireworks

displays. The chestnut trees, magnificent large ones had red lampions (Chinese round lanterns) lit all over, like large glowing fruits. The paths in the gardens were edged with coloured little glass beakers, each with a candle inside. The fountain facing the gardens was illuminated and it was turned into a fairyland park. I used to love to watch the fireworks but hated the bangs and went away with my ears red from pressing my hands against them.

The large park had a section where all the mineral springs were situated. All within I should say, about less than a ¼ mile. Since they had nearly all be discovered by the Romans, each spring was surrounded by Roman type walls, pavings, little open roofed over buildings, statues - the lot. When I was small one could get the water from any spring for nothing. One simply handed the white aproned and capped attendant one's glass. Once Hitler came to power this part of the park got fenced in and one had to pay an entry fee. Each spring, although so close to the others, had a different flavour and different healing properties. One particular one was full of sulphur and we used to call it the rotten egg spring. Once in a while a visitor would go along with us and we kids would say: 'we'll go and get some water for you'. We'd sprint to this spring and watch for the expression on the grown-up's face when first in anticipation they would smile and then on tasking the nasty fluid would switch to a face full of disgust. I don't know how we explained 'our mistake'.

On Saturday afternoons we usually were taken for a walk by the nanny. We were all dressed up and had to try and walk sedately. As we were pretty religious, there was very little we could do on the Sabbath. We couldn't even pull out a single blade of grass, pick a flower, cut anything with a pair of scissors, ride a bike or scooter or switch on a light or light a match. So, it was just about the only thing save read a book, we could do. We would run far ahead hoping the Nanny would get worried lest we'd run away, then hid behind the large trees, to boo her when she passed us.

Fritz was the only one who did not mind all these restrictions, while I always had 'wicked' thoughts about doing all the forbidden things. I was very frightened, however, of the consequences, and remember having a sleepless night after eating a waffle that had been done with 'vegetable fat' that did not have the Kosher stamp on it. I think

Edith and I did switch on lights on the Sabbath but Fritz didn't and once nearly lost the sight of one eye, walking straight into an open door smashing his glasses. I never liked 'Religiousstunde' which was in the afternoon and where, Parrot fashion we learnt to translate prayers and parts of the Old Testament. Our teacher was the local Kantor - name of Herz who had bad breath and usually sat very close to me. We had these lessons in the house belonging to the Jewish community at the back of the four towered red sandstone Synagogue in the older part of town. The classrooms were on the ground floor and on the second or third lived the 'Shammes' the verger whose wife had a basket on a long string, which she lowered from the top to the bottom of the staircase with the keys or others things her husband wanted. This saved him the many climbs up the stairs and the sound 'Jenny let down the basket' still rings in my ears when I think of this place. The Rabbi was an old man from East Prussia, which to us, was practically Poland and we had not been brought up with a great deal of tolerance or affection for Poles. Polish Jews were the only ones we ever met and for a long time I was convinced that only Jews lived in Poland. Dr Wreschner had a fuzzy white beard which according to our unkind remarks showed the menu of, if not of the meals the day before, certainly of the last meal before our lessons. To me he was a slightly unappetising old geyser, to Fritz perhaps the inspiration of his whole religious career. His wife, I recall only as the one who always seemed to wear a violet coloured (lila) knitted cardigan and that I think more or less became her nickname 'Lila Jächchen.

The Synagogue itself was quite a big building for a small town and the 100 or so Jewish souls. I am afraid I never felt near to God, least of all in the Synagogue where I would be bored to tears by the hours and hours of services that lasted nearly a whole morning on all the festivals. On Yom Kippur it lasted all day, since one did not eat anything (the day of atonement when everyone over 13 fasted for 24 hours) there was little to go home for. The women were always separated from the men who sat in the body of the building. The women occupied the 3 galleries upstairs which had wooden railings above about neck or chest level, probably so as not to distract the men below. The seats were hard wooden benches and I was a very boney, thin child and fidgeted about a lot to stop my behind and legs from going to sleep. Many prayers (none of which I understood, though I could read them) had to be said standing up, that was even worse. The only redeeming feature was the very

large window on our right through which, standing up (once I was tall enough to look over the back of the seat) I could look down into the 'Wallstrasse' which was an old cobbled street with very old houses, but where the odd cart and horse or person would go along from time to time. In this street lived the Jewish town gossip, who was renowned to have written scores of poison pen letters. She lived on the ground floor and always sat by the window facing the street and when we passed by coming home from Hebrew lessons, she would stop us and talk to us. Once or twice, she asked us to come into her dingy though very clean 'parlour'. She would tell fortunes from playing cards too and did for Ilse and myself once.

The only Jewish festival for which I did not mind going to Synagogue, was 'Simchat Torah'. The celebration and expression of joy over the giving of the Torah (5 books of Moses). On Simchat Torah all the scrolls that were kept in the shrine above, what could be termed the Altar, were taken out, each in its own velvet cover, ruby red or royal blue, silk embroidered in gold and hung with silver ornaments and capped on both sticks of the scrolls with pagoda like hats, and carried around the synagogue by the towns most venerated people. They walked and almost danced around and around and we children like the rats of the Pied Piper, follow the rabbi and the other men, carrying little flags. On this round trip we passed the pews of many men and those who were wealthy handed us sweets, in little bags and other tiny toys sometimes. We called it the 'Dütchen' in the local slang, which meant little bags and we vied with each other as to who could get the most sweets by pretending, we'd been passed over before and so getting twice or 3 times from the same person.

Otherwise, it all was just so much of a bind, particularly because we had to be 'dressed up'. Lachschube (patent leather shoes) white socks and the best frock. I once got into trouble after crawling into the cellar hole that was under the grate in the street, with Wilhelm Lüdeche, to look for treasure (coins or other little things people looking at the shop windows occasionally dropped and never retrieved) while I was dressed in my best velvet frock, new shoes and socks, ready to go to synagogue. One does not need a good imagination to guess what I looked like when I emerged from the coal cellar. Knowing my father's reputation, by now, also, the state of my behind, when Papa had finished with me. Nevertheless, I felt it was worth it as we had found a few pennies which we shared and

some cheap trinkets which Wilhelm magnanimously let me have.

It is the custom or a law, that when the members of the congregation who were descendants of the tribe of the Cohanim (All Cohns, Kahns, Cohens etc) pronounced a blessing on everybody. One does not look at them and stands, either with averted eyes or closed ones. For years I never dared to look for fear of being struck by a bolt of lightning. There was a great deal of awe on being blessed by these unknown privileged men. Until I took heart and peeped through my fingers. I saw Herr Kahn, our butcher and several unholy looking characters with their hands outstretched before them wearing checked camel hair slippers. All the awe and mystery vanished, I felt these familiar and rather coarse people could not possibly succeed in blessing me or anyone else for that matter. That they had powers and were in closer contact with God, I could not believe.

Birthdays were occasions in our family and we looked forward to them for ages. I always enjoyed, and still do, surprises. Once I ruined my birthday by peeping in a cupboard left unlocked and finding my present. I remember crying myself to sleep that night because I had spoilt my pleasure of getting a surprise on the day. I think I understood very early what were the reasons for certain pleasures and recollect feeling sorry for some very rich children who had absolutely everything all year round. When I went to the Silbermann's together with Fritz for the first time, I was overwhelmed by their 'playroom'. It was full of toys. A shop large enough to stand behind the counter etc. If felt envious fleetingly and then sand and sorry for the boys. They had everything and had no pleasure from most of it. I felt that we were lucky to get our shop and dolls rooms once a year only. I knew even then at about ten or eleven that the greatest joy we got out of missing, forgetting and then rediscovering our best toys that came out once a year.

Since we never had money of our own, the only presents for parents or other adults we could get were those we made ourselves. Mother must have been 'thrilled' at getting match boxes covered in felt and little flowers on them, or when I was small covered in shining paper that had gum on one side and which was cut into shapes provided the decorations. Sometimes we only went out to pick wild flowers or in early spring pussy willows.

Once we played rather a dirty trick on Papa from whom we pinched cigars over a longish period which we eventually packed into a well-kept cigar box and presented it to him. I am sure he knew, because the cigars were a motley crowd of varying lengths, thicknesses and colour.

When I look at our two cats, I am reminded of that one domestic animal we had all through our childhood. Micky was a black cat (with a little white somewhere) which, I have a feeling was really Fritz's cat. On day she(?) disappeared and we were sure that the man with the red Tomcat had shot her. We hated this man with a deep and abiding hatred as one can only note someone one has never see. He, the same as his cat, was almost a legend and we 'knew' all sorts of things about him that had probably grown in our phantasy out of the meagre information we might have had. Fritz did have a goldfish and they grew to considerate age and were nursed through many bouts of illness cured with common salt. Once Fritz also had a terrarium in which he kept Lizards whether bought or caught I do not recall. Birds we never had and certainly not a dog. I sometimes used to be allowed to walk with Terry, the Ackermanns Dachshund. I used to feel very important straining against his leash probably because in Germany generally, dogs were a sign of affluence.

There were several characters in Homburg, the one most vivid in my memory was called 'Spitzengretel' 'Lace Grete'. She was supposed to have been a Lion tamer in a circus and had been scalped by a lion. She certainly wore wigs. All the same shape, shoulder length, straight with straight bangs (a fringe). She had a pale blond one, a red\ginger one and a black one. She wore dresses in the fashion of the twenties, no waists, just above the knees with large lace collars (hence the name). She wore pale stockings and pointed shoes and was often seen walking down the street on the arm of an elderly gent wearing a monocle in an English tweed Norfolk jacket, sedately and upright. Then there was a bum called 'Bubser' who I was told had never done a day's work in his life. He slept in barns, on park benches etc and was to have replied to someone offering him a job as a potato digger, 'let those who have hidden the potatoes look after them'. There also was a red-haired woman (red hair very unusual) who was very dirty and we children though of her as a witch.

I took a shine to a girl my own age whom I only knew by sight, but who seemed to possess the qualities I felt I lacked - mainly I was influenced by the coat (lodenmartel) - she wore, which I saw as a symbol of independence, of sophistication and so on. One spring day I was going along the knobbly cobbled yard at the back of our house on my brand-new scooter (Wipp Roller) which was a bright blue with a yellow lightening symbol on the front of the handle. It was a very special type of scooter, the very latest in scooters and I had only just been given it for my birthday. While I was scooting away up and down the yard without a care, fate in the shape of this girl (whose name and looks I have quite forgotten) was approaching. Her mother was in my father's shop

to buy some shoes. My father, ever the kindly, considerate gent, told the girl to go and play with me while he served Mama. (It never occurred to me until this moment to think, that maybe Papa rather liked her mother and thought the daughter would be best off away in the back). Anyhow the girl came, I was in seventh heaven. She went on my scooter and seemed to like poor little insignificant me. When her mother called her I was thrilled when she asked whether she could come again. This was all too good to be true (as indeed it proved to be). I walked on clouds. Next day Waldfraut (as we will call her) came and we played together. She came the following day too and she came every day after that. Every day with the regularity of a clock and slowly I grew to hate her. I would stay indoors on glorious sunny days so that the maid could say I was out. I'd mope around the flat rather than feel this horrifying sensation having lost all my privacy, of having fallen into the hands of someone who felt she owned me. She eventually got the message. I do think her name was Waldtraut.

The children of the flats were numerous and we really never wanted for company. We would play catchers and had our own special brand where the catcher could only walk along the reddish cobbles whereas the rest could only go on the blue basalt ones. We went through the seasons of marbles, tops, hopscotch, skipping etc. It is strange all over the world children have seasons that, like an epidemic, spreads like wildfire and eventually dies out only to give way to another one. No one would dream of playing hopscotch when it was the skipping season, or spinning tops when one played marbles. We had one glass marble. I really think it belonged to Fritz, which had inside it a twisted pattern as if woven

of yellow thread almost like a balloon. Here (in Southern Africa) the children call the big special ones guns the U pronounced like O in womb. We played daddies and mummies which sometimes got tedious for the girls who had to stay home to mind the babies while the men went out to fight Indians and robbers.

The garden which, when I think of it now was laid out very stiffly had gravelled paths bordered by bricks. The flower beds were singularly unimaginative but still it was a garden and there was a grassy patch on which we were allowed to play. On this patch stood an apple tree, around which we buried sundry pets and dead creatures we found. Fritz gave excellent sermons and must have thought the gold fish, lizards or sparrows were all good Christians because in place of a headstone we always put little wooden crosses on their graves. In the corner of this patch Margot (the granddaughter of old man Becker) and I were allowed to have a tiny bed of our own. We actually grew some pumpkins there which was like a miracle to me. There were two solid iron rods with a bar across for the sole purpose of hanging carpets over it and to beat them unmercifully with a light instrument made of planted cane. We used to climb up and swing from the bar which had become smooth with years of carpets and children's hands. There was a large rose bed which also had carnations in it. I liked neither and still don't like carnations to this day although I have grown fond of roses (in a vase or bowl, still not in a garden). There was a wooden fence which was virtually a wall along the side of the garden next to the neighbours pub. All along this grew sour cherries and below them masses of lilies of the valley. I loved it when the cherries were in bloom and their white snow like petal speckled the ground. Next to the summer house was a large roofed over structure which was used for drying washing when it was raining. I can feel the feel of damp sheets and smell the smell of them when we used to hide in there between the rows of newly boiled washing. I also remember vividly how my father's winter underpants or long- sleeved vests would stand up by themselves when overnight they would freeze solid during the winter. When Eugenie collected these garments in the cane basket, they looked for all the world like stiff corpses or pale sides of beef from a butchers.

When Edith left school and because as a Jew could not enter University, she became apprenticed to a firm of exporters and

importers of Handbags, costume jewellery etc. The day before she set out on the train to go to Frankfurt to work, she sat with me on the grass and my heart bled for her. Never again (thought I - with her very active persuasion) would we be able to sit thus, because she was going to slave away from sunrise to sunset forever and ever.

I thought the end of the world had come for me, when we moved to Frankfurt. I imagined that we would live in an asphalt jungle with nothing but buildings and that the seasons would come and go and I would not even know. I would imagine that one day I would return to Homburg to the country and would find that spring had come and gone and I had not noticed it. How very different it was, there was a little lilac tree outside our very ugly block fo flats, that crooked and dead looking in winter would burst into scented blossom every spring. One block away from us was a beautiful park that had so many wild violets growing under the trees that the perfume greeted you as you entered. There were lots of parks in Frankfurt and one that ran right around the city from the river curving around and returning to the river where as far as I know the old city wall had stood. Helmut and I used to go for walks in the evening trying to locate necking couples and identifying ladies of easy virtue.

Homburg of course, was only a small town. It had a population of about 15000. I went to Junior School at the age of six and spent 4 years there, amongst a very motley crowd of children. Then I entered the one and only High School (Lyzeum). We started to learn French and mathematics as well as Physics. This school was a girls' school and some of the teachers were old and crotchety. A lot of them had taught my sister Edith 8½ years before me and expected me, as a matter of course, to be as good in German, French etc as she had been and naturally as hopeless as she was in Mathematics. I was neither, although maths was one of my weakest subjects. After my first year in the Sexta, Hitler came to power and with it a new kind of fear entered our life.

I have forgotten the names of many teachers and who taught what. I do recall Frauline Feichaman, a small, wizened spinster with the face of a bush baby who taught us French. She would stand facing the first row of tests with tips of her fingers on the desk and she

would rock on her feet from feet fully on the floor to tiptoe. She also pursed her mouth and the whole impression was that of a mechanical tool which incidentally would move her head sideways and all of it in rhythm. Frau Stande, we had for German. Also, a spinster, also thin, but all elongated. She had a narrow face which always looked sad and was easily upset even to tears. She is over 80 years old now and her handwriting which I hadn't seen for well over 30 years, is exactly the same today as it was then. Herr Bendig, who apparently struck fear into the head of even the mothers of children who went to school with my sister Edith, had changed into a little old man, very partial to Brandy which he used to sup once in a while when we went on school outings, from

a small hip flask. He was very fussy and would give us bad marks in geometry or algebra if we forgot the comma after the date or the full stop after the year at the left-hand top corner of our 'Klassenarbeiten'. We never had exams but during the year had sprung on us frequently tests in a particular subject. These 'Klassenarbeiten' we all hated and we all knew what was in store for us if the teacher walked in with a pile of exercise books under her arms.

Our most fervent wish included in many prayers was, that the school might burn down. The nearest to that happened when at the boys' school, which was situated above ours (the street was very steep and they could overlook our school and yard) a wooden structure used as an overflow school room, caught fire and some children actually stayed home or were sent home, for a day or so.

We girls from my part of town, passed the boys school on the way every day. In winter they would throw snowballs at us or whistle or tease us. Later on, the bullies would call us 'Juden' and then we were not a crowd of girls any more, then we, the Jews stood out and always expected some sort of insult. In the beginning I think it probably wasn't even very vicious and had little meaning to those who called us names. Later on, it changed its tune and was backed up by something much more menacing.

Herr Dr Raucsch was our German teacher. I liked him very much. He had black hair and a little moustache and was the only teacher who was dressed in an informal manner. He wore grey flannel bags with a jacket to match. He did not wear starched collars and we

used to call him 'the Englishman'. He was probably not a very good or systematic teacher and could easily be channelled into other subjects, by us, especially if he walked in a dreaded pile of exercise books. We would keep him on some pet subject and he'd suddenly wake up to the fact that it was too late to start. Of course, we didn't get away with it, the agony was merely put off. I don't think I was particularly good at anything, what help me, once Hitler came to power, was the fact that I was good at light athletics and sport had suddenly been elevated on to a higher plane and counted for a lot more.

Herr Bendig had different ways of marking different types of offences. Punctuation was marked with a U, alterations which he called 'Schuuddeleien' with a wavy line and mistakes by a straight line. He had the habit of spitting out of the window and I think once someone below was hit by the missile and there was a bit of a kafuffle. He threw things out of the window too. If he found you playing with anything he would take it away and out it would go. If it was a ball, you could say goodbye forever because the street was so steep it would roll on and only stop when it got as far as the park.

None of the teachers were Nazi's, but our headmaster was a coward and accepted any new measures without a murmur. He looked a bit like a pink pig with very thick lenses which gave him a queer expression.

One winter day mother, Tante Flora, Edith, Helmut, Fritz and I went for a hike in the Taunus. I can't recall the place we made for. All I know is that very early on I lost my walking stick (the handle was the horn of a Gemsbok and it had a bit of skin around the top). We were all walking in a forest. The trees of course were bare, but soon the light got dim when the sky covered itself and there was an eerie light - a sort of diffused glow. We came to a crossroad (path) and decided to take say, the left fork. It began to snow, silently every more thickly. It got colder and it was getting late. We did not reach our destination and realised we were lost. By now nothing looked the same any more. The new snow had changed everything. We could hear a dog barking somewhere in the distance. We also thought we could make out a train, but in whatever direction we turned we never seemed to get any nearer. We all were tired and fed up. Tante Flora was nearly in tears. I had frozen feet and we all wanted to get to a warm place and get our 'tea'. We trudged along

and eventually reached the crossroad we had passed before. Now which fork were we to take? No one remembered how we had gone before. With the equivalent of Enee, Meeny, Mini, Mo, we made a decision. I was lagging behind feeling sorry for myself when I suddenly stumbled over what seemed a tree root. I was nearly in tears though I didn't hurt myself. I was furious and wanted to kick the root that made me fall when, wonder upon wonder, the thing moved and turned out to be nothing less than my walking stick. Hurrah - not only had I been restored to my stick, which sported a modest few silver badges from places we had visited, but we also knew that we had taken the right turning. From then on we all got our second wind and arrived cold but cheerful at home for hot chocolate and rolls with jam. This is a story told Philip dozens and dozens of times when he was small. He never tired of it (I did).

One of our shorter and gentle hikes used to be to 'Friedrichsdorf'. To get there we had to pass through a wood on the outskirts of Homburg. Emerged from it one was in open farmland and in the late summer the yellow corn fields were gay with white daisies, blue cornflowers and scarlet poppies. Then through a spinney and then the small village where we went for coffee and cake. Friedrischdorf got its name from a duke name of Friedrich who allowed Huguenot refugees who were persecuted for the religious belief from France (quite a few went to South Africa hence the many French names). Nearly all the people there were of French stock and still spoke a sort of pigeon German mixed with a lot of French. They were bakers by trade and made rusks and pretzels.

We always used to shout into the spinney across the fields, on coming out of the wood, because there was an excellent echo. In the spring the ground in the wood was covered in delicate anemones. They were white with a blush of mauve underneath and the slightest breeze made them tremble with all their delicate lacy foliage. They are called amongst others 'wind flowers' or 'cuckoo flowers'. In this wood we also often heard the first cuckoo. Hearing the first one of the season, we always had to shake our purses, so that we would always have money for the rest of the year.

In winter Fritz and I used to have bouts of flu and ear ache. If we were sick together, we slept in one room and had a good time. Eugenie used to put an ironing board in front of Fritz's bed (how, I can't remember), so that her Fritzschen would fall out of bed. We used to lean it against a bed at an angle and then slide down.

Occasionally we got splinters into our bums, and of course always raced into bed if we heard any adults approaching down the long-crooked corridor. The walls in our bedroom and that of our parents did not have wall paper as apparently, they got damp and the paper peeled off. So, they were painted - ours pink and the parents' lilac. With stencils, the outlines of birds in flight were sprayed on in a slightly darker shade or was it silver and gold respectively? Horrid.

We had quite a few nannies in our time. I can recall only one with real clarity, that was Resi, whom I saw from time to time even when she left us because she was related to Eugenie. She had a round jolly face, blond hair and blue eyes and the pointed chin that gave a heart shaped look to her face, that all the Fischers seem to have (Eugenie's family). I recall that we had one girl who used to wear mother's clothes when we were away, the rest are a big blur.

Once Hitler came to power we became much more conscious than ever of being Jews and Dr Leibowitz who ran a Jewish Sanatorium became very popular as a Zionist and he inspired us all and we went to his Oneg Shabbats where he told us about Palestine, taught us Hebrew songs etc. He was a Latvian and had the mannerisms of the Eastern European Jews. They would shake while praying or rock forward and back slowly and completely lose themselves in their devotion. Leibowitz was a bachelor and was always dressed very nattily. He had a pointed short neat beard and we all found very amusing. We often, to start off with had the giggles because all his mannerisms were strange to us and the ignorant think strangeness funny. We eventually got used to him and all became exceedingly fond of him.

January, 1978 - Updating Memories: Frankfurt and the Nazi Periodhood Memories

It is many years ago that I started this book of memories and since then both of you have grown up and I may speak, in my mind to a slightly different audience. I have never got around to the Nazi period, something hindered me, but now I feel that I must try to speak about the patchy memories I have and the almost complete ignorance of the political motivations and results.

All I know is - that on a spring day in 1933 - the town was full of red flags with a black swastika on a white circular background. The brown shirted SA men marched through the streets shouting slogans, that people suddenly greeted one another (at first a few and timid by stretching out their right-hand calling 'Heil Hitler' (Hail Hitler)). I do remember that all that was preceded by a number of elections at which the Comunists and Nazi's fought in the streets and one heard slogans 'Juda verreche' (Jews perish) and down with the Jews etc. There was already an atmosphere of fearful anticipation. And then - it came - what I only partially understood, but which I knew was going to be bad for us: 'the people who - instead of going to Church on Sunday - went to Synagogue on Saturday'. That, at least to us children - till Hitler - was the only difference between us and the others. We had, naturally different festivals and at differently, but we thought we were Germans of Jewish religion as Eugenie was German on Catholic religion.

From then on - children used to call you 'Jude' which quickly became and felt like an insult. I remember when the Germans took over the Saarland which had been taken over by the French at the end of the first world war. I was in Hospital having my appendix out and because I caught a cold and got ear trouble had a mastoid operation as well - when the Germans took over Austria 'Zurüch ins Reich' 'back into the Reich' was the slogan. I recall earlier on when we still lived in Homburg the organised boycotts against Jews. You would hear lorry loads of SA men race through the town screaming hate slogans against the Jews, shooting into the air and I remember the horror it struck into my heart.

Hitler came to power just when I was 10 years old and started High School. At first most antisemitic actions were haphazard and amateurish as time went by and Hitler felt he had the German

(Arian) population in the palm of his hand it all got nastier, more efficient and coldly calculated. The boycotts were already countrywide and you would hear a column of SA men march up the street singing fighting songs - even the ones of leaving the sweethearts behind had a menace about them, and then a command yelled out, the column would stop and two would come away and post themselves in front of a Jewish shop. The sound of marching feet, the sudden stop, the command and sound of a couple of people walking towards your building, they still ring in my ears and bring back the horror one felt then. The boycott was conducted by plain intimidation. The men didn't attack anyone just standing by the entrance was quite enough, certainly in a small town like Homburg where everyone knew everybody. I recall only one woman who marched into our shop. She said to my father, 'I don't really want any shoes - I just wanted to show those bastard's that they couldn't intimidate me. She was a member of one of those non-conformist Christian sects, that have strong convictions and live by them. The Jehovah's Witnesses were themselves persecuted and Fritz met many in Buchenwald who, if anything, were treated even worse than the Jews. The boycotts worked even when the SA didn't stand at the door of the shop. People found it easier to just go to the opposition even if they had been our customers for years. In fact, most of the Germans capitulated in this way. It was so much simpler not to stand out and go against the crowd. Some comforted themselves by saying 'Hitler won't last, then all will be OK again'. They didn't realise that by their early cowardice they themselves helped him firmly into the saddle.

One day one heard, by word of mouth only, that the headstones in the Jewish cemetery had been broken or turned over. Immediately the rumour was countered that it had been done by the Communists. Fritz, who was always interested in old cemeteries and ancient monuments, but who'd been prevented from visiting the Jewish one (with Eugenie we saw every Catholic one) - by a custom amongst German Jews that one does not visit a grave yard as long as one has both parents alive, decided this was an extraordinary occasion that could supersede this tradition. He went with a friend and an Agfa box camera and took photos of our grandparents' grave (they had remained intact). He had them developed and printed by the local chemist up the street and a few days later a policeman who'd known our parents for years came to see my father. He was apologetic but said he'd been sent to

confiscate the photos (which incidentally were of very poor quality) as they might get abroad and be published as 'Grenelmärchen' (atrocity stories).My father handed over the pictures and negatives and forgot about them. He had, a few days earlier shown them to our landlord's son in law, laughingly (only 2 or three were of the graves) saying 'see my sons first efforts'. A young man who belonged to the SS who worked for Herr Becher, stood nearby and looked too. A few days passed

Edith, who always had a vivid imagination and whom no one took very seriously, woke one night (or thought she woke) and heard banging at the front door, then the splintering of wood, the tinkling of breaking glass then jack-booted steps along the 'long corridor', murmurs etc. She came to or woke up and rushed to our parents' bedroom woke my father telling him that people had broken in and would he please get up quickly.

He was rather dubious and took his time to put on his dressing gown and slippers. When they examined the flat, all was silent not a soul in sight, looking down the staircase, into the street - not a soul. He sent her back to bed and told her off. A few hours later she wakes - and hears the same sounds again, the smashing of wood and glass, the booted footsteps along the 'lang gang' (long corridor) only this time when she opened her eyes, her room was lit up and six SS men were standing by her bed with leather holsters that weren't empty on their polished belts. They yelled at her to get her father whom they knew had sent pictures of the cemetery to England and they appeared in the British press etc etc. They would not even leave the room to allow her out of bed and don a dressing gown - when she appeared once again at father's bedside, she really had a job to convince him that this time she wasn't hallucinating but that the SS had come to take him away.

Reluctantly, still cursing her he came out to find these thugs accusing him of exporting Grenelmärchen and they wanted to take him along. One already knew what their taking one along could mean. Father offered them the phone to ring the police to ascertain that, in fact, all the pictures had been taken away. After shouting abuse and argument, they decided to go away. This was, of course, still just an action done without orders from their authorities. In fact we were pretty certain that the young man who worked for Becher perhaps slightly drunk in a pub told these others about the pictures.

and they all decided to show this Jew what the SS could do, for a lark, as it were (to them at least).

They left and we discovered that they had smashed our front door, a partly glassed-in door. Early next morning we called our landlord who was appalled. My father told him that he wouldn't pay for the repair and the Landlord equally felt it wasn't an act of God (I wonder) and actually approached the SS headquarters who, still not as secure in the saddle as merely another year later, quietly paid up. I remember the blanket that hung in place of a door, can't remember whether anyone stayed away to guard the flat the next night. As I said a year later our landlord would not have had the courage to threaten to sue the SS, he would have quietly paid up or if he had been a Nazi would have made the Jew pay for it.

I recall sleeping with Eugenie in her attic bedroom, hearing the drunken Nazi's in the still of night, yelling outside the house, kill the Jews, kill Rothschild and the Jews across the road (forgot the name). One felt sick with fear. Eugenie was loyal to us through all these terrible times and many is the time that people called her a Jew whore. Fritz was often beaten up by bands of Hilter youth and while he wasn't easily frightened, he could never have stood up to several of them. I was never beaten but remember the sensation of fear if a child walked closely behind me.

My mother suffered a nervous breakdown which I imagine was a result of change of life, the shock of a whole town, or nearly all, turning against her when she had been a respected, well-liked,well-known member of the community. Another factor could have been how Uncle Julius, Helmut's father demeaned my mother, accusing her dragging down the family with her 'expensive tastes' when it was more like my father - the wastrel - couldn't make enough money to keep things shipshape.

In those few months that I got to know some aspects of my mother's life, she talked about the experience when she was in a mental home. They always sedated her and then, asleep she used to have the most horrible nightmares. She had all sorts of premonitions which she feared to come true. My sister would be

arrested by the Gestapo because of her association with a young communist, Fritz would go blind etc, etc. Now she also saw an old Jew down the Road dressed in his burial gown bidding her farewell. When she was a bit better this man died. Now she felt sure that her other premonitions would come true. When my brother who was so religious, he wouldn't switch on a light on the Sabbath, walked into a half-opened door in the dark, smashed his glasses and got splinters in his eye, she was certain this was the next prophecy to come true. She went through hell - until Fritz was taken to the doctor who removed the splinter with no ill effect. Perhaps that was the beginning of her real improvement. I don't know.When Hitler enforced the Nürnberg laws one of them decreed that only Arian women over the age of 40 were allowed to work as domestic servants for Jews. These Jews might commit 'Rassenschaude' 'Race defilement'. Eugenie was just over 40 and I felt my world had to come to an end. There was a date on which she was to have left and I walked around sick to the heart. It taught me what children go through at the loss of a mother. I think once the Nazi's had done a bit of arithmetic, they realised that there would be a lot of unemployed women, they changed the law to put up the limit to 45 and - Eugenie could stay. I remember hearing the news when at my friend Sese Marx' father's shop and while I did not like her father - because he told me the news I reached up and put my arms around his neck with Jubilation. The Nurnberg laws also resulted in Jews being thrown out of universities, newspapers, the stock exchange, I think also it stopped doctors from practising.

Due to the boycott, it was soon apparent that our business couldn't continue and we sold it at a bargain price - so many Jews were in the same position - and moved to Frankfurt. My father got an agency for a cigar firm and drove around the district in a newly acquired motor car (Opel or Ford I don't remember). I remember as if it were today my feeling that having to leave Bad Homburg was 'the end of my life'. I hardly knew what a large city looked like and was sure I'd never see a blade of grass again. I feared that I'd go into the country after months to find that Spring had been and gone, and that I had missed it. In fact, although we lived in a very old apartment building which had no central heating, only individual tiled stoves, the area was quiet, there was a crooked lilac tree by the front gate that covered itself in blossom in April. Around the block was a very large park (ironically it was bestowed to the City of Frankfurt by the Wealthy Rothschild from Frankfurt. In the spring the

scent of violets greeted one as one entered the Grüneburg Park. In fact, we were took us less than an hour to ride to Bad Homburg where we would leave our bikes and hike in the Taunus mountains.

It was decided that I learn a trade. Something to do with my hands as I was pretty deft with sewing, jig sawing, making little toys etc. I was not allowed to become a silversmith which I could have done under a very talented young man because of the great fat blonde wife of our Uncle Martin Siligman who was a doctor in Frankfurt

Ellen in Franfurt

told my mother that the man was a danger to young girls' virtue, a complete fabrication of this vulgar woman. So, we settled for dress making. As non-Jewish children had to do a year in the land army or national service apprentices could only start at age 15. I would have loved to work and farm - so as not to waste a year, I was employed by a woman who did exclusive knitted garments. Hand knitted with Ellen in Franfurt teams of women who worked from home.

Alice Plant hand not ever worked before. She was a very attractive woman whose husband had been a stockbroker. That stopped overnight and she started a business making clothes for the wealthy. She had clients who were the wives of Diplomats etc. We

did the knitted suits that were tailored like tweed suits knobbly with very artistic buttons made of raw wood or leather. Winter coats of very fine wool. Evening gowns of gossamer, lacy delicate patterns with underskirts of contrasting taffeta. Linen dresses for summer. The list is endless. She had excellent taste. She actually was a butchers' daughter and could be pretty vulgar but somehow managed to deal with people out of her range (often with sarcastic smile to me, who handed her pins,behind some awkward customers back. When my years was up I started a proper apprenticeship with the Bodenheimers who had a wealthy but very conventional customers. Two sisters and the ones' husband who was a proper tailor ran the 'Salon'. I was terrified of them all, especially the women who were tough cookies. They, must have been irritated beyond words with me. I was so shy I often lost my voice, which must have been infuriating. I think the only reason they didn't throw me out was because they could not fault my work,

One day I had to go to Hospital to have my appendix out. In those days that was at least a week in hospital. I wasn't allowed out of bed or move my legs for several days. I had a sand bag on my stomach to keep the wound from bursting (or so the surgeons thought). After a few days I got a cold and sore throat and then an earache. There were no antibiotics around then and I could only get Aspirin, sweating sessions and continued bed rest. The pain got so bad a specialist was called in and by the time they decided to operate I was in terrible shape. Unbelievable pain etc. The operation (through the back of the ear through the bone) was just in time as the danger was that the pus would erupt into the brain and that would have been fatal. I already was stone deaf on my right ear as the eardrum had been eaten away. In the thirteen bed ward, all the other patients prayed for me and were very upset on my behalf. I was the only one who wasn't worried.

Anyhow the operation was a success but a very lengthy business. When I eventually returned to work my bosses were very concerned. Initially worried for the health of their customers but they were also kind and understanding to me. As such I lost my fears of them and life at work became a lot easier.But not in life in general which turns to nightmarish. This is a translation from a diary I wrote in Northern Rhodesia, in a Copperfield Cold Storage Order Book. The stupid song of 'Verliebte Bimbambulla ruft am Abend Hulla Hulla ' takes me back to the night of November 10th

1938. Mother,Edith and myself are wandering through Frankfurt. It is 3am (night) and we don't know where we are heading for. Only one thing we know, that we have to go away from home where they might beat us to death. It is cold and the streets are unfamiliar. Tall, unfriendly (abweisende) buildings on either side and only the hollow ring of our feet on the cold pavement. Then suddenly an SS man appears and our hearts miss a beat - then he disappears and we sigh with relief.

Again and again, shapes appear and we are waiting to be accosted and to be arrested. What for we don't know, but then all that happened that day, what we had come up against and seen made no sense at all. After seemingly endless walking, the vicinity became familiar again and we ended up at the Jewish Hospital (Gageru Kranhenhaus) and we tried to get shelter there. The whole building was alive with

activity. In the corridors, crammed full with numbered women, crying children, old, rich, helpless people were accommodated on mattresses, chairs and beds. Many of them had been driven from their homes in the Pfalz (Country). They left as they stood and were warned not to return. Scores of young men, sat on the bare tiled floors. Their homes had been smashed and they had been put into the streets with absolutely nothing.

Now I see it again: 'It is morning on November 10th. As always, I leave my bike at 7.45 to go to work. I had made myself a new skirt which I intended to show my boss. I am passing the 'Westend Synagogue' and notice several policemen outside. I note it without an ill though. At work I want to demonstrate my handiwork when the other Jewish apprentices come crying up the stairs. 'The Börne Synagogue' is burning and the one on the Friedbeiger Anlage too and yet another'. Now I realise why there were Police near the one close to our home. No one knows why - they have been set alight deliberately - what does it mean? The Christian girls are all gossiping and giggling as if nothing had happened. I have to appear before the Employment Bureau to present my book. The boss gives me a few additional errands and I walk along the Guthentstrasse. Near the theatre (Schanspeilhaus) I notice a large group of people moving back and forth in front of a Jewish shop. I hear yelling and can distinguish people with huge sticks and stones smashing the display windows.Suddenly it all feels like a dream. The shouting seems far away. The people appear unreal and wooden. I have

the impression that they are all leaping in and out of the windows. I am waiting to wake up and move on quite mechanically. At the Employment Bureau a friendly civil servant stamps my book. He is sitting in a well heated sunny office. On his desk is his mid-morning sandwich. Am I dreaming. Can this be? There the mindless destruction and here – peace?

On the way back I pass other Jewish shops smashed. Glassless doors and windows of an upstairs restaurant stare like blind eyes on a side road which seems dead and is strewn with broken crockery. I have only one idea now - to get back. For the first time since I started my apprenticeship do I decide to disobey my boss and hasten back through a mob that yowls and shrieks. Yet there is still the fear of my boss, bigger than the unreal happenings outside. Customers are in the fitting room and nothing in the world would induce me to interrupt the little fat tyrants.In a daze I enter the work room, which, though nothing has altered, looks different to me. Strange, because it has not yet realised the things that I have just witnessed. The girls whisper and laugh, their hands are handling their work deftly as ever. From the ironing table the familiar smell of damp wool and stiffening wafts across. I don't belong any more. My thoughts are racing wildly while my hands more mechanically. I know that every stitch is wrong, but I don't care anymore. Someone addresses me and my voice fails me. Outwardly I am dumb while inside there is turmoil. I feel paralysed. I am unable to do anything. Then in comes the boss (a woman) and asks whether I have noticed anything unusual in town. First, I just nod and then it comes out like a flood. When I get to the description of the restaurant, the other boss (woman) cries out and runs out of the door shouting 'my boy, my poor boy'. He was an apprentice there. These were 'memories' many years ago when I lived in Northern Rhodesia and by now nothing is as vivid or as detailed in my mind any more.

Then father arrived at the Bodenhenners front door and 'ordered' me home, Contradicting my fear of the bosses - who seemed to me all powerful - it was my father who had to point out to the two sisters and the husband of the one, that this was not the time to play around. The things that were were happening around us made all their dress-making worries unimportant.

Father who was on a round trip to collect his 3 children from different parts of Frankfurt, just told me to 'get home' at once. I was in two minds about taking my bicycle, but the thought of, perhaps

never being able to get back to work and lose it, made me decide to ride home. I rode like the wind looking neither left nor right hoping no one would recognise I was a Jew.

When I got home Eugenie was in a state because Fritz had hardly got home when a message by phone was received that Tante Flora

Fritz Rothschild

(Helmut's mother) was in trouble, their shop had been smashed and Uncle Julius was taken away by the police. Fritz, who suddenly felt 'grown up', said he would go to Wiesbaden by train to assist Flora.

Eugenie, who thought of him as her blue-eyed boy, pleaded with him to wait till mother or Papa's return. But his mind was made up and he left. A little later mother came home unaware that anything unusual was happening - she had been to the Chiropodist and on her way back passed nothing untoward.

By lunch everybody had returned home and father decided that he would go to Wiesbaden and send Fritz back. Later at suppertime

that Eugenie was called to the phone by downstairs neighbors. I remember sitting round the kitchen table having a meal and Eugenie came back, white as a sheet. She said it was father speaking from Wiesbaden, calling to find out whether Fritz was back home now. She said he was not and asked when had he left Wiesbaden? The reply was - 'he never arrived here at all'. When Eugenie said that I felt sick and rushed to the loo to vomit.

Where could Fritz be, he had left in the morning - Wiesbaden was only about 30 km away? Then started the search and bit by bit we became aware that other men had disappeared or had been arrested. I cannot recall the sequence of events. I remember that a policeman came to our house looking for my father. 'He was in Wiesbaden' we said and we were told to get him to come to the police station to offer himself for arrest. Father could in fact have tried to hide with non-Jewish people - and I must say it was the bravest and most unselfish act of his life, he decided to give himself up. He felt that if he by chance were to be taken to the same place as Fritz he would be able to give him comfort and strength. So, on his returns, before he walked away from Freiherr-vom-Stein-Straße, he put on extra layers of clothes, so that he might be able to give some to Fritz - who only was wearing a thin raincoat when he set out to Wiesbaden. People who were arrested in our part of Germany ended up in Dauchau, Buchenwald and even Sachsenhausen. But he was taken to Buchenwald, where amazingly he did find Fritz.

Fritz's story goes like this. He made his way to the Hauptbahnhof (main railway station) in Frankfurt and boarded the train to Wiesbaden together with two Jewish boys he knew slightly. As they walked through the barrier in Wiesbaden Fritz noticed they'd fallen behind and turned round to look for them. They had been stopped by an SS man, who, when they noticed Fritz further along, asked whether he was Jewish too (he didn't look obviously Jewish with Grey eyes, very fair complexion and hair with fairish lights). When they answered to the affirmative, Fritz was called back. From then they were bundled into a van (I think) and taken to Wiesbaden jail. Coincidentally, uncle Julius (Helmut's father) ended in the same cell as Fritz. I remember him telling me about the desperate scribbles on the walls, scratched with fingernails, perhaps of other prisoners, That was all political it seemed. Then they were all loaded into cattle trucks.

I have forgotten much but what I remember is Fritz telling me about was the gauntlet they were made to run at Weimar Station (I think it was there), Ewhere on either side of the steps leading to the subway SS men stood on either side lashing out with rifle butts. It was the luck of the draw, who got through unscathed and who, once beaten was disabled and was thus attacked again and again till some died before ever reaching the carriages that took them to the concentration camp. The translation of the words over the entrance to Buchenwald (Beachwood) was 'My Country right or wrong'. The welcome there was violent and for many that place was the end of the line.Later on, my father arrived in that place too, although through quite a different route.

Somehow, as time went in incarceration - as Fritz said - they all got used to this terrible new life and measured everything according to the new scale of values. The food was rotten but then the Jehovah's Witnesses were even worse off and the Jewish prisoners put some of their leftover crusts into the coal sacks these people carried. There was one water tap for hundreds if not thousands of inmates. It was opened for one hour a day. This was not sufficient for everyone to get enough to drink. Four people shared a tin plate and one sip too many by one meant the last man got nothing. Many went mad with thirst.

The SS made a sport of it. They would shout from their observation towers – commanding a prisoner come to the fence which was separated by a ditch, which they were forbidden to cross. If a man did not cross, he was shot because he disobeyed orders, if he did, the same fate awaited him because he broke the camp rules.

Some in their despair raced across, jumped and killed themselves by touching the electrified fence. Once in a while a man would be pulled out of his bunk (we had more comfortable bunks for out potatoes in our cellar) and beaten to death. I remember Fritz telling me that first one heard the pleading and screams that rose and rose and then got fainter and fainter - then silence which meant death.

Also, they would let vicious dogs lose that just rushed into the barracks and got hold of prisoners and savaged them, many to death as well. Yet - Fritz said - in between they chatted, told jokes

and tried to find some balance in this cruel situation. It also was one of the coldest winters and every barrack (roughly put up in timber) had one stove for hundreds of people. They had one blanket, if they were lucky. Fritz had his toes frozen and nearly had to have them amputated. The toilet facilities consisted of a large long pit with a wooden superstructure through which one performed one's bodily functions. The latrine later on acquired a new significance as a rumour or story center. The few minutes on the latrine were whiled away relating stories heard, hinted at etc and it became the centre of information.

Helmut's father got ill - he died in Fritz's arms - of what? No one knows - people just perished like caged animals do. His death certificate said 'Kreislaufstöring' literally translated that means 'lack of circulation'. I expect that happens when someone hits you over the head or when due to any other cause, the heart stops. On the day uncle Julius died, over the loudspeaker system his name was called out - he was to be released.

At home we received a postcard with the printed message that the undersigned who was 'sitting herein', was not allowed to write but requested 10 marks. And it was signed by father. On examining the card, I discovered that the address (also written by father) had one word written in Fritz's handwriting. It was then that we knew that at least they were together. Mother went from office to office to secure the release of father and Fritz. Frantic telegrams were sent to Rhodesia (Southern) to obtain visas for father, Julius, Fritz and Helmut. Helmut was at home a little case packed, waiting day after day to be collected.

While our dear aunt Erika and her then lover Kurt Stein (later Kenneth Stone - now living in Düsseldorf, once more as Kurt Stein), had a little feeling for mother and Flora, they did instigate proceedings to get visas for the men, at least. They could be released if they presented proof they would emigrate.

Southern Rhodesia hadn't reached approval stage and yet things were set in motion with lawyers help (Ben Baron in Bulawayo) visas were obtained. As mentioned before, Julius was already dead by the time his name was called for release, as a result of these efforts. Incidentally the procedure to get the German authorities (the Gestapo) to issue release orders was very long winded. Edith

helped also, running around different offices My mother nearly despaired. Applications for father and Fritz were made at the same time. Five weeks after Fritz's disappearance, our doorbell rang.

We always looked out of the window to see who was calling. We weren't sure who it was, but the man downstairs was calling out 'it's Richard'. We pressed the button that electronically opened the downstairs front door and waited by our own, leaning over the landing, seeing the arm of the ascending person slide up the bannisters. And then - it was father!. His hair shaved like a convict, his ears standing away from his head which looked funny like that of a plucked chicken. Thin, yellow skinned – smelling - smelling of five weeks in the same clothes, of five weeks of unwashed body.

'Where is Fritz? cried out Eugenie and father said 'he'll come soon' which Eugenie in her distress interpreted - 'just behind me'. She waited and father had to put her right. Fritz wasn't released with him.

Father had a bath and food of which he could only eat little having been half starved for so long - within a few days father got very ill, with a high fever and wondered around the apartment with wild looking eyes.

Still no Fritz. Mother went to the Gestapo again, begged, pleaded. The man she spoke to told her he could do nothing - it had to go to a higher authority. Mother said, 'but I was told you were the highest authority'. Then in anguish and anger, she called out 'What use is it, my trying to appeal to your humanity - you haven't got any - my son is very young - he has seen his uncle die - he will perish too' (This in response to the man's remark - 'your son is young, he will be ok). She was just turning to go away and the man going up a winding iron winding iron staircase when he turned around and in a different voice said 'Maybe he'll come home sooner than you think' - it was that day that Fritz's release was signed. Of course, we didn't know that and everyday was a nightmare.

A young teacher friend of my sister Edith, who'd been a communist for years sent a message asking her to come to see him. Father was furious at her being 'compromised' by knowing a communist, forbade her. Day after day messages arrived and eventually father, not knowing what was so urgent, went to see him. This friend Karl Cohen told my father that he too had been in Buchenwald and

had seen Fritz before he was released. He saw Fritz distraught over the death of Julius and he feared that would destroy Fritz. He told father that he just had to get Fritz out - because, once you were emotionally disturbed, the Gestapo never released you, just as they didn't release people who had been injured. Father, who had told no one in the family of the horror of Buchenwald nearly went out of his mind. All he had said was that it was 'tough'. He couldn't confide in any of us without revealing the ghastliness of the conditions. This would have driven my mother to complete despair. She was in Wiesbaden helping her sister, Flora (Helmut's mother).

He came back from Karl Cohens place and rushed to town to the British Consulate, It was Christmas Eve. He was told to return after Christmas, We didn't understand, but he was in such a disturbed mood he went later that evening directly to the consul's house to plead with him. He asked him to intercede on Fritz's behalf. Incidentally - the British Consulate was full of Jews whom the Consular staff looked after to prevent the Nazi's from arresting them. The Consulate was legally British Territory and the German authorities had no jurisdiction over it. Father eventually returned home and went to bed. Though I had intended to accompany Eugenie to midnight mass we stayed home, worried about fathers' sanity. We also went to bed.

In the middle of the night, we were woken by a scream from father's bedroom. We jumped out of bed and found father sitting up in bed with an expression of horror or insanity on his emaciated face, his eyes deep in their sockets, coal black and wide open. But there at the end of his bed was the figure of Fritz - shaved, pathetic with the same smell (now of seven weeks of unwashed body).

Fritz and one more man were the only ones released that Christmas Eve. Throughout the entire ordeal - though everything else had been taken from him - he had nursed the front door keys of our flat. He had returned and let himself into it silently and walked into our parents' bedroom. Father who had been nearly insane with worry - woke up - the light was on and - there was Fritz. He was convinced that he was mad and Fritz was simply a figment of his imagination. Mother was informed the next day.

Father relieved her from her helping position in Wiesbaden. Fritz it seems told mother everything he had been through. All he had

seen, experienced and heard. He spoke practically non-stop for several nights.

We soon discovered that his feet, now in a warmed apartment, hurt terribly and the doctor said it was frost bite. His toes were nearly black. The treatment, which saved his toes was bathing them in urine several times a day. He also came out in painful boils which were the result of malnutrition and insanitary conditions.

Edith by then had already gone London - to be a 'nursery governess' to the Silbermans youngest boy.

By now visas for 'Northern Rhodesia had been obtained and had been ready for some time, Helmut had left Germany earlier - as soon as he could get a boat. I shall never forget the bitterly cold railway station where we made our farewells. I think he got his boat in Hamburg. Later on, we realised that it was on that day that his father had died in Fritz's arms.

Since Fritz was in bed with his bad toes, he was granted an extension to his stay at home, before leaving Germany. He was originally to have left within four weeks. Once he was better, he went to town to the HAPAG German Shipping line to book his and fathers passage on the USSUKUMA from Hamburg via Cape Town to Beira.

It was his first venture into the city and he planned additionally to get himself some new clothes for the journey. At the Shipping line offices mother spoke to the manager who told her that a German official had been assassinated in Austria and the Nazis would use this to stage a program of arrests again. The former program was 'ostensibly' in response to the assassination of a diplomat in Paris by a 17-year- old Polish boy named Grynszpan. This boy's parents had been hauled out of their beds (as were hundreds of other Polish Jews and were put into cattle trucks as they stood. They were pushed across the Polish border where they had been left in no-man's-land. This was an action by the Germans to forestall being left with stateless Jews. Many antisemitic (especially rural) Poles held to the medieval 'blood libel' myth – namely that Jews killed Christian children to use their blood in rituals or bake into Matzos, around Passover. The Polish government had put out a decree that

all Polish Jews who did not return to Poland within a very short time span would lose their Polish nationality. The Germans had never naturalised these Jews and even their children who were born in Germany spoke only German, were not German. The Nazi's not relishing the idea of being 'lumbered with this scum', pushed them across the border a few days before the deadline.

The tailor who was making a suite for Fritz had been taken in this sweep and when the police let mother into their home and workshop to collect the garments, she noticed they'd been taken in the middle of a meal that had gone bad still on the table.

The Grynszpan boy, hearing about his family's suffering at the borders, got hold of a gun and walked into the Germany Embassy in Paris and shot the first man he came across. Ironically this man was not a Nazi nor were his parents who did not attend the 'state funeral' accorded to their son.

The managers at the shipping line suggested that, perhaps Fritz did not wait another 4 weeks till the Ussukum sailed. Fritz was terribly depressed and declined the shopping spree. On the way home he decided to leave 'that night'. The thought of going back to the concentration camp was so horrifying that he could not stand another day in Germany. Now, because he had been arrested at a railway station, he feared that the same would happen again. My mother organised a taxi, Eugenie filled a suitcase (no one realised it was her own) and mother and Fritz left that night at 9pm on the long drive (something unheard of in those days) to Aachen or rather the nearby small town of Stolberg where Uncle Leo and Tante Meta (Walters parents) lived. It was close to the Dutch border.

Since Fritz had a temporary visa for Britain (the parents of a school friend who lived in Hampstead (11 Templewood Avenue) had procured it for him, in case had nowhere else to go) he was able to pass into Holland quite easily.

Also, Leo knew all the ropes, having, more wisely than my parents, smuggled money and jewellery out of Germany. Leo helped him across the border and the next day I presume, Fritz crossed the channel and arrived in London.

It was while he stayed there, he procured a temporary visa for me

(for 2 years). But for that - I wouldn't be alive today - you children would not exist - and I would not be able to write all this. What a strange thought.

What one seemingly innocuous action carried in its wake. I hope you (my children) are glad to be alive. I certainly am, though there were periods in my life when I could easily have thrown in the sponge. When your father died - but for you two - I could cheerfully have died then. I am glad I never had the choice; I am more than happy to have you both and happy to be alive,taking part in this exciting adventure of 'living'. Happy because I am lucky to have children to give me pleasure and deep satisfaction.

My mother wasn't as fortunate and I often think of the cruel fate that gave her an unhappy marriage, an unfulfilled life in her occupation, estrangement from her children, near destitution and daily fear, after we all left and then – death, presumably in the gas chambers.

I really hardly knew my mother. Eugenie or one of a string of nannies, looked after us. Eugenie beat us and since she was there from the day we were born; she was a constant factor in our lives. That is Fritz's and mine.

Edith was already at school when Eugenie came to work for our parents. Originally it was Frau Amendt who worked for my maternal grandparents (Jacob Strauss and his wife). When she fell pregnant (Frau Amendt) she introduced her cousin Eugenie Anna Philippi, who then stayed for over 20 years. Frau Amendt (Eva) the mother of Käthe König and Anni Dinges and Heinz Amendt, Stefan and Hans, Georgs father) later on came to the house to do the washing. There was a wash house in Louisenstrasse 35 on the ground floor going on to the cobbled (then) yard. It had a large cooper cauldron built into a stove in which all the white washing was boiled (after being soaked in cold water over night). It was then transferred with the help of a big stick into huge wooden tubs and after cooling off a little, scrubbed with a brush on a wooden board placed on a slant inside the tub. After rinsing till the water was free of soap it was all carried to the back of the garden where there was a latticed shed with a tarred roof which was full of rows of stretched wires that received the washing so that it could dry.

In winter the washing would freeze hard and the sight of my

grandfather's long-legged underpants frozen solid always made us roar with laughter. It was amongst the wet sheets hung up that Wilhelm Lüdeche, piano teacher and leader of the band of the voluntary fire brigade - made me take my bloomers off to examine my anatomy, which was, as he discovered, quite different from his. This in turn caused a great deal of kafuffle and was considered a most disgusting act on this boy's part (barely two years older than myself) and my parents were not on speaking terms with the Lüdeche's for some time. However, living in the same house, playing with the same children, it was rather difficult for us to be kept apart for long. Anyhow, I expect Wilhelms curiosity (having no sister) had been satisfied, so I expect I was safe from this debauched boy.

Being an only child, he was rather spoilt and was, in fact quite an aggressive person. Nevertheless, we still played together for many more years. Later on, when the Nazi's were in the ascendence he used to taunt us with 'Judd Scheiss in die Dutt' (Jew shit in the bag - it rhymed). We used to reply 'Christ scheiss in die kist' (Christian shit in the box). So, we were quits. Still later he became a member of the Hitler youth and, anyway we moved to Frankfurt - I have strayed somewhat from the subject of my mother.Bella Strauss and her sister Flora were both brought up very properly, went to a special school for young ladies, learnt French and English and other subjects.

Mother wanted to be a teacher but that, my dear, was not 'proper' for a good Jewish middle class girl. When, as I mentioned before, the man who wanted to marry her, was not allowed to by his parents, it looked a bit as though Bella might be left on the shelf. Flora married a hard-working singularly colourless character Julius Rothschild. He came from a large family from Alsfeld, a very picturesque medieval town North of Bad Homburg. Julius had had a good education. When one had to think hard to find a husband for Bella who was nearly 25 years old, Zacharias, the younger - good looking brother, was considered.

Who made the choice I don't know. Certainly, our mother had little to do with it. She renamed him Richard, apparently hating the name Zacharias (Rias for short). This good looking carefree young man, with little or no commercial training was introduced into the secret workings of Jacob Strauss' shop selling shoes and underwear for

men. Old Jacob Strauss, whom I remember as a small white haired, hunchbacked gentleman with a little goatee beard, probably never gave that whipper snapper, son-in-law a chance to make any decisions in the business. My grandparents lived with mother and father until their death, both having lingering diseases and needed nursing for long periods up to their deaths. This fact, coupled with the already existing incompatibility of my parents, made it even more difficult for father and mother to come a bit closer as a couple.

They were never alone. Father probably, soon developed an inferiority complex having had the barest minimum of education whilst mother had been brought up on Goethe and Shakespeare, the history of art and music etc. All through my childhood the Leitmotif through any quarrel was 'Of course I haven't been to High School', 'Of course I haven't matriculated', 'I haven't learnt French' etc. Edith had the best education - she was just ready to go to university when the Nazi's barred all Jews from those institutions. Nevertheless, she had the best education which included private piano lessons, painting lessons etc. Consequently, she got the worst of father's wrath. Fritz only did his Einjähriges, the equivalent of 'O' levels, but he made up for it reading and studying on his own. He was forever buried in books and didn't get into mischief like other 'normal' boys = as father thought of them.

Fritz was so good at School he was allowed to ship one class and had to have private tuition to bring him up to date. So, he too was a constant reminder of fathers limited background. When it came to 'knöpfchen' (little button) there was little sense in her doing more than the bare minimum and so I left school at 14 after the compulsory 8 years of school. I constituted the least threat to fathers' ego, so perhaps got less of his anger, although I got into trouble together with Fritz and much to my father's fury, instead of fearing chastisement, was in fits of giggles with Fritz. We never really seemed to mind or bother about getting hidings from father. We were so convinced that father would hit us whether we were guilt or not, we just accepted it most of the time with certain disdain. None of this helped our father's ego.

After Fritz had left Germany, father got ready to leave on the 'Ussukuma' (Deutsche Ost Afrika Line). Strange, I have no recollection of his leaving at all. All I know is that mother and I were left and then Tante Flora moved in with us. She took over

my parents' bedroom and it was full of her prized possessions. On the walls were Persian carpets. Again, this period is quite vague in my memory. All I recall is the fact that from the time Fritz got the 'trainee job' for me in London and with that a visa for 2 years, mother was anxious that I should leave.

My reasons for not wanting to go were many fold. First, I think there was the fear of a strange country, strange people, facing things alone. Then to leave mother, the last of the family, whom I had only just begun to get closer to but more than that to leave Eugenie who was the closest person I know and whom I felt I would never see again.

Strange the fate I saw in front of me. Mother I felt sure I'd eventually meet in Africa. That was merely a question of time, but Eugenie 'I would never see again'. As a German she could not leave the country. It all turned out so very different. Mother it appears ended up in the gas chambers in Poland, Eugenie stayed on in Homburg and I had the good fortune to get into contact again and saw her on several trips overseas and had her as a visitor to Rhodesia only weeks after David died.

Ellen in Frankfurt - revealing insecurity of the time.

Departure from Germany to England

Mother was at me day after day to make me leave Germany and in the end, I realised that she would be happier if I up and left.

So, I got ready, had clothes made, old hand me downs altered, bought myself, out of all the pennies I had gotten as tips as an apprentice, the felt flowers I'd made and sold to friends (it was the fashion to wear artificial flowers in the buttonhole of a suit or dress) or little sewing jobs, and with a gift from Tante Flora, a very modern sewing machine. It was a German Singer machine and the first 'household' one that had a built-in zig zag mechanism and could make button holes. This machine together with my feather-bed and pillow, a few sheets and other things were packed in a large wooden box made by Anni and Koethe's uncle Fischer from Pfaffenwiesbach.I left by train from Frankfurt on - I think - July 28th 1939. Mother had arranged I should travel together with a girlhood friend of hers (Lydia) who accompanied Jewish children who were (temporarily) adopted by British families. Mother thought it would be safer for me to travel with this lot. Strange, I do not really remember the farewell, which must have been heart rending. I do not even remember who saw me off. Yet I recall vividly the children who were in the compartment with me, One little fat boy who was dressed like a little adult (like the kids in the film Bugsy Malone). He could not have been more than 6-8 years old. Immediately even before the train left the station, he got out a pack of cards and dealt them to the other kids like an old hand. I remember feeling terribly upset by the attitude of all the children who barely gave their parents a glance. As if they were going away for a weekend on a visit. Here these parents sent their children abroad to be looked after by strangers so that they would not fall victims to the Nazi's. Even then I wondered whether they would ever see each other again. I suppose the majority never saw their parents again because the war broke out just a few days over a month later. Strange what our memory selects. Surely my leaving home for unknown shores, the fear of a new life should have made me remember those I was leaving behind? Did I feel guilty leaving them and because of that wipe out the memory? I shall never know.

The journey through Germany was tense. The woman who looked after the children closed the windows at every station to avoid

unpleasantness's. The children were not completely unaware of all that and clambered over each other, got sticky with sweets and gilled and laughed. To me this was a nightmare, knowing the realities of the situation, the heartbroken parents left behind. We crossed the German-Dutch border at Emmerich and again it was hard to curb the children so that the German border police did not get nasty. And then we were in Holland. Immediately we crossed the border everything changed. The landscape flat, divided into large squares with canals dividing the land with stagnant green algae covered water. Brighter and cleaner cows, sparkling houses, windmills. I recall vaguely that at Rotterdam some kind ladies gave us drinks and something to eat. Then on to Hoch van Holland and into the ship that was to take us across the channel to our new home. It was evening and I can't remember seeing any water at all. We were all herded downstairs into bunks and I lay awake all night waiting to be seasick (I'd always been car and train sick). Next morning, we reached Harwick. It was a grey, drizzly day and was convinced I'd never see the sun again, having heard of the awful English weather. We went through immigration and were looked over by the health authorities, then in a shed by the quay side we were given mugs of tea and bread. The tea which I tried black as we had it at home was so strong, I couldn't swallow it. I added milk to make it weaker which I found revolting. The bread, white sandwich type to me was so dry and tasteless I could barely swallow it. Where had I come to? The boat train that took us to London was very luxurious, I felt even 1st class in Germany wasn't so smart but it was grey and wet and once in a while the clouds allowed a little extra light to penetrate and that milky light reminded me yet again of the sun I thought I'd left behind forever - I still sometimes get reminded of this, when I stand on the Kopje in Harare, on a dull day yet a little light penetrates the clouds with pale white shafts almost like on a religious Sunday school picture with a dove in the sky.

As we sped towards London through blackened industrial areas, I was very dejected and the factories near Liverpool Street station, the warehouses and station buildings looked so old and dilapidated, I could not believe we were entering the largest city in the world (in area). As for the station, it was so small, so scruffy, so completely unimposing, I was convinced that we'd been shunted to some deserted station because there had been, maybe an

accident at the real station which I imagined shiny and lofty with glass domes and bright brass fittings and gay kiosks. It was - in fact, the correct station and later on realised that London had no such thing as a Central, main station and that the others were equally squalid and scruffy. As the train drew to a halt there was my sister Edith. In a pale beige McIntosh (which in various stages of scruffiness, I realised were the national dress of Londoners). As a belt she had wound around her waist a royal blue plaited wool sash and still have this sash and wear it. She had her hair piled on top of her head in Geisha fashion and wore a bright cyclamen lipstick. Was I glad to see her. There was still the business of children getting sorted out and though officially I wasn't one of them, somehow was ushered into a large hall where the prospective parents were introduced to their charges. It was a bit like a lottery, I felt. Did these people know what child had been allotted to them? There was an exceptionally fat ugly girl and I wondered whether her foster parents' heart sank at the sight of her. Also, the rather pompous little fat boy in my compartment with waistcoat and large wrist watch.

When it was all over, we got on to the underground which at the station was also shabby. My first experience of the tube which later on became a friendly known entity - at least the Northern line did. We came up at Hampstead which Edith told me was the deepest in London and from there we made our way by bus to the nearest stop Heath Drive (which I found very difficult to pronounce). 11 Templewood Avenue was a little cottage compared to the turreted mansion of the Silbermanns in Homburg. My sister was nursery governess to the little boy Freddy. He was away in America with his mother so Edith was completely free. Only Mr Silbermann was there and we rarely saw him. We ate with the rest of the domestic staff. The job I was supposed to get lasted exactly 4 days because the 'Atelier' closed down for the summer. It was an upstairs place with a little boutique downstairs. The shop window had one very expensive dress in it with a hat and gloves to match. It was on the corner of Vere Street an extension of Bond Street opposite Marshall and Snelgrove. I felt very shy and couldn't speak any English. One of the girls gave me a ginger biscuit which was something quite new to me. I don't even recall the name of the place I worked nor the name of the owners, nor what they looked like. All I see when I think of the place is mauve wool. I must have done some work on a mauve garment. Outside Marshal and Snelgrove sat a beggar playing the bagpipe. He played all day - It was only years later

when your father joined the Defense Force in Chingola and joined the pipe band, that I discovered that pipers actually play tunes. So, after 4 days I was out of work. I worked for one day in a dress factory where the sewing machines went like racing cars and I had been trained to work so pernickety and carefully, I couldn't cope at all.

Then Edith, who had to go with me whenever I looked for a job (to interpret) got fed-up. She wanted to enjoy her holiday so we just went all over London Hide Park most of the time. I think she was in quest for a male and so I never saw any of the sights of London. We went to several artist friends of hers and I was her little shadow. I am sure I must have been a great nuisance to her, but she never showed it. I came across racial discrimination outside of Germany for the first time. We were invited to a house party and one of the guests brought an Indian student. The hostess was furious. I was shocked.

The IRA were very much in evidence in London in 1939. They left bombs in underground stations, in letter boxes, phone booths. Edith loved mysteries and intrigues and, on several occasions, purposely acted in a suspicious way in order to be suspected. Once a man followed us and she got such a fright we eventually got on to a bus and lost him. She sort of 'hung' around places going into phone booths without apparently phoning and really hoped to be picked up as an IRA member, then dramatically able to prove that she was just a poor refugee from Nazi oppression. At Lyons near Marble Arch, I had my first 'sandwich' and a ham one at that. That constituted my first unilateral action.

When the Germans marched into Poland, we were convinced it was the end of Europe or indeed the Western world. The English seemed so completely blissfully unaware of the threat of the Nazis one felt sure that they were wholly unprepared. When Britain declared war on Germany on September 3rd, Edith decided that London was too dangerous a place to stay. Her boss was away and almost overnight she decided to leave and go 'North' where she knew a Jewish fellow in Sunderland. She just left a note for her boss. He must have been furious. After all they had given her a job to get her out of Germany and there she just buzzed-off without any

your leave. Another Edith Baum (I think she was an opera Singer) also decided London was too risky so 3 tickets were purchased and off we went to Sunderland. When we arrived at the young man's home his parents were most embarrassed (and so was the young man). They gave us tea and advised us to go on to a place called Keswick which would be safer because of all cities in the UK that were bombed in World War I, Sunderland was one of the few.

Strange, I suppose my sister was always something of a physical coward while she had great moral courage, something I couldn't boast of. Anyway, off we went on the train. As we got well out of Sunderland a horrible smoky industrial town, the country began to change. Eventually we entered mountains and valleys with green, green meadows such as I had only seen on boxes of cheese from Switzerland. We reached Keswick with blue skies and sunshine and the whole area was so beautiful it was like arriving on a holiday. A funny little man called Postlethwaite advised us to see a Mrs Moffat in Standish Street who rented us a room with one large double bed. So, all three E's slept in that. Mrs Moffat was a funny old woman who had a little wart in the shape of a little worm which was below her neck and which looked very well cared for. You felt she washed it with care - lifted it to wash underneath and powder it in the same way placing it gently back on her upper chest. She had a parrot called Polly and lived downstairs most in her little kitchen with an open hearth, an iron water kettle hanging over it and a small oven next to it with a hob to keep things warm.

All three of us signed on for National service and since my sister had no skills, nor did the other Edith, I was the only one who was called upon to help in the war effort. I was assigned to make and alter clothes for evacuated children from the slums of Newcastle who were living at Longholm - a castle like Estate by Derwent Water which belonged to Lord Rochdale who being a Sir by succession and making lots of money out of cotton spinning, became Lord. I sometimes walked to Lingholm from the village with the evacuated children and they were either pathetic or very tough. I believe when they first arrived at Lingholm they were afraid to sleep in a bed by themselves, never heard of toilet paper and ate like little savages. From the poorest slums they were whipped away to this beautiful spot in the country, a nanny to look after them, nourishing clean food, clean clothes and bed linen. I wondered whether Lady Rochdale wasn't breeding the revolutions that would

one day fight her, under her own roof. All the same the old lady must have been quite stingy. The kids had (at least to start off with) one set of clothes and they had to stay in bed while they were washed. I felt so bad about it and went scrounging from the few people I knew in the village and added some of my own clothes. Far from being embarrassed to accept these things Lady Rochdale was delighted and allocated one garment to each child. She was a very little white-haired lady, could have been a pensioned off old school teacher to judge by her clothes. All the same the children were very much in awe of her and curtsied and addressed her as 'My Lady'. I - bolshie as I was, would not call her that in the foolish hope (and fear) of starting some argument. I am sure she never noticed it and did not care in the slightest. The two Ediths and myself lived for several weeks off the savings of both and wandered around the beautiful countryside. We would buy a loaf of home-made bread and gather berries in the hills for a meal. We went up Skiddaw amongst the horned mountains sheep in heather and bracken covered mountainsides. We got to know an Austrian couple Mr and Mrs Körösi who were also refugees and whom Lady Rochdale supported. Grete Körösi. was then about 25 and had two young children. Her husband was fifty and as he did not want to accept charity, offered to work for Lady Rochdale. She made him Butler.

We also met a Miss Marshall, a very tall white haired, pale skinned blue-eyed woman, who never wore anything but corduroy pinafore dresses, royal blue, bottle green, wine red with silk paisley patterned blouses to match. She owned a beautiful house in large grounds next to Lingholm, a place called Hawse End. She had been a suffragette, was a socialist, had been present at the Geneva Convention after World War I and had opened her house to Sudeten German socialist refugees. She invited us for tea one day and I was very impressed that she insisted on being called Miss Marshall (in Germany once one was getting on a bit, one was called Mrs irrespective of whether one had a husband or not). We were given long forks and toasted raisin bread over the open fire in her dining room which was buttered while hot and sprinkled with sugar and cinnamon - not the dining room. We also had our first China tea.

Since the phoney war seemed to go on and on the other Edith decided to go back to London to her boyfriend Fritz Shames, an

artist who, she knew wouldn't remain without a woman for long. Then my sister got news that her visa for the USA was ready. (She'd applied a few years previously) and so she had to get ready to leave. I saw her off at the little station to get the train to London and thence, in a convoy, to America. By the time she left we had no more money except for what I earned with my bit of dress making and sundry jobs for Lady Rochdale. So, all we had Edith had to take on that long journey and I was left with 12\- (shillings) and the rent at the end of the week was 10\-(ten shillings), the gas 2\- (two shillings) and the coal 2\-. In some ways I felt quite elated to be on my own for the first time, to be master of my own destiny. I was both frightened to be left and yet felt the challenge to cope on my own. Of course, I was hopelessly inadequate. Couldn't speak English, wasn't good enough as a dressmaker (had hardly a year's apprenticeship) and generally was a frightened little mouse. I never earned enough to pay the rent and eat adequately. So I was continuously hungry. I'd buy the cream cakes in the local bakery Saturday lunch time when they would flog them for very little as they didn't keep them till Monday. Once or twice, I met Lady Rochdale in the village and she asked me to have lunch with the children who ate at the Women's Institute. What a feast, oxtail soup with a large potato in it and banana custard. Once in a while I'd try to meet her there ostensibly to ask something but really hoping she'd invite me to eat. Sometimes I'd buy a potato pie for a meal or I'd boil rice and concoct a gravy out of friend onions and flour and eat that. Sometimes I'd get 2d worth of chips. Fish was too dear - it was 6d.

Winter came and I'd walk by the lake shore and feel an almost religious awe at the beauty. Hoare frost on the tree branches and grass glistening in the sunshine. I am quite convinced that my hunger heightened my perception of beauty. Once in a while a shaggy white dog would walk along with me. What a comfort to have a creature that was happy to be with me. Also, to meet a friendly dog. In Germany all dogs seemed vicious - I started to write a diary to which I confided all my hopes and fears. All the things I was going to do, the fears I was going to conquer.

At Xmas Miss Marshall asked me to visit at Hawse End. I looked forward to that. In the meantime, the snow had come and the lake was frozen over. Once when I was visiting Hawse End, which was on the opposite side of the Lake from Keswick, I decided instead of walking all the way around the lake past Portinscale, I'd walk across

the lake. My landlady thought I was mad - 'What - without skate?' Why not thought clever me? I wore my heavy boots (ski boots inherited from my sister) and on a beautiful sunny day started to make my way across the lake. While I was in the area where people skated, I was ok but once away from it the surface of the lake was like glass. I spent more time on my bottom than on my feet. The sun was quite low already maybe 2 or 3 in the afternoon and the lake looked like a huge mirror reflecting the brilliant light. I made little progress and decided to take my boots off. I walked in my heavy woollen socks and never slipped again and arrived with warm feet. Halfway across the ice was so clear that one could see the bottom of the lake, the plants and all. It was really quite frightening for I did not know whether the ice was an inch or a foot thick and whether it

Lake District

would crack under my weight.

When Christmas came Miss Marshall arranged for the laundry man to give me a lift with my little suitcase. When we started up hill, the road was so deep in snow he said 'Sorry you've got to walk from here!' Which I did and found it very exhausting in the deep snow but exhilarating as well. I arrived at tea time when it was almost dark and all the Czechs with a sprinkling of Austrian were sitting around a roaring fire in the delightful large typically English drawing room. Large, comfortable arm chairs and settees covered in faded

floral linen. A piano (which Miss Marshall I think, played quite well). It had a large (was it a bow window?). It had windows all round with window seats looking over the sloping lawns down to the lake. I was given a charming little room with a minute fire place. On my first night I found a minuscule fire in it and a luke warm hot water bottle in my bed. My first English made bed. The sheets were of starched linen and they felt like ice. Instead of a feather bed that lies all around the curves of your body, the sheets were tightly drawn across the mattress and there was air - cold air - all around me. The two thin blankets didn't keep the cold out. The little token fire looked pretty but gave no warmth and soon went out. I spent the night teeth chattering till in the early hours of the morning I ripped off the blankets and wrapped myself in them. Fortunately, Miss Marshall asked me next morning had I been warm and very shyly I asked whether I could have some more blankets. It was beautiful at Hawse End and there were several young boys. So, I had rather a good time as the only unattached female. I loved having three square meals a day and for the first time in my life I ate everything. Gone was the finicky spoilt Ellen who'd fish out any bits of tomato skin from the soup, who wouldn't eat fat on meat, who couldn't eat porridge and God knows what else. Every meal was a celebration and I only dreaded going back to my poverty and hunger again. Whether Miss Marshall became aware of the fact that I never had enough to eat I don't know, but soon after I returned to Standish Street, she asked whether I wanted to come and live with them at Hawes End. All I needed to contribute to the housekeeping was 15 shillings a week (she gave her house free) which was the amount the Czech government paid for every one of their Nationals. The money went quite far when we had more than a dozen people but so far when we were less. Anyway, we lived largely on starchy food. Lots of potatoes with the fat recovered from pork sausages, poured over them so, for the first time in my life I put on weight.

I lived at Hawes End about six months. During that time, I fell in love with Erwin because he was the first boy who'd ever kissed me (he kissed every half way pretty girl he got a chance to). Then with Bondi the short, dark haired, fiery eyed passionate Hungarian student. I met Wenzel Jacksch - - the leader of the Sudeten Socialist who addressed me as 'Comrade' and was quite used to be revered by all his followers and thought it not remiss to accept a seat from a bent old man, many years his senior. I was shocked. I was such a starry-eyed idealist. Socialists had to be kind, generous,

good hearted and modest.

Hawse End was a beautiful place. The house built of the local grey stone was inviting and warm it stood on a slope overlooking lawns that led down to the Lake, which of all the Lakes in Cumberland was the bluest. In spring the lawns were waist high in Daffodils later on to be replaced by Marguerites. By the landing stage and boat house were very tall redwood trees that had been planted at Miss Marshalls and her brothers. She was then over 60 years old. We used to go into Keswick on rowing boats and I got quite adept at handling one because the lake was rather treacherous and storms could upset a boat easily. In fact, we were told that the captain of a big ocean-going liner was drowned in Lake Derwentwater. My room faced the slopes of 'cat bells'. The hill behind the house and in spring I could see the new lambs, rabbits and pheasants from my bed. The countryside was incredibly beautiful and I thanked my fate (or Edith) that planted me there instead of the huge city of London.

The population of Hawse End was varied and people came and went. Once we had the leader of the Communist party convalescing after a suicide attempt. Believe it or not, everybody shunned him. I was the only one who talked to him. I had no idea of political intrigue and jealousy. I could not understand that socialists did not feel kinship with communists, who to my naive mind, were

not so very different. I had the feeling that the petty socialists would have found more compassion with a Nazi.

I made firm friends with Grete Körösi, who lived in a stone cottage at Lingholme just next door. I even slept at her place when her husband Victor, along with many refugees, was interned. She was the first real friend I ever had and since she was about 9 years older than I was, was to some extent a substitute mother who more than once had to scold me. She lent me books and also shared my love of art. I lived the unhappy life of Myshkin the main character of 'The Idiot' by Dostoevsky, as if he lived inside me. I first read Tolstoi's 'Familienglück' (Family Happiness) which I still love. She introduced me to Lafcadio Hearn and Edgar Allen Poe and because she had a strange love of fear, made me read all their creepy stories, late at night when she would then be scared to go upstairs to bed by herself. One night we'd been sitting by the old-fashioned open kitchen fire, rather late, I think she'd made me read 'the Pit and the Pendulum' when she decided to make a last cup of tea. She went into the room next to kitchen to fetch the cups, when she shot back into the kitchen - 'there's someone in the next room' white as a sheet. One of us carried the boiling kettle the other the iron poker and thus armed we went next door - across the room to switch on the light - nothing. Later on when we decided to have some of her freshly baked bread with some home-made Damson Jam, we found the cause of her fright. It was one little mouse that had fallen into the jam jar and standing on its hind legs and cover with jam was trying to get out.

At night she'd come into my bedroom, pull me out of bed and drag me to the open window that had a beautiful view over the tall trees and the lake and would tell me to listen to 'enemy planes' in the distance. I was usually to sleepy t either her nor want to hear them but had to agree with her before I could get back into my cosy bed. We were in such wild and unspoilt country enemy planes were not interested in woods full of blue bells, meadows full of rabbits and wild flowers. Grete remained my friend through all the years that followed. We wrote to one another after I joined father, Fritz and Helmut in Chingola and as you know is my great friend to this day.

A group of 4 or 5 Hungarian medical students arrived at Hawse

End. They had all been studying at Bruo (Brün) in Czechoslovakia and so were 'guests of the Czech government. I instantly fell in love with Bondi (now Bandi) Andor Neufeld who was short, dark, slightly bow legged, but love only saw the glowing eyes and passionate declarations of love by him. We seemed to have so much in common. I read poetry to him etc etc. We would go for long walks at night and after passionate kisses and embraces he would ask me to fulfil this love by sleeping with him. Whilst in theory I believed it was more honest to sleep with a boyfriend and be faithful to him rather than go around necking with a number of boys, when it came to me at that particular period, I wasn't having any. We would then stay away from each other for a day or 2 and then he would woo me again and then the same thing would happy. In my ignorance I told him I wouldn't mind if he went for sex to a prostitute thinking that sex to a man was like a meal not very important what. He could 'love' and satisfy his animal desires elsewhere. He protested that it was with me whom he loved and wanted to sleep. Circumstances beyond our control protracted my continuing virginity. He and his mates were sent to another part of England and soon after I left for Africa. We corresponded and I wrote such wonderful love letters even once I was in Chingola. However, his letters were mundane and he often copied expressions of mine and sent them back to me. This resulted in my falling out of love with the active help of David Chudy who courted me for a time. That also had ups and downs and I became infatuated with a man much older than I,

Werner Brill a German refugee whom we all called the 'Porzellan Schweinchen (China piglet) who was pink and fat. He was very musical and worked in Chingola for an accountant. I loved him but didn't like him. He was very stingy except with me and father and Fritz loathed him and were in constant fear that he'd seduce me, but I am running ahead.

Had I been a little more sophisticated I could have enjoyed Miss Marshall who, politically speaking, had led a very colourful life (Bertrand Russell refers to her in his memoirs). A friend a Miss Bradford stayed with us at Hawse End for a while. She had been Secretary to Winston Churchill before World War II. She had lived in Kenya and forever bemoaned the fact that she now had to live in cold, wet England. I though her a bore. 'So, it rained - that was part of living in Europe'. It never occurred to me that the day would come when I would so love Africa, I would be an equal bore had I to return to the gloom of Britain.

On the days that I worked for Lady Rochdale I would stay at Lingholme for lunch. This I would generally have together with her Ladyship and her secretary in the very large timber panelled hall that had a huge fireplace with carved surrounds. The dark oak table was long, thick and highly polished. The three of us would sit at one end with Lady Rochdale at the end seat and the two lesser mortals on either side of her. The table was always beautifully laid and a large luscious looking fruit cake as well as a bowl of fresh fruit as well as some flowers decorated it. Decorated - yes, because we were never offered any of the cake or the fruit. In fact, Lady Rochdale would dish out the food and the roast would be carved like tissue paper and two slices were carefully put next to a tiny potato and a spoonful of vegetables. I was a growing girl and after my period of starvation, had a healthy appetite. When later on the head housekeeper or someone else kept me company while sewing I made all sorts of scratching noises to drown the gurgles that emanated from my empty stomach.

When Lord Rochdale would deign to visit his wife, they ate on their own. The secretary would have her meals in her room and I would eat with the domestic staff. A very large dining room with a long deal table. At the head in black and white lace collar sat the head housekeeper. I had the honour to sit on her right then on either side, head house maid, head cook etc, etc, etc past Mr Körösi, the butler, right down to the giggling scullery maids. We ate in less picturesque surroundings but one got a good plateful of filling food and second helpings if one wanted. I was intrigued at the size of the bones in the stews etc and only after a week was enlightened that we'd been eating Rabbit nearly every day. The area was so infested with rabbits that one only had to clap one's hands to see a group of them scampering off, whether one was in a meadow or forest. I loved to watch them on a rise where they would be silhouetted against the evening sky, sitting up, grooming themselves till the sky turned red before sunset. When I lunched with her ladyship, my mates at Hawse End would keep my lunch for me and I'd eat that plus dinner when I got home. The women were good cooks and we had Bäuschi mit Knödel - a stew of lungs with wild mushrooms with a large loaf like dumpling as light as a feather which was served in slices (cut with a wire) with the luscious stew and lashings of gravy. We also used to get Schuppen-Fleckerte, home-made short noodles with pieces of home cooked ham and eggs baked in the oven.

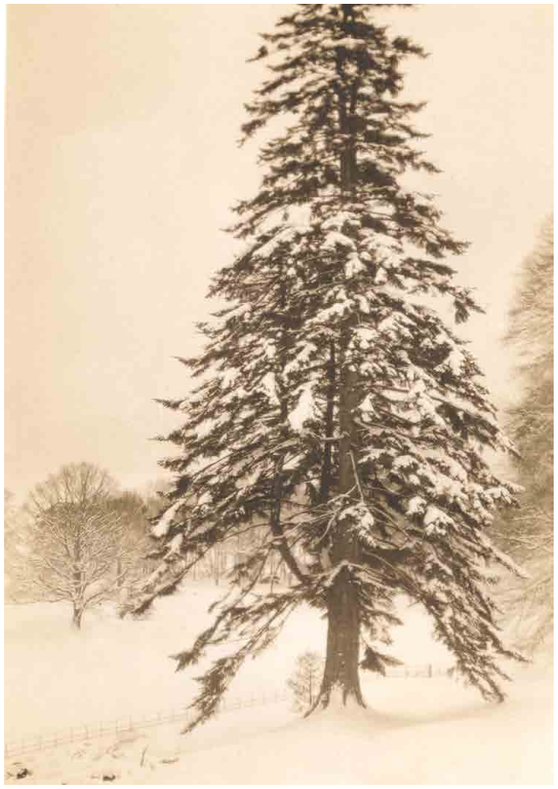
The daughter of Lady Rochdales driver (Lady Rochdale had a Rolls Royce) sometimes came to teach us ballroom dancing. She was a fairly large plain girl, who aged about 20, boasted with a complete set of false teeth. She also perspired rather freely and when I had to dance with her was almost overcome by the fumes. We had about 4 records which we played ad infinitum. One was 'Oh Rosemary I love you' the march from 'William Tell, 'Red sails in the sunset' - maybe it was only 3 records.

We all had to do chores in the house. Washing dishes, drying, making fires, sawing and chopping wood etc. I enjoyed sawing large logs and once my hands became hard enough with rowing the boat, I did not get blisters with the large saw (used by two people) any more. When I was on duty washing up I dreaded being with a middle aged spinster (I suppose she was over 20) who came from Austria. She was forever dropping dishes while carried away reciting misremembered poetry to me 'Füllest wieder Busch und Flur auf den Mond'. Her renditon of To the moon by Goethe. God was she a drip.

We had two young boys, brothers. One simple, good hearted and forever in trouble over girls. He used to get me to write his love letters for him. He used to stoke the stove that heated the water throughout the house. His brother was very bright, very lazy and managed to get out of almost all boring chores by 'being left alone to 'invent' things. Somewhere in England he'd been detailed to reap some sort of root crop (mange mangle wurzels) and being lazy by nature, evolved a technique of getting twice as many with the same labour force. Ever since then he would be 'inventing'. It sometimes meant rowing along the lake on a sunny day with one or more girlfriends - or lying in the meadows with his eyes closed. Only once in a while when the boat was needed urgently to get provisions or go to the Post Office in Keswick, dared we make use of the megaphone that could be heard right across or the length of the lake, to call him back.

Incidentally Lord Rochdale, whom I never met, was in a wheelchair paralysed (whispering tongues would have it he got that from 'high living'). I believe his wife lived to be over 90. Ann Beck knew her, having grown up in Portincale or close to Keswick.

When I first moved in at Hawse End it was still deep winter and we were, in fact, snowed in for 3 weeks. Two pairs of skis were found in the attic and two youngsters (the Czechs are almost born on skis) would go around the valleys taking essentials to the local farmers. It was a glorious period with many leaden gloomy days to be spent by the fire and equally many sunny ones when the windows would be opened and the red squirrels would come right into the living room looking for nuts which we fed them. Some were so tame they jumped on Miss Marshall's lap to look for nuts in her apron pockets. Then came spring - a glorious spring with daffodils and blue bells with melting snow, with swelling buds on trees and bushes, new leaves. Young lambs and returning birds. The days would lengthen into summer. We'd troop home after an evening at the cinema in the village under a large orange moon through the forests at Lingholm and then Bondi left, I can't remember where he went. We wrote to one another, exchanged photos with scores of kisses and eternal love on the back and then it was time to leave England on my journey to Africa.



Hawes End

Africa Bound - Copperbelt Via Cape of Good Hope

I started from the Station at Keswick and headed South to Crewe where I was to meet the boat train that was to take me to Glasgow. The Arundel Castle was scheduled to leave from Liverpool but the harbour had been so heavily bombed she was diverted to Glasgow. On a sunny day I was in a coach with an old lady who was going to the next station. She asked me where I was going thinking I'd say Carlisle or a place along the line. When I said 'Africa' she was quite taken aback. 'So far?' I looked so young. (I was then 18 but still only looked about 15). I travelled for hours till I got to Crewe. There I had to wait and for the first time saw sandbagged buildings, windows criss-crossed with sticky tape against bomb blasts. I eventually, after hanging around the station, got on to the boat train which after several hours stopped at Carlisle for over an hour which was no more than an hour's journey from Keswick which took me more than a day to reach. It seems to me that we got to Glasgow next morning and the train took us right to the docks. Immigration or was it security had a lovely time with me - the only 'enemy alien' as we were still described. They looked through all my photos and made me nervous and tongue tied. Eventually we were led on Board the 'Arundel Castle' even then one of the oldest Union Castle boats (built before World War I sold to Onassis after World War II). I shared an inside Cabin with an elderly lady and a young Irish Girl. We left Glasgow after lunch and it seemed to take us several hours before we left the Clyde and emerged into the North Sea. The boat was full of Royal Air Force men coming out to Rhodesia to train, away from the constant threat of German attacks. Also, there were quite a few young women and children who came out to join their husbands. Just before we underwent the routine 'boat drill' (which I was terrified of because I was convinced that we had to get into the life boats and would be lowered into the sea). A sailor chased across deck yelling 'man overboard'. It turned out that a baby was heard crying and when a steward looked for the mother, she was found in the cabin with a young air force chap. We'd hardly left and so she took fright and jumped overboard. Several sailors in their heavy outfits dived into the very busy Tyne, and in a rowing boat apparently handed the woman over to another boat which took her back to Glasgow, the Captain refusing to take her back. I never found out how the child got back to her. Anyway, it was a dramatic start to our journey. It took us 17 days to reach Cape Town non-stop zig zagging all the while to avoid torpedoes. It was quite amazing

how long one could see the wake of the ship behind - it seemed to go right to the horizon.

On the first night when we went on deck, I was amazed to see such a lot of light around the ship, since we were told that there was total blackout. When I reported it - a smiling sailor explained that the light was caused by myriads of phosphorescent particles churned up by the ship gave it this halo. These 17 days were wonderful, once I got used to the motion of the ship. We had food aplenty and social activities plus the ceremony celebrating the crossing of the equator although due to security, black out etc, we really didn't quite know when we crossed it. When I travelled out in 1940 there were no more convoys for passenger liners, in fact soon there would be no passenger liners at all any more. All we had was a large cannon on the upper deck which to try it out they shot two or three times aiming at some largish timber object they had thrown into the sea. Life seemed peaceful although heard rumours of U boat sightings. Our radio officer picked up the news from Germany where 'W M Joyce' better known as Lord Haw Haw, an Irish defector who worked for the Nazi's and was tried as a spy or traitor after the war) announced that on August such and such the British Liner Arundel Castle had been sunk off the west coast of Africa. His program was dramatically started with a bell being rung. Each peal of the bell stood for an allied ship sunk. How much he exaggerated I don't know, but the Arundel Castle certainly survived the war and for all I know, may still be in use by the Greek shipping company that belonged to Onassis to this day. I did the odd bit of sketching on the backs of our menu cards and sketched a man who turned out to be a well-known South African Actor whom I saw as an elderly man in a play not so many years ago in Salisbury. We were very lucky, I reckon. A boat loaded with children on their way to evacuation to America was torpedoed off the coast of West Africa, they left Glasgow two hours after us.

I had my second encounter with racialism. There were several Indian students on board and I got friendly with some. One day I sewed on a button to a shirt which belonged to one of them. The Irish girl was shocked and disgusted.

I read a lot, went right through the poetry etc of Heinrich Herne - a very Romantic German Poet who was banned in Germany because he was a Jew. He wrote the lyrics of the song the 'Lorelei' which has

become, perhaps the most popular song in Germany. Certainly not a boat ever passed that famous rock without everyone bursting into song. The story has it that instead of heeding the dangerous currents in the bend of the river Rhine, the boatmen would be so entranced by the beautiful Lorelei who sat on the rock combing her golden hair and singing, that their boats would capsize and they would drown.

This peaceful and worry-free interlude came to an end when through the high seas we reached the fairest Cape of all (also known as the Cape of Storms) the Cape of Good Hope. Sea gulls guided us towards table bay and there was Cape Town there just a little way up the mountain. As soon as we docked the immigration officers arrived and set up shop in the lounge and one by one, we were interrogated, had passports scrutinised. When it came to me, the elderly Afrikaans man announced, with great regret, that I could not land on South African soil because I was not in possession of a transit visa through the then Union of South Africa. In London I'd been told that the Jewish Refugee Committee in Cape Town would be advised by them to see that I got through SA safely. There was a somewhat seedy Jewish man who said he knew nothing about my business and who told me to stay on board ship till he'd consulted with his colleagues next day. Anyhow, wasn't I lucky to be able to be on the ship, he'd always wanted a weekend on board an ocean-going liner. Also, with black out in Cape Town, it really wasn't a good place for a young girl like me. The Son of Haile Selassie, the then Emperor of Abyssinia (Lion of Juda etc, etc) who was on the ship, despite his dark complexion, then even more frowned upon that later, still had better connections, because despite the absence of a transit visa, strings were pulled and he left the ship that evening. In fact, everybody left the ship that day since she was ordered not to go on to Durban but turn around and return to Britain. Early on in the journey a child went down with measles, by the time we reached Cape Town there were well over 20 cases of measles on board. Now the cabins were fumigated and I wandered around, nowhere to sit.

It was pretty cold and there was snow on Table Mountain. It was September and spring. Since I was completely ignorant about Africa, I had put all warm clothes in the hold and so shivered around the drafty corridors and decks. The Stevedores were all coloured people and they frightened me. What a sorry sight I

must have been. I had my meals with some officers and they were quite pleasant. One in particular commiserated with me, he had an Austrian wife and knew what foreigners had to contend with.

The next day no one came or called nor the next. I was afraid I'd still be on board when she had to sail back and I'd have to return to Britain. The nice officer on his day off went ashore and promised he would contact the only person I knew in Cape Town - a woman who had been good to me. I never saw the officer again for on that day a thoroughly unpleasant man from the committee came on board before breakfast and took me off the ship. He called a taxi which I protested against not wanting him to incur expenses on my account. Surely a bus would do. He insisted. He somehow felt he ought to help with my luggage and landed with a very small suitcase with a broken handle. That infuriated him, it looked so shabby and embarrassed him. We went to look for Berthel Lindenbaum and found she'd changed jobs but were told where she worked now. The man was fed up and we went to the building his association had its headquarters in. We stopped outside the place and he pointed at the taxi metre saying 'Come on you pay up, it's your taxi'. I was very upset because I had little money and none of it mine and would gladly have walked. I was deeply touched by the coloured drive who only asked half the fare of me. And that bastard from the committee didn't even feel ashamed. I felt sure, reflecting on it later, that he'd put in for his expenses and included for taxi fares. He dumped me in the Grand Hotel, a pretty dingy place near the old Station. I had a sort of attic room and didn't know at all what to do. And so, I did nothing. I just sat in that room all day, didn't eat anything. I thought meals cost extra and Fritz had threatened hellfire if I spent any unnecessary money. Also, I was too timid to appear in the dining room on my own. Night fell, nothing happened, no one called and I didn't even know where to contact anyone. I went to sleep in the bed and spent the next day the same. Afraid to go outside in case someone would turn up to take me away. In the evening of the second day someone knocked at the door. I gingerly opened the door. There was a plump friendly looking woman standing outside. I nearly shut the door in her face, sure that she'd made a mistake. She beamed at me and said: 'Don't you remember me?' It was Bertal who had been hunted down by the nice officer and when calling at the boat had been told I had been collected. She traced me to the Hotel and I was so happy to

see a friendly family face I could have kissed her - in those days I didn't kiss people unless I absolutely had to (you see Naomi?) except passionate kisses to Bandi the Hungarian Student. She took me to her home and made me something to eat. I hadn't eaten anything for 48 hours. I'll never forget the asparagus omelette which was the best food I had ever eaten in my life, I felt.

Berthel went to the market with me next morning and I bought a whole lot of fruit to sustain me during the journey north. That night she took me to the station and for the first time in my life did I see every passenger's name written outside the coach and also the door of the compartment. Here thousands of miles from home, in a strange country, I saw my own name written against a railway compartment. There were two young women, a red hair Salvation Army Officer, her name Ruth Tarr and she came from Southern Rhodesia, from a place called Featherstone. Also a teacher - a Miss Peters from Bulawayo. I'd heard of Bulawayo before because Walters family lived there and my Aunt Erika. There also was what seemed to me an elderly lady (she was probably 35). She found the compartment too cramped and got the conductor to give her a small coupé for herself. In those days and many years to come a ten bob (10\- shillings) note was enough to persuade the guard to do this. The story goes that one would say to the chap in charge on the train 'I bet you ten bob you can't find me a coupé for myself'. He always one the bet. Anyhow we started to move out of Cape town – North

I nearly forgot. After that miserable man who came on the ship when we landed told me of the blackout in Cape Town, I assumed that was so. Imagine my delight and also anger, when - as night fell, I saw Cape Town a sea of light with twinkling windows and street lights rising up the mountain. What a sight after 12 months of blackout in England.

As we passed through the Karoo it was cold, raining and drab and there was the vast expanse of - to me, then nothing. I felt very dejected. At every station little black and brown children in rags would run up to the train to ask for food. People would throw out biscuits and the kids would scramble for them in the dirt. I was disgusted. I had a packet of biscuits and reached out and handed it to a child. Within seconds all the others set upon the unfortunate girl who probable ended up bruised and without biscuits into the bargain.

The Karoo which many years later held such fascination was the most desolate landscape I had ever seen. I felt that if I wanted to commit suicide I'd only have to go and stay there, it would be a pleasure to put an end to my life in this barren drab wilderness. We travelled on until, I expect it was 2-3 days later, we reached Mafeking (a name that meant nothing to me, never having learnt British History). We were still in our bunks about 6am when Immigration Officials came to board the train and demanded to see our passports. One scrutinised mine and said 'Where is your exit permit to leave the Union?'. I didn't know, how was I to know? – I had to get dressed quickly and I and my luggage were taken off the train. Before I left, my companions were most upset. They both put some money together which they insisted I took. (They knew I had no money because I never took a meal in the dining car and they had shared some of their own food they had brought along too).

Then Ruth Tarr asked if I minded her saying a prayer. She knelt down in front of me and prayed fervently that God helped this poor unfortunate child in her hour of need etc, etc. I had two instincts, one was to weep over my fate, the other was to laugh at this strange spectacle of the kneeling woman. Anyhow - I was in Mafeking. Know Mafeking? Well, then it consisted of more or less two streets. The immigration authorities promised to ring Pretoria to

Chingola home - Ellen and Fritz

get permission for this poor child, who, fresh out of Britain, couldn't possibly know about exit permits especially as she had just had a 'transit visa' only. I was still lucky in my plight because for some mysterious reason there was another train that left for Bulawayo that night. To kill time till that train left - without spending money - that was the problem, I wandered along the two streets in the blazing sun up and down, up and down trying to look invisible. I feared that someone from the hotel would ask me in and that a) I wouldn't have the courage to say no and b) I'd be involved in spending money. After a while the manager of the hotel spotted me (I am sure the whole of Mafeking knew about the child that had been left behind) and said to come in and rest. He showed me into a room and sent in some tea. Since I hadn't slept very well on the train, I could easily have stretched out on the bed for a snooze especially since the only chair was a very upright hard one. However, I was sure I'd be charged for a night so had my tea and spent the rest of the day on the chair. When it came to leaving, I was charged 2\6 (two shillings and six pence or half a crown, the equivalent of 25 cents only of greater value). The train to Bulawayo arrived and I got on hoping that my latest experience would be the last of an unpleasant nature. On the way to Bulawayo, we saw quite a number of bush fires and I would alert people who didn't know what I was worrying about. Bush fires (then) were part and parcel of the dry season and only were in importance if they threatened a homestead or were racing towards people in the bush who, as I learnt later, would start burning near where they stood and quickly burnt a bare patch so that the raging fast fires would not reach them once they got close. Usually with a bit of wind the fires travelled so fast that no one on foot could escape.

Then we arrived in Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia. Meta together with Walter (then about 16) and Doris who was quite small, were at the station. Meta wanted me to come to their house (in Grey Street) and perhaps spend a week with them before setting out on the journey into darkest Northern Rhodesia.

Walter was detailed (only he spoke English of the Hollanders) to arrange for me to get permission to stay a week. It was about 2 hours before the train would leave for North. We sat waiting, outside Meta and Doris waited, in Grey Street my aunt Cilly waited. ten minutes before the train was due a large matronly tough looking woman immigration officer called me to her desk to inform

me that I would get no permission to stay and since there was little time till the departure of my train would I get on it chop, chop so that I wouldn't get into trouble. The Bitch. When I got to my compartment, I just managed to say goodbye to Walter, Meta and Doris. I found a large cardboard box on my seat. It was filled with fruit, sweets, sausage rolls etc and was left for me by the lady who in Cape Town got a coupé for herself as soon as we left (ten bob bet). Apparently when out Cape Town train drew out from Mafeking, she noticed the bedraggled figure of one Ellen Rothschild standing

Rothschild's in Chingola - Richard, Fritz, Ellen, Helmut

forlornly on the platform.

She recognised me and went to our coupé to ask Miss Tarr and Peters what had happened. They related the sad tale and the elderly lady made enquiries about my movements. She bought all these goodies and made sure they were put into my compartment.

A New Home - Chingola, Northern Rhodesia

You can imagine how nervous I was about my impending entry into Northern Rhodesia, the country of my destination. I had on me a cheque to the value of £100.00 (Pounds Sterling) which Fritz or my father had sent. It was one of the conditions of my visa to Northern Rhodesia that I had £100. But - Fritz had reminded me again and again, that this money had been borrowed and that I was, under no circumstances, to mention its existence unless I was asked just in case the authorities would take it as a deposit and not returned it for, maybe years. I felt sure, pessimist I was - still am in a way, that I would have to surrender it and incur the wrath of Fritz who would be sure not to believe me that I had had no choice. We crossed Northern Rhodesia by way of the bridge across the Zambezi River by the Victoria Falls. Actually, you can't see the Falls from the train but again I was terrified to tell Fritz who would exhort me about my stupidity, since surely anyone with eyes to see could have taken notice of it.

Anyway, we steamed into Livingstone where a very lethargic Immigration Officer stamped my passport asking no questions which made me feel sure that somewhere else, the worst was still to come. Since I had a lot of luggage, a box with my sewing machine, featherbed sheets (and stuffed in between, while my mother wasn't looking when first leaving Germany), my dolls and one-eyed Teddy bear. I asked the people in my compartment when we would pass through customs and they didn't seem sure but thought it would be in Ndola. I think it took more than a day to that swamp, malaria ridden dump and of course by that time no one knew where anyone came from any more, whether from Maza Buka or New York. Anyway, no one ever asked us about luggage but I was still nervous. When we crossed a road with a few cars waiting outside Nkana one of the girls travelling with me cried out, there - look there - there is someone waving to you. 'Couldn't be for me - I am going to Chingola'. At the station of which there isn't the slightest impression on my memory, was my father and Fritz and maybe Helmut. I was puzzled. I had a ticket to Chingola and that was where father and Fritz lived. How on earth did they come to collect me at Nkana? I learnt later on that no one (with the exception of Helmut Rothschild and years later Henry Welshman Ethywyn's father) ever arrived at Chingola Station. It was far from

the township right in the bush and though Chingola was only 35 miles by road from Nkana it took the train all day to get there. In fact, many people collected friends and relatives from Ndola about 60 miles away. Father had borrowed a vehicle named a Vanette. It looked like a miniature lorry and was very common zon the Copperbelt being both a passenger vehicle and having space to transport goods. People also had proper passenger cars that had, instead of a large boot, a large box sticking out of the back. This again meant one could take hunting equipment, a dead animal for the pot and - in those days - members of the indigenous race who were regarded as primitive and really not taken very seriously as 'human beings.

Anyhow, we travelled the 35 miles to Chingola through typical Northern Rhodesia bush which was msasa and other indigenous trees, right up to the road, large anthills constructed of red soil which I had never seen before. They were as high as a bungalow and higher. When they protruded into the road they were simply chopped in half and many of them flanked the roads all the way to Chingola. The road was not tarred and we left in our wake a huge cloud of red dust. On either side the trees were covered in dust so that everything was an almost uniform shade of brick red. I remember, after driving through the mine township passing the 'shopping area' which consisted of a collection of buildings that had originally been white washed but also were almost orange near ground level from years of wet mud and dust. They were covered in corrugated iron indeed some were wholly constructed of this material which I had never seen before. The shops were just rectangular buildings with an extended roof slanting over a raised area towards the street. This raised area formed a kind of veranda on which were groups of tailors with sewing machines perched on wooden boxes. They were mostly Muslims from Malawi with white caps and they operated their machines with handles fixed to the wheel. Ready-made garments of uncertain shape hung from the wooden beans.

Other verandas had sacks of mealie meal stacked on them, odd wooden boxes, a stray cat asleep on it or a scraggy dog of doubtful parentage. The doors to the five or six odd shops were wooden like barn doors and during the day afforded one of a view of the inside where cloth of all descriptions hung from the ceilings and Khaki

Ellen was approx 18 years old when she arrived in Chingola

shorts and trousers called hembi and kapitulas (shorts) on wooden shelves.

The Road, if anything was even more pitted than the road through the bush, which in certain places was heavily corrugated so that one was well shaken about. One could overcome this by going a certain speed which seemed to make the car fly from corrugation to corrugation with an even rhythm. I was told the size of the corrugations was created by the average speed vehicles negotiated the road. I never really found out. Having reached the township of Chingola which was adjacent to the Mine township called Nchaya, we turned into a space between shops and stopped at the back where a white washed building with very high small windows was pointed out to me as the home of Mr and Mrs Dorsky - she South African (ex-Lithuanian), he Russian, the owners of the shop in front. The vanette belonged to them. To be polite we went inside and found, to me, a most incongruous sight.

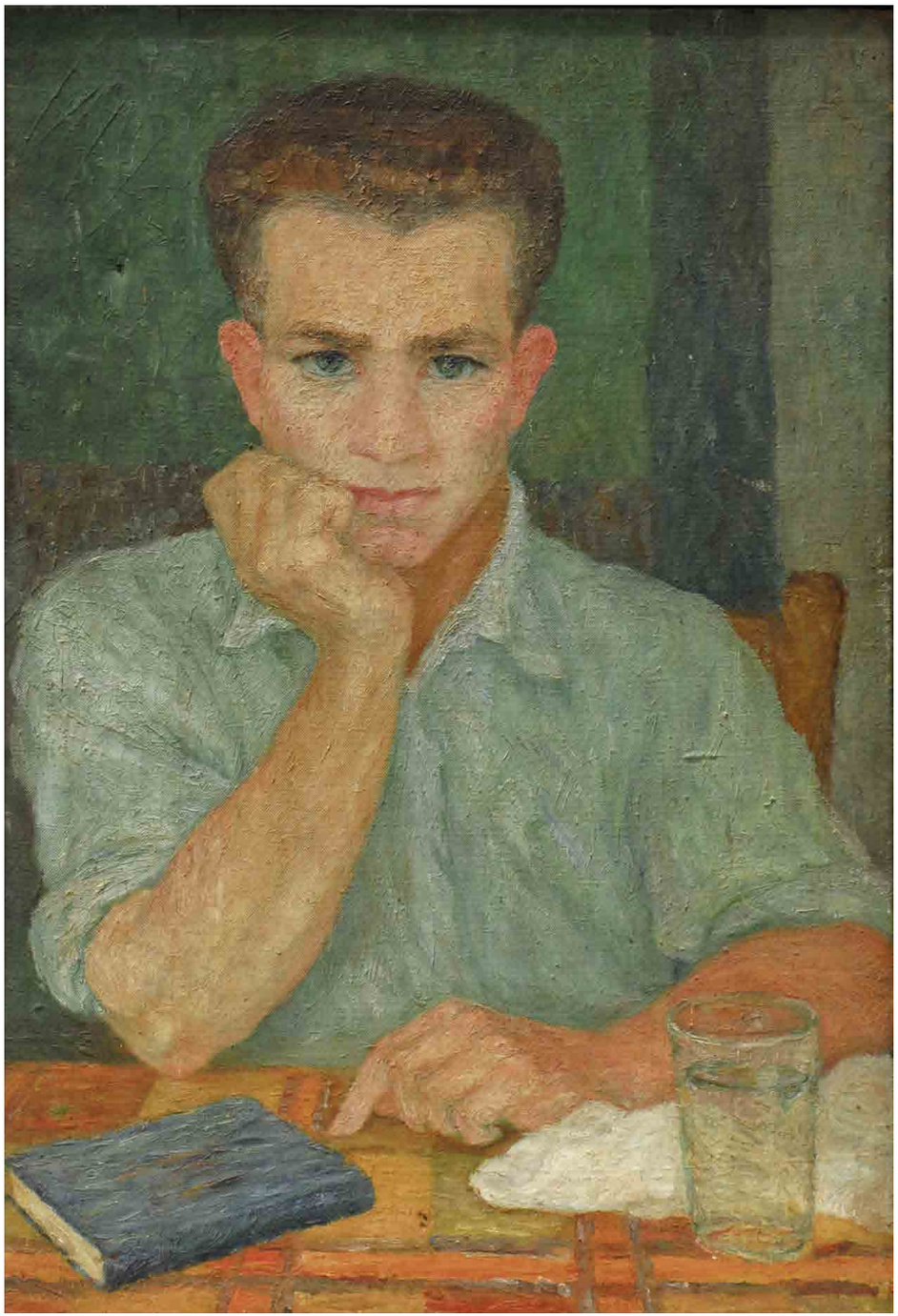
In this shed, barn, stood what I was told was a 'Chesterfield Suite' e.g., a settee and two armchairs. They were huge in glowing royal blue velvet-like material. The arm rests all of a foot wide covered in wood veneer had half way down rounded veneer covered columns that - with a circular glass sheet formed kind of 'tables' on which were balanced bright brass ashtrays and, as I learnt later on the glass in which one was served the famous 'Sundowner'. These chairs had the same emerging aggressive quality as Epstein's Adam. On one wall was a reproduction of either the 'Blue Boy' or 'Mrs Siddons'. I shuddered. There was also a stand with the inevitable fern pot, usually made of one gallon paraffin tins cut down and painted in green or blue stripped with gold paint. I think we had some tea. I was deeply depressed.

Then - with a packet of cooked fish, which kindly Mrs Dorsky - a fat rather vulgar looking blonde woman had cooked for my first meal - we were taken to No 2 Shaft my new home. There were three narrow buildings, each with a gauzed in veranda along the front. Our house faced the bush with the old mine shaft (disused) headgear sticking out of the very high grass. The house was the colour of the road as it was built of large, so called, Kimberley bricks. These were the ant hill soil mixed with water and straw and were plastered inside. They were covered with corrugated iron and consisted of 3 rooms in a row. No 1 room was the workshop of the shoe makers my father employed. No 2, my room, and No 3 fathers

and Fritz's plus stores of leather and or meagre provisions. No bathroom, indeed no kitchen and the loo a long way behind in the bush. With trepidations I entered my room only to find that to my great delight it was freshly white washed, had off white short calico curtains, an iron bedstead, a deal table and one wooden chair, the only chair we possessed - innocent of furniture. Otherwise, we used wooden tree stumps on which the shoe makers knocked their nails into shoes etc during working hours. I was delighted. There was nothing offensive and I knew that I could make it attractive with my East African cloth (I'd bought from Germany - a gift of a missionary) and a few reproductions (post cards) of Michelangelo and Käthe Kollwitz and with wild flowers and grasses - outside the veranda was a water stand pipe from which we got our water supply. Next to it was a clump of banana trees which swished gently in the breeze. They were the first I'd ever seen. They had hands of tiny bananas at the end of which hung the deep red flower that seems to last for ages. A few sheets of corrugated iron (those and the dust were a sort of leitmotiv in all the years in Northern Rhodesia. Only perhaps bettered by mud and termites which we called 'white ants') leaning against each other were our kitchen, the stove consisted of four lots of bricks with iron balanced on them. Underneath one made a wood fire and between bouts of weeping eyes from all the smoke one performed the task of cooking. It had been thrown down by the servant (a commodity even the poorest of the poor (whites) could afford. They felt ashamed of this construction since there was now going to be a Dona or Misses on the premises. Since the Missis was as poor as the Bwanas, the kitchen had to be erected again.For a bath one boiled water over the stove in a 4-gallon paraffin tin which was tipped into a Galvanised iron borrowed tub in one's room for one's ablutions.

That evening Fritz took a box of matches and took me across the road - rather an illustrious term for the modest dirt path that was wide enough to accommodate a car. With an actor's panache he drew a match across the side of the box and produced a flame which he, kneeling down applied to the dry dusty grass, it flickered and wavered, nearly went out but then a little wind caught it and suddenly there was the crackle and swishing and it started to move along at an ever-increasing speed, first upwards to the grass see that flamed more brilliantly and then laterally sending clouds of dust and white ash flakes into the dark night sky. Soon there was a sea of fire and the first experience for me, of the smell of veldt

Barotse women - Painting by David Chudy



David Chudy -self portrait

fires that from then on became one of the unmistakable smells of Africa. Fritz had kept this area of bush, despite his love of fires, to present me with the spectacle that never left its fascination for him. Especially the feeling of power it gave him when, for all the world, he was setting fire to Africa. I must admit, it was always a new and exciting experience to see a veldt fire. The upward surge that carried white and black fragments of tissue-like ash, the insects and small animals who ran for their lives, the birds that would hover in wait for insects to devour. On windy days the fire would race in one directly only timidly gnawing on the upwind portion. On a still hot day a fire wood spread evenly in all directions and would create an ever-increasing circle that, black (like the centre of a sunflower) would be surrounded by red and yellow tongues of flames again not unlike the petals. If there was a tree in the way the flames would shoot up to scorch the leaves and leave them black, bleached or white. Though the heat would be fierce the trees rarely died although often their growth would be inhibited. In the spring they would send out new shoots, leaves and flowers. The fire would have the charred grass tufts - little spirals of white smoke for a little longer and the sweetish acrid smell that meant the end of winter, the beginning of spring - in Rhodesia.

Later on, these black stubbled 'dambos' that, in certain areas near the rivers especially, exposed the pure white sand would sprout delicate green shoots, but mainly covered themselves in wild flowers that made it look like a gaily embroidered carpet. Scarlet Rhodesian pimpernel, the mauve-blue Rhodesian forget me not, yellow daisies, white delicate bell flowers with mauve stems and leaves, mauve flowers, little blue lobelias and many more.

I have digressed. We were standing in the road, our faces orange with the firelight reflected silhouettes from behind. That day I met a short, well-scrubbed young man in carefully ironed grey slacks (later on I learnt that the servants ironed these with wet brown paper until the crease was like a knife edge), a white open neck shirt, large grey soft (almost calf like) eyes and wavy light brown hair. He was called Chudy although his first name was David and everybody else was called by their first names. Chudy (not Mister) was about 23 years old, was a Polish Jew and worked on the mine. He was the 'resident' plumber. I later found out that he learnt the trade, helping his equally untrained brother Martin, in Johannesburg

for about 2 months. He then went to Northern Rhodesia (I'll come to that in good time) and got a job with a builder with the name of Smith, a red faced individual with a very pretty wife and a private plane (he had a child who when he grew up worked in the Income Tax department in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia and incidentally caught Aaron - David's elder brother for a few hundred pounds after he applied for a tax rebate and who soon after that left the Tax Department to become, if not a good, but a very popular writer named Wilbur Smith). David did all the plumbing installation in the houses Smith built for the Nchanga mine employees, white (I think the blacks didn't have plumbing in those days). When the houses were built, David was out of a job and then applied to the mine to be employed as maintenance plumber.

He had the great advantage that he knew where most of the pipes were, having laid them himself. On the other hand, there wasn't much work, all the houses being relatively new. I suspect the wives of the miners asked for the young plumber to be sent because they were bored with their existence. They had servants to clean and cook, garden boys to weed and dig and water, they were mostly fairly simple women who didn't read but spent a lot of their days having tea with neighbours or played tennis, made their own clothes.

Anyway, this young man who already had a receding hairline then, was a very good natured, generous chap who earned good money, had a second-hand green Plymouth and who often restrained Fritz and I think Helmut (later on) from fighting with my father. He seemed a very nice person except that he was a trifle cocky but I rather liked him. He was very interested in Art and so was I. We all went to the cinema together (one film per week I think 2 performances) went to the Kafue River and into the bush on weekends. My memory is vague, but I know that I fell for a man who must have been all of 27 years old (to my 18) was short, fat, stingy, musical and I resented the advances Chudy made for quite a long time. I am digressing again.

I have just arrived in No 2 shaft; these were a group of old houses built of Kimberley bricks (large sun-dried bricks) that were the remnants of the Nchanga Mine No 2 shaft that was flooded deliberately by the Mining Company who wanted to close down the mine in 1934 and closed down. If I am not mistaken it was flooded

deliberately by the mine management because the price of copper had plummeted and that made the shutting down of the mine easy. Apparently, this happened while all the employees and bosses (it was a very democratic community) were enjoying themselves dancing on old year's eve, seeing in the new year. They all sobered up next day when they heard the news. No one in that community had any money in the bank (or very few). They were suddenly out of work. The government had to help them to make their way to South Africa where most of them hailed from. Many left their belongings behind having no funds to move furniture and other possessions. After that, when the mine was opened up again, the mine company adopted a system of bonuses payable after completion of service so that the same disaster couldn't happen again. In fact the bonuses were a very good idea. It meant the most improvident always had this compulsory saving which often amounted to a very tidy some of money.

No 2-shaft had 3 or 4 single quarters such as ours and about 6 married quarters a little further along. Ours as I mentioned before had neither kitchen nor bathroom and the 'long drop' lavatory was quite a few hundred yards away in the bush. It was built of wood, had wooden seat or rather was like a wooden box inside with a hole which was built over a very deep pit. Because it was so deep it never smelt of anything but hot timber and dip - a disinfectant one occasionally poured down. In the day time it had a peaceful air about it, one usually left the door ajar and the scent of whatever season it was, would waft in. The bees would buzz around, the spiders would be busy weaving their webs, lizards would dart around and only once in a while one would disturb a bat inside the hole and a gentle currant of air would touch a white bottom fanned by the wings of the nervous creature. A trifle disturbing the first time. Whether one could purchase toilet paper in Chingola I can't remember? We certainly couldn't afford it and the Friday edition of the Bulawayo Chronicle received every following Wednesday would be neatly cut into squares and served a double function.

Once in a while and in a hurry some less absorbent type of news media would have to be used. One usually had time to read the adverts or the vary much out of date stock exchange column (if one knew what the various names and columns of figures meant). At night it was advisable to take a torch since there were snakes about, but if I am right, we never possessed one - a torch - not

snake. In fact, we used to walk in convoy, with three Lithuanian Jews (the three stooges, Geishas Mandelis called Mandel, Furmonousky and Ettinger) when we went to the cinema called the bioscope, because they possessed large 4½ volt torches and the Bioscope was over a mile from our, already remote place, right out in the middle of nowhere. One walked along the 'Congo' road which led one in 10 miles to the border of the Belgian Congo to a small town called Tshinsenda.

Now that there was a woman in the family, life was expected to take on a more homely quality. In fact, my father still supervised the cooking executed by first a very black gentleman who in turn was replaced by Adrian - a lighter shade - brown and later on by a failed priest who was the greatest thief. It was pretty basic. We had brisket boiled and the stock made jolly good soup, roast topside - pot roasted for obvious reasons, that cost one shilling and six pence per lb. And which Fritz as an employee of the Copperfields Cold Storage got at a much- reduced rate. Fish was imported from South Africa and was still very cheap. Chickens (old and tough) one bought from the locals for one shilling to one shilling and six pence each. I was amazed that here in darkest Africa one could buy tomatoes, beans, peas, cabbage, spinach and lettuce. All grown near the river by Africans who'd hawk them around on bicycles. One usually had to bargain - it was part of the game.

I tried to get work doing dressmaking. I was slow and with one year apprenticeship and the little practice in the UK was not efficient. Also, there were several women who did dressmaking for pin money, the money I could charge just didn't add up to a living. I also easily got discouraged if something went wrong and got depressed and that rendered me useless. After a while we managed to get the mine authorities to rent to us an old married quarter. It was in a row with several others and hadn't been inhabited since the shut down in 1934. It had two bedrooms, a living room, a gauzed-in veranda, a pantry, a bathroom and under the same roof a real kitchen with a wood stove. The loo was still far away but - to have a bath was sheer bliss. The water was heated from the kitchen stove. The house was square with the kitchen tacked on.

The Veranda was gauzed in and Prion the one eyed German

African women - David Chudy painting

Jewish Artist gave me material to make curtains that made it very gay. It served as sitting out place, dining room, spare room if we had a visitor. We used to keep the lights on at night in the roofed over open part near the kitchen and during the rainy season the gauze door was covered next morning with a collection of the most beautiful moths, from tiny pastel-coloured ones, furry white-black ermine like one to huge cooked strawberry-coloured ones with transparent eye-like circles. One got used to the millions of flying termites and in the rainy season swept their wings which they shed, by the shovel full in the mornings. I got familiar with praying mantises, stick insects, dangly legged wasps and dozens of insects of all shapes and sizes. There were snakes, lizards, large chameleons and other creatures and once in a while a leopard would take a dog from someone's back door during the night. A leopard skin cost about £1. Once we had cleaned our new house, removed the 2-3-foot-high termite hills from the corners of the rooms, white washed the walls, red stoep polished the floors we moved in. It was sheer bliss to have a living room in which we had borrowed furniture (a small settee and two armchairs) a small table on which I placed an African made brown jug that I filled with wild flowers or sunflowers from the garden. (Fritz grew them to feed his chickens). We had curtains I made out of off-white summer suiting material and we had even a few pictures on the wall and a grass mat on the floor. Fritz started gardening in earnest and grew the tallest pea plants I ever saw, tomatoes, cucumbers and strawberries - strawberries that multiplied until he had 1000 plants. I made jam, juice, bottled them, gave them away and under Chudy's tutelage made beautiful wine. One day there were 1000 healthy plants, the next, 900 had been eaten by ants.

I got a job on the mine in the time office where I had to operate a machine into which one fed a wages card for every African on the mine. One girl fed the card into the machine for the right column to be printed, the other from daily cards tapped out the information. It was not very inspiring work and there was a fair amount of figure work involved for which I had neither liking nor the slightest aptitude. I don't think I was very good at it. I worked with girls whose only interest in life was clothes, boyfriends (preferably ones that one go engaged to, and after breaking it off - one kept the, if modest, still a diamond ring. Some girls had quite a collection.

Fritz, David and I, plus Brill who knew about music, were a little colony of slightly more civilised background or interests than the

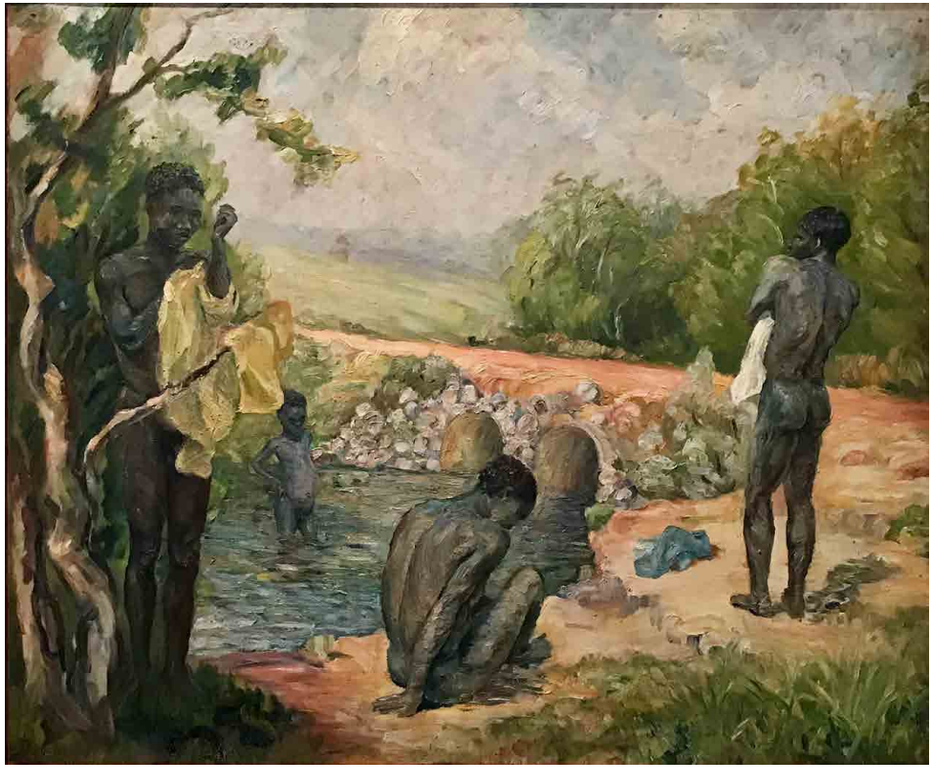
average minders who were also referred to as the 'riff raff of the Rand'.

Looking back over my diaries, I realise that I was very miserable. Father and Fritz, while quite happy to have Brill as a friend (the short fat musical chap), were nasty and suspicious of my relationship with him. I was very infatuated and suffered every time father or Fritz accused him of all sorts of things. Deep down I had misgivings about him but I wanted to love and be loved and he in his own way was fond of me and made me feel a 'person'. I recall after I got over him and the atmosphere at home was easier, we used to refer to him as 'das Porzillan Schweinchen' the 'China Piglet'. I then saw a lot of Chudy who was kind and tolerant and made me happy. He tried to teach me to paint and his own not very exciting work improved all the time. He also started to teach me to play the violin. I managed to play 2 tunes, I think.

Just came across a letter to Edith in 1941 that was never sent - I quote (translated from German): 'I often feel homesick for Europe for cold, snow, autumn, mists, spring. Here nature is never dead, hence she can never be born anew. There is no will to live because the fear and nearness to death is unknown. Man loves life because life is circumscribed. Sun is beautiful, much sun more so, but I long for a grey, cold autumn cay, for a slate grey sky that promises snow, a such who shy and small, that pale and cool shines, on an early spring day, on a still, dead landscape. He is not glowing golden like here, but he means more light and joy because he comes as a gift after a long dark period.' I mention a skin pouffe which I purchased for two shillings. That I am about to read 'Brothers Karamazov novel by Fyodor Dostoevsky' and that Chudy is teaching me to paint and was pleased with the picture of Roses I did in oil. I speak of the great need I have of a woman friend because all the small nonsense's that one confides into another female, become important when one is surrounded by men.

I was so longing for love that I longed for Brill and yet hated him. Father and Fritz seemed to fear that he would seduce me and so I went through a most unhappy time. I so wanted tenderness and the love of someone who wasn't critical of me all the time. My relationship to father and Fritz was laced with tensions, with lack of trust (born out of a kind of fear and the responsibility they felt for me) which made no sense to me because I felt I knew how to

look after myself and anyhow, I felt I had a right to make my own decisions. Of course, they didn't, couldn't look at it that way. I was under age and certainly fathers' responsibility. Brill was stingy but, since we were all poor, he was generous to me. He wrote little poems to me and that helped to make me feel a 'wanted' person. All the same, father and Fritz soured it all and made me feel guilty. I was very emotional and there was 'the world against me'. Chudy's



Early David Chudy painting

attentions annoyed me and his arrogance that I just had to be in love with him, did not flatter me at all. I don't know how the change came about but a new little diary dated 1942 starts - (from German) 'I am glad at the thought of him'.He is the first man who makes me glad. Who doesn't take the happiness with him when he leaves the room. He leaves me enough of the certainty of his love, to make me go on feeling happy. He cares for me for myself. Not because there is no one else, or he would have loved me when I first came and thought myself in love with him. Now he had to fight for me to break my resentment (looking back I realise that this is so

much in character with David, who didn't appreciate anything he didn't have to fight for, anything that was easy to get). He gives me understanding when I need it and has patience with my obstinacy and bursts of hatred (father and Fritz I suppose). He can't and won't be unkind to anyone and I could kill him untold times because I have moments when I wish to hurt those that have done me unkindnesses. He doesn't dislike anyone. Is it lack of character, lack of a sense of honour or is he really so good natured that he takes anything without getting ruffled? I love him so much when he comes in his dirty work clothes, a little unshaven and tousled hair that has a shimmer of gold in it. Open neck shirt that shows the hairs on his chest that reach up to his neck. When he grabs me roughly and kisses me that I feel it takes my breath away and my ribs creak ominously'.

It was Whitsun this week. At home the birch trees are green. Here the grass is fading. One can already burn the bush. The fire spreads rapidly. It races past trees and bushes, licks the bark and branches, singes a dry twig here and there, whirls dead leaves and drives them burning along and leaves a sweetish, acrid smell behind and the trees and shrubs who, surprised that they are still alive, standing as they are on the exposed ground, are powdered with black and white ashes'

A few months later - August 1942: 'That I never saw beauty in nature in all the two years I have been here? The country is strange, colourful, but has left me cold.Nothing really gave me joy. A flower might be colourful, a bird ever so beautiful and outlandish. It didn't give me pleasure. I was aware of their beauty but it had no relationship to me. Apart from the sunrise on the farm (old Fowlers farm above the Kafue Rive on the way to Solwezi) nothing had touched me. That is why I so longed for Europe where spring, summer, all the seasons were mine.

Where I could part of it all - here I am a stranger. Nature doesn't want me. She merely tolerates me but has no affection for me, while in Europe the sun caresses in Spring, like a friend, where in winter the snowflakes dance around to take one along.

Here I have always felt that nature spoke to me. Why have you

come here? You have no right to be here. Go back to where you came from. We, the elements won't force you to leave but we can show you the cold shoulder and you will go of your own accord.It was like this till a few days ago when suddenly the wind was more friendly. When the clouds invited me to wander with them. Since the sun has been milder. He seemed less bright an inaccessible. I have seen him weak just once and we can never be strangers again.

Still, sad is the fact that all the beauty I see today is not what it really is of itself. No it is merely the recognition that it is, after all, not so very different from home. That an autumn forest is, colourful and

Belgian Congo

bare too as the bush just now. That a spring sky is a pale as now. That a March wind is as cold and delightful, as it blows today.

August 13, 1942: 'The bush is as silent as death. Leaden and dark is the sky. The air feels thick as if one could touch it. Not a bird is singing, not a cricket chirping. The dry leaves fall tin like to the ground. Only in my partially deaf ear there is a humming and buzzing - ' (Still translated from German)

It was to be many years still before I found that I loved Rhodesia,

Africa as she was, not as she reminded me of other places. What I did grow to love soon was the spring, when after months of dryness the Msasa trees unfolded their new leaves in all the autumn colours though not dry but delicate and translucent. I recall, when we were planning to leave Africa and I looked forward to it, I had one reservation. I always prayed 'Please God, let me see just one more Rhodesian Spring'.

Of course, our fairly primitive life brought one into contact with the more uncomfortable sides of nature. The mud, the millions of insects, the mosquito bites during the rains, the inability to go to the loo during heavy storms. Then the inches of dust on the roads, the dust laden trees bordering the roads, the taste and feel of dust in one's mouth and hair and the layers anew every day in the house. The dryness that made ones skin tight and one's lips crack (and no money for the sort of cosmetics that might help). And it did take me many years to feel the changes in the weather to recognise the signs of the changing seasons. The whole rhythm of seasons as a meaningful whole. In fact, I recall, and that was in Southern Rhodesia, so after more than seven years, that one year when the rains had started and one could almost hear the grass growing and feel the lushness of the rainy season, that my thoughts quite instinctively turned towards Christmas. It was then that I realised I had become a Rhodesian when it wasn't the snow and ice any more that signified Christmas but heat, humidity and greenness. I think the seasons like a piece of music only to begin to make (emotional sense when one is so familiar that one can anticipate the next step, the next phrase.

Helmut lived in Chingola for some time and he shared a house with Brill for a time with Fritz. There were so many underlying cross currents, Fritz really never got on with Helmut. I had always been close to Helmut, already in Frankfurt when he lived with us and worked as an apprentice in a chemist shop. Even this closer relationship with Helmut evoked resentment in Fritz who somehow felt that my loyalty to him had to exclude warmth for Helmut. I do not want to give the impression that life was on continuous string of unhappiness and strife. We went together to the Kafue River where we spent many happy hours boating or walking. We explored classical music together and exchanged thoughts on books we read. We were of course, all of us vitally concerned with

the progress of the war. I can't recall when we stopped hearing from Mother and Tante Flora (Helmut's mother), but it must have been in 1940. I came across a letter from each of us addressed to mother (via some neutral country) that I have in my old suitcase and that had obviously been returned to us. Fritz listened to the BBC every news broadcast (every hour, on the hour) and we went on, hoping against hope that mother would survive it all.

Brill taught a young Australian nurse to do some bookkeeping and then recommended her for a job in the butchery. She was Janet Southey who worked under Fritz and became friends and as you know this friendship is as close as it has ever been to this day. Dick worked as a chemist on the mine and they both had a proper house in the mine township. I remember winter evenings when Fritz and I would walk up through the Chingola township on moonlight nights. The fine dust in the streets, we imagined to be snow. The silver light on the corrugated roofs of the stores, hoar frost and at Janet's place we would find a welcoming fire in their little fire place and a hot cup of cocoa. One was safe as houses in those days. Crime was virtually unknown except for theft for which every store keeper had to budget.

Snakes were reasonably common and our dogs would stand and bark at hooded cobras with their heads raised poised to strike. I obviously got used to many aspects of life in Chingola though it took me a long time before I felt at home.

A letter to Edith in November 1945: 'It is terribly hot. Outside the crickets are chirping, Fritz is reclining in the bath, the only cool spot. Sunday, we had the first rain with thunder and lightning but it appears the rainy season isn't here yet, now it is even hotter than before and the rains have disappeared again.

You have autumn now. By the time this letter reaches you, it will be winter. I long for snow and cold, for a well-earned Spring following a dark and bare winter. Here everything falls into one's lap – nothing costs anything. I am not talking of material things (they cost a damn lot here). I mean at home one pays with a hard winter or a damp, foggy autumn for a fresh, green spring for sunny flower rich summer. I don't know whether you understand what I mean, but

one doesn't appreciate anything as much as at home, one doesn't give the same credit because nothing is as difficult to attain. If one wanted violets all year round one could get them (not true strictly speaking - remark 1978). Nearly all fresh vegetables grow all year round. Only cucumbers have a season and those we look forward to and strawberries (these we actually get 9 months in the year - remark 1978), but practically everything else is always available and one gets so used to them, they mean very little.

Never mind, enough about the climate etc. I bore all my friends with such talk. I am so aware of nature and so depend on her that it influences me a great deal and determines my attitudes.

Now you must not think that there is no beauty here or that I don't like the countryside. The incredible size of the bush gives one an incredible feeling of freedom which one could hardly have in a civilised part of the world. I often wonder how I would feel in a mountain area where dogs have to be kept on a lead, where one is not permitted to smoke, cannot break off the tiniest twig. Here everything belongs to you. In the bush there are no mapped-out roads. You find the narrow, winding paths the natives have trodden. One can walk, drive wherever one wants. One can, in order to get one flower off a tree, tear down half the branches. It will grow again. One can, in the dry season when the grass is man high, on the wide savanna, is yellow and dry, take a match and turn it into an ocean of fire. These are all aspects of life here that in the rest of the civilised world would appear as prize worthy. Our house is not large but we are our own masters. We can be noisy late into the night and our neighbours won't hear it. There are no stairs. Hundreds of times in a day we step in and out from house to garden and when heavy rains prevent us from it for a few days, we feel like inmates of a penitentiary. We have 3 dogs and never even had the intention of keeping more than one, but they are here, we are used to them and they don't compete with us for space. So is everything and wherever we will go hence, we will miss this freedom. Last, but not least we have a staff of 3 who do all the work and where in the world could one afford such a luxury?

Terry, Moses and Schlumpus are barking at the moon outside. We once had a little Duiker which an African found abandoned in the bush. We called it Rebecca a variation on the German Rehbock. It

Road scene - Northern Rhodesia

was a delightful little creature and became very friendly with the dogs. You could see the dogs and duiker stand licking each other's backside and so, quite naturally form a circle that way. One morning Rebecca was dead. We found her in her box in the bathroom and when we took out the straw a very small snake escaped from it. We also had a terrible invasion of soldier ants that entered our outside store room where Fritz was keeping a hen and her young chicks and another hen on her eggs. He kept them out of the fowl run because the others were aggressive. In the night we heard that they were restless and at sunrise found, the hen still on her eggs, dead, the other one on top of some boxes high up had escaped, but her little chicks were just so much skin, bones and fluffy feathers. They had been sucked dry and, of course dead. We had another invasion in the house a few years later. This time in the house. We found the house overrun when we returned from the cinema - we just took a toothbrush, pyjamas and went to people in the township to spend the night. Next day they had wandered on. We heard of a baby in Nkana that was killed by soldier ants.

The Congo Road, which was nothing but a dirt road that led to Tschinsenda took one across a bridge spanning the Kafue River. On one side there was a pretty waterfall, that I was almost afraid of. If I stood on the bridge and looked at the turbulent frothy water

thundering down, I always had the strong feeling that, afraid as I was of diving, I would be irresistibly drawn into jumping into it. On the other side of the bridge was a wide part of the river, where it turned. We called it the Hippo pool. It was full of crocodiles and the son of a Belgian family (Mortier) was taken and killed by a croc when he was foolish enough to swim across. The river was a source of great pleasure to us. It changed its character with the seasons. At the height of winter, one could often jump from stone to stone to cross it. Then in the rains one would feel completely lost because all landmarks would be submerged. We had never heard of bilharzia and picked the beautiful mauve water lilies which I kept in a floating bowl I'd made of a utilitarian white lampshade plugged up with a large cork and balanced on a frame. We had no vases and I would scratch around the rubbish heaps for jam jars and such like. (We had no money to buy jam in glass jars) and would fill them with wild flowers from the bush. Only once did I dig a large round flower bed in front of the house and it was at its best and very colourful, when during a storm a large tree was struck by lightning. Out of all the plus and light switches came sparks and I was terrified Helmut's radio might have been ruined (I had been told to disconnect it during storms and had forgotten), as I walked through the house and heard the clap of thunder, I instinctively knew something would give. I opened the front veranda door and as I stepped down, the large tree crashed to the ground and the heavy crown went smack into the flower bed destroying everything. My relief at finding Helmut's radio intact, softened the blow at losing my one and only flower bed.

We had a friend, a Jew from Germany, in fact from Frankfurt. His name was Max Piron. Actually, his name was Max Cohn and when he married (his wife was not Jewish) he added her name and made it Cohn-Piron. When he left Germany or even before, his wife divorced him (maybe because he was a Jew) but soon after Max dropped the Cohn and became plain Piron. We all called him Prion (not Max). He was the son of a doctor in Frankfurt and had studied art. He did very amusing caricatures and also had an inexhaustible fund of jokes. He had a glass eye and told the tall story: He had to watch a gang of Africans doing some road work or similar. Being a lazy son of a bitch himself he would wander off and go to sleep out of sight. So that the labourers would not do the same he would place his glass eye somewhere within sight and toddle off. The labourers would work just as if he had been there, believing that

the eye would watch them. Then one day he came back and found they'd not done half of the task he had mentally set them and rushed over to the watchful eye only to find that they had put a hat over it. Piron did not like work. For a whole year he slept on David's little veranda when he lived in the mine single quarters. Also, he ate the larger share of the meals which David had fetched from the dining room for single men. For quite a while he paid for his keep with his entertaining jokes, his knowledge of art etc, but eventually even David, who was very phlegmatic in his attitude to people then, got fed up with him and told him to get out.

Father and Fritz found too that he was an amusing fellow, but would have no qualms walking into their room and later on into our pantry and help himself to the last bit of bread or other food. On the other hand, he could in a moment of generosity give you the shirt of his own back. He once came with a large roll of checked cotton material for me to make curtains all around our gauzed in veranda. In order to impress people or to appear the eccentric he most certain was, he would appear wearing a monocle. At some stage of the war, he volunteered for the army and was in fact amongst the first that entered Frankfurt, his home town, when it fell to the allies. He tried to locate his ex-wife who, he had heard had died during the shelling of Frankfurt. Now his children, who, being half Jewish had been sent to Holland to get away from the Nazis, he did not expect to see again, as the Nazis of course routed out all Jews once they invaded Holland. He found them safe and sound. One of them married (and later divorced) Julianne Prion whom you both know -Piron himself settled in England and married a blonde middle-aged German woman who looked after him until, years later, he died in Malaga, Spain. He got a very decent pension from the German Government and went to live in Spain where, until a few years ago(now 1978) living was cheap, the climate kinder. Looking back over the years in Northern Rhodesia, I realise that one did not take the Africans seriously at all. They were 'children -unreliable, uneducated, dishonest, stole where they could, lied when it was convenient, turned up at work when it suited them'. Clowns/amusing children - in awe of the 'white man's muti's' and so on. I admit in those years the idea of their independence or even equal rights probably never entered our heads at all. Never came across one that spoke English except for a few who knew a little and spoke it when they were drunk. Hence, we learnt Chi-Kawanga, or Chilapalapa, within a week. The feeling that they had

the potential to be made part of the 20th Century only came home to us when we came to Southern Rhodesia and I came across letters to Edith in which I deplore the attitude of the Afrikaners (Boers) who believed implicitly that God had created them to serve

Kopje view of African wilderness

the white man in perpetuity. As far back as 1947 I wrote of the need to train and educate the Africans and to absorb them into the white society as soon as they were capable of doing so to lay the foundation of an eventual equal society.

To get a change, people from the Copperbelt went across the border to the Belgian Congo, where one found, even in the very basic primitive border towns (villages, nay hamlets would be a better description) had a continental atmosphere. Madam Fifi ran the little bar across the Tshingzenda where Fritz, David,

Janet and Dick and I went to get drinks unobtainable across the way in Northern Rhodesia. We also visited Elisabethville about 90 miles from Chingola which had pave streets and sidewalks, lighted streets and many varieties of shops, an attractive hotel and nightclubs. I remember sitting down in a little vegetable shop just smelling Brussel sprouts, celery etc that reminded me of 'home'. Also, they had the same scales and kg weights as in Germany. On the Copperbelt there were just department stores - primitive though they were but in Elisabethville there was a little jewellery store, dress shops, cafes where one sat on the pavement and watched life go by. I remember dancing right through the night at the L'Ermitage. Believe it or not David and I were quite good at, what, even then was called the old-fashioned waltz and we were always the only couple on the floor. Why, I really don't know, except that I enjoyed the swish and speed and the turning and turning until one was dizzy, then quickly to reverse. Neither of us was good at dancing but the Old-Fashioned Waltz we got a kick out of. What appealed to us in the Congo was the fact that public places were multiracial. Once, after your father and I got engaged, yes, believe it or not, after all the years during which he swore he'd never marry, he actually bought me a modest, but nevertheless, a diamond engagement ring. Though I was never partial to diamonds, I wore it with great pride because, David, the Bohemian, the unsentimental,the non-conformist, did this incredibly conventional thing and it really pleased me. Sonya Hude came to Chingola to 'look me over'. While she stayed on the Copperbelt we took her to Elisabethville and hoped to get new tyres there. Belgium was still out of the war - or had it already capitulated?

Anyway, one could get lots of things that were not available from Britain anymore and 95% of all the goods we got in Northern Rhodesia came from the UK. We found all tyres were sold out and were advised to go another 90 miles (also pretty bad dirt road) further north to Jadotville. Sonya, though quite adventurous, had had enough of the bad dusty roads and stayed at the Hotel Leopold where she just rested and went for gentle walk. David, Fritz and I drove off to Jadotville. It turned out that Sonya had a right instinct as it turned out 'eine Reise mit Hunderussen (chaotic). Only perhaps 20-30 miles out of Elisabethville the car coughed and spluttered and stopped.

David opened the bonnet of his 1932 model Dodge. They were still the hinged type that lifted on either side. He found that the pump wasn't working right. He fiddled a bit and on we went. Another few miles, the same thing. Eventually he decided to take the pump

Underground copper miners - early David Chdy painting

out and cut new gaskets out of old cardboard. We went with fits and starts till about 15 miles outside Jadotville. Then it packed up. These 15 miles I drove, David sat on the bonnet with a champagne bottle full of petrol (which he'd siphoned out of the tank, sucking it up first and getting a swollen face from it) which he slowly poured

David and Ellen - 'string selfie'

into the carburettor, while I tried to look around him with the now setting sun, full in my face. A bottle took us about 1½-2 miles and the syphoning and spluttering and climbing on the front was repeated again and again. Eventually the sun also reflected from the shiny bonnet and I drove more by feel than by sight. We drove into Jadotville as the sun set behind the hill. Jadotville seemed a pretty town built on hills and it had steep roads. We enquired about the garage who were supposed to stock the tyres we needed. (All shops had closed). We parked the car and walked around the streets and eventually found the man, who not only had the tyres and offered to go to his shop to get them, but also said he'd help with the repairs we so obviously needed.

Fine - we, in renewed good spirits, returned to collect the car, only to find that it wasn't there. Queer that, we thought we'd made sure to remember the spot we left it at. Felt pretty confident that we had come to the right spot. A nice place we had come to, where they steel cars, looked into the bargain. (Remember this was 1945 and crime most unsophisticated). Look around for a police station only to find that about a quarter of a mile or less, we saw the old black Dodge unmistakably ours (dark red undercoat showing in various place and a Northern Rhodesia number plate) David Chudy, who never put the hand brake on when parking, but usually left the car in gear, had for reasons I now forgot, got out of the car on a pretty steep slope and left it in neutral, without brakes and of course it had rolled and rolled and rolled until it encountered a 'trottior' (sidewalk) which it jumped and which in the circumstances, luckily, punctured the wheel which acted as a brake, also rode into a pile of builders sand which had brought it to a complete halt. Just as well, since it would have gone right through a shop window of a brand-new building. With renewed faith in the honesty of the Congo inhabitants we repaired the wheel and drove the car back to the garage. David and the mechanic repaired the pump, we purchased the precious tyres (unobtainable on the Copperbelt) and looked for somewhere to sleep since by now it was well after midnight.

At day break we set off on our return journey. Although it was only 90 miles from Elisabethville that was a journey of 3½-4 hours and we took it in turns to drive (David and I, Fritz didn't drive). I did the first part and while David was driving, I dozed off. Quite close to Elisabethville here was a fork in the road and a sign. David going flat out at 30 miles per hour overshot and decided to reverse in order to

read the sign. Some sixth sense made me wake up and yell 'watch out' but it was too late - we were already in a beautiful newly dug 3-4-foot-deep ditch. There we were, tilted at a precarious angle, the wheel not even touching the bottom of the ditch which was the most perfect rectangular ditch I'd seen in Africa. It took us a good hour to fill the ditch (no shovel available) and gradually jack the whole car up in stages. I need hardly tell you that we did not restore the ditch to its original perfection. We hastily drove towards Elisabethville (having actually anyhow, been on the correct fork in the road). Sonya was quite alarmed about our

non-appearance the day before. We of course hadn't worried at all, because when we realised that we would never reach Jadotville on time to return the same day, we stopped one of the two cars we encountered going to Elisabethville had written a note for her warning not to expect us till next day. We had asked the person to deliver the note to the Hotel Leopold, which he did. Only the staff did not send it to Sonya's room but put it on the board where mail for residents is displayed. Naturally Sonya who was there for 2 days only, didn't look out for mail and so sat in her room biting her nails to the quick. Soon it was all forgotten and we proceeded to enjoy the pleasures of Elisabethville which included a visit to L'Ermitage where we danced through the nights. I danced a great deal with a young man who was also visiting from Chingola. He was tall, handsome and wore a kilt (still don't know whether they wear pants underneath. Young Capstick Dale was there with his mother - a red headed woman who worked in a Government Department in Chingola. We all had a good time and set off next morning to return home. Mrs Capstick dale (no she was married a second time and had a different name) was returning on her own and it was decided that we travel in 'convoy' because one always had to reckon on mishaps, flat tyres, broken springs etc (all had ancient cars). The last moment your gallant father decided to drive Mrs Whatsit himself and just yelled to me, 'go and drive my car.' I was furious. Wasn't I a helpless little female too. (I expect I was a lot younger). In a foul temper, not the most experienced driver anyhow, I started up the car and she wouldn't move or rather, she barely moved, I revved and revved and eventually smoke billowed all round. I stopped and jumped out in a rage swearing at that bastard (no, in those days I didn't even say bloody) or whatever the strong swear word for me, who'd just driven off leaving me with his clapped out car and just Fritz, who was worse than useless when it came to anything mechanical and a woman doctor whom we were giving a lift back.

After lifting the bonnet and finding nothing wrong with the engine, I went back into the driver's seat only to realise that, after the experience in Jadotville, Chudy had, for the first time, since I met him, put on the hand brake. I swore some more and then we went on our way.

We got back to the Copperbelt none the worse, but I still felt sore about David abandoning me and what put the lid on it all was that 'he'd given the old lady (I am sure she was not more than about 40-45) a lift because she worked for the customs department in the police and we would be able to get through customs without paying duty for the new tyres. He forgot that I had the tyres in the car and that he'd crossed the border before me.

Thus ended our weekend in the Congo. We did go across a few more times and I shall never forget one particular return journey. Since we stayed up nearly all night on these visits, we really were always rather tired returning home. Again, we would take it in turns to drive. I was driving along the fairly narrow dirt road which was flanked by trees and shrubs, covered in dust and all I could see was the read earth road ahead and the bush ahead on either side and, out of the corner of my eyes, the vegetation on either side. Suddenly, it all became animated - there were shops lit up on either side, the feeling of people on sidewalks - wait - we were in the middle of the bush country - what was happening - immediately I pulled myself up, as it were there was just the bush, blackness beyond and only the beam of the head lights on the road ahead just touching the verges. It was obviously an illusion brought about by over tiredness and later on I found that David had had similar hallucinations.

A dream 10 April, 1942: 'I dreamt last night Mr Messerer, Edith and I wandered along a path in the bush. From the dying trees hung blood red leaves in shreds, like meat in a butcher shop. The sky was almost white. Every now and again it seemed as though the ground were covered in fiery and yellow autumn flowers and then it was only dead grass. We walked along for quite a while and were sad because winter was coming who bleaches the sky and the countryside' -

Also from my diary - April 13, 1942: 'We slept 2 days on a farm about 50 miles from here. I slept in a room full of old junk. The moon

Ellen and 1932 Dodge

CONTENTS

Ellen - Northern Rhodesia

shone in through a crack in the roof. I watched the sunrise over the plain and the winding river below. Two natives rowed us along the river which the cool morning breeze curled and teased. I had only ever seen the river bordered by trees but this time, as we rounded a bend the country opened up and it filtered, pale blue, into the lime green plain, dotted with red and yellow and the grass moved gently in the wind - the movement of the water. Above us was a deep blue sky that paled where it touched the dark outlines of the distant bush'.

We wandered through a neglected orange grove. Amongst the dark shiny leaves we found the snowy white, scented blossoms and next to them the half ripe large oranges. We picked Manderin Oranges (Naartjes) that were still green and so sour, the drew the saliva in your mouth. Lemons there too in great quantities. Even a forgotten peach tree we came across. Its bare branches were dotted with tiny blossoms. They looked for all the world like helpless, delicate pink naked babies that clung, forgotten, on to the first object they could find.

In the house in which Spiders and dust kept home, we found hundreds of old torn books, once decent furniture and China, that were signs of past affluence. The roof overhangs the walls on all four sides and forms supported on brick pillars wide verandas. On the walls are horns, lions and wild pig's heads from which spider webs together with dust hang like torn cloth. Chudy is coming tomorrow to start a new painting. I wish I could contribute to his producing something really great.

We love each other best when we ride through the bush together. When we have recovered from the stormy embraces and kisses. Then we sit together like gay children and we talk and we understand one another. We then love each other in such a hilarious fashion we have to act sedately when we get home, to hide our bubbling joy.

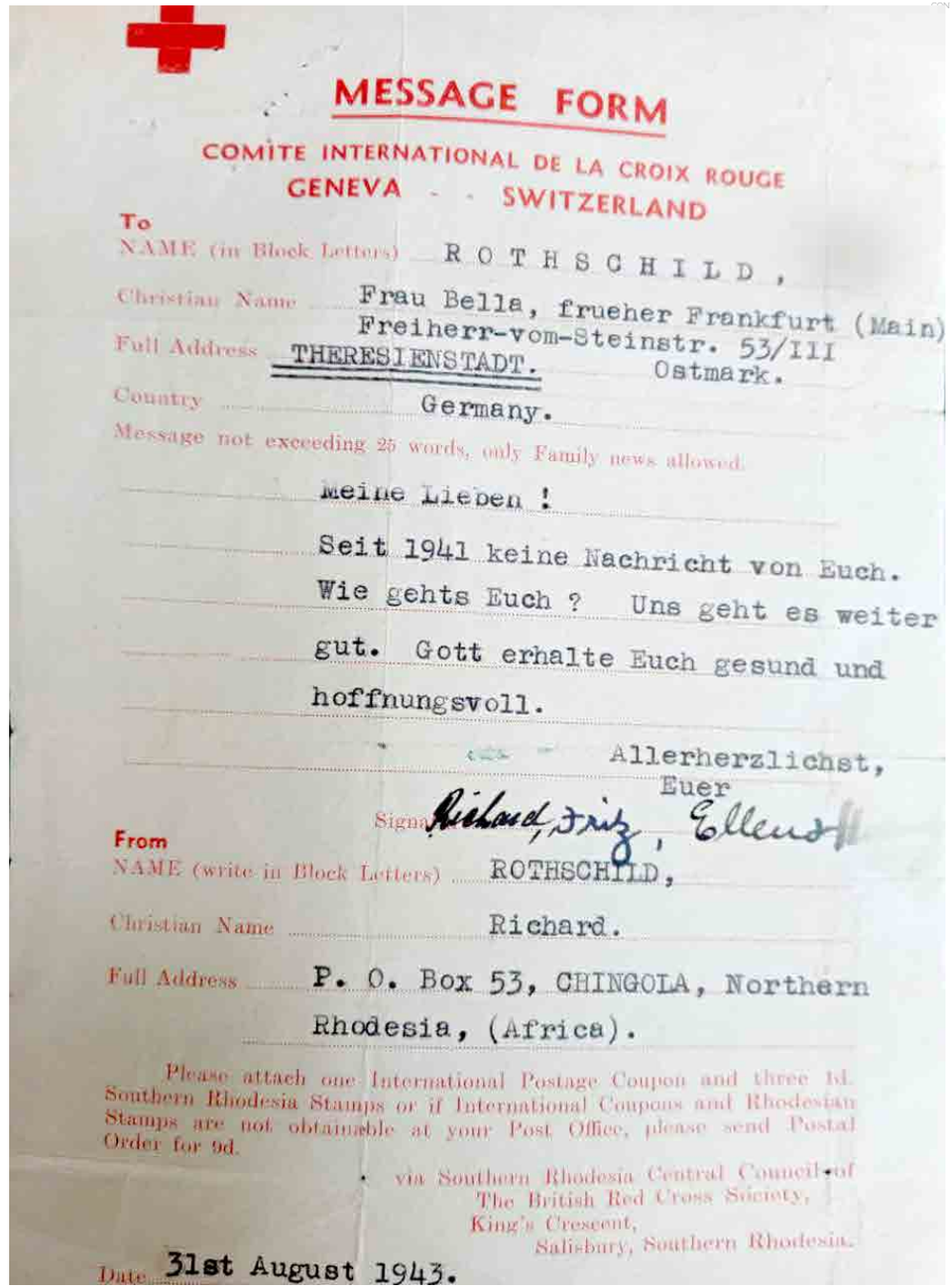
I love being carefree and Fritz has the talent to darken the sun, with a word - a glance. We three Rothschild's actually have a very silly way of being funny. It isn't even joking, we simply laugh. Yet suddenly, Fritz will stop, seems to realise how stupid I am and lets me know in a cold hurtful way. Yet, in the last few weeks we feel

a little closer. Since I spoke to him about some of my feelings for Chudy and misgivings about Freda (a Jewish woman, then a lot older than myself). He (Fritz) seems to have opened up a little and become a bit more human.
Recently we read some poetry together and I am grateful for what I learn from him. We read Edith's old poems and I even showed him a short story she had recently sent to me and we suffered goose pimples together. Yesterday he showed me two poems of his. He described them as Parodies, yet they didn't strike me as such. At least one of them. It showed Fritz as he loves and lives, with his cold in-drawn qualities. His fear of warm, emotional words. Altogether they showed his fear of showing his inner feelings. I think he already regrets having shown them to me. Still, he did, if for a moment, feel the need to show them to me. I remember poems he wrote at home that no one had ever been shown and which (being part of his diaries in a queer shorthand and Arabic script) mother made me burn on November 10th 1938. Even our happiest moments are under a constant cloud threatening a storm. I try to avert it with inconsequential chatter. In our most harmonious hours, I know, that any moment it can end, that in a second a thought in a different direction can destroy everything. That is why I must laugh and chatter to make myself forget and to stop him from going off on a tangent.

Here is the poem (can't translate it meaningfully - I don't think).

Vor dem aufgetanen Schlund der Kühle
weichen zitternd wir vorm Wind dem kalten Tief,
bestürzt, dass so bedenkende Gefühle,
Nie Geahntes in uns selbst entfalten
Stehen wir dem Aufprall fester gegenüber als wir selbst geglaubt,
Da in Wahrheit uns doch unser letzter allerletzter Forst uns ward geraubt.
Und da wieder leichte Wellen sich wiegen, wogt der Abgrund noch auf unsren Zügen.

Why am I always full of longing when I am in love. Every minute away from him I think of him, wish I were with him there and then. We are alone together so very seldom. There is always the threat that Fritz or Helmut will turn up. Most of the time they just sit around in the house and won't leave us on our own. Only on Saturday



MESSAGE FORM

COMITE INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX ROUGE
GENEVA - - SWITZERLAND

To
NAME (in Block Letters) ROTHSCHILD,
Christian Name Frau Bella, frueher Frankfurt (Main)
Freiherr-vom-Steinstr. 53/III
Full Address THERESIENSTADT. Ostmark.
Country Germany.
Message not exceeding 25 words, only Family news allowed.

Meine Lieben !

Seit 1941 keine Nachricht von Euch.
Wie gehts Euch ? Uns geht es weiter
gut. Gott erhalte Euch gesund und
hoffnungsvoll.

Allerherzlichst,
Euer
Signa Richard, Fritz, Ellen

From
NAME (write in Block Letters) ROTHSCHILD,
Christian Name Richard.
Full Address P. O. Box 53, CHINGOLA, Northern
Rhodesia, (Africa).

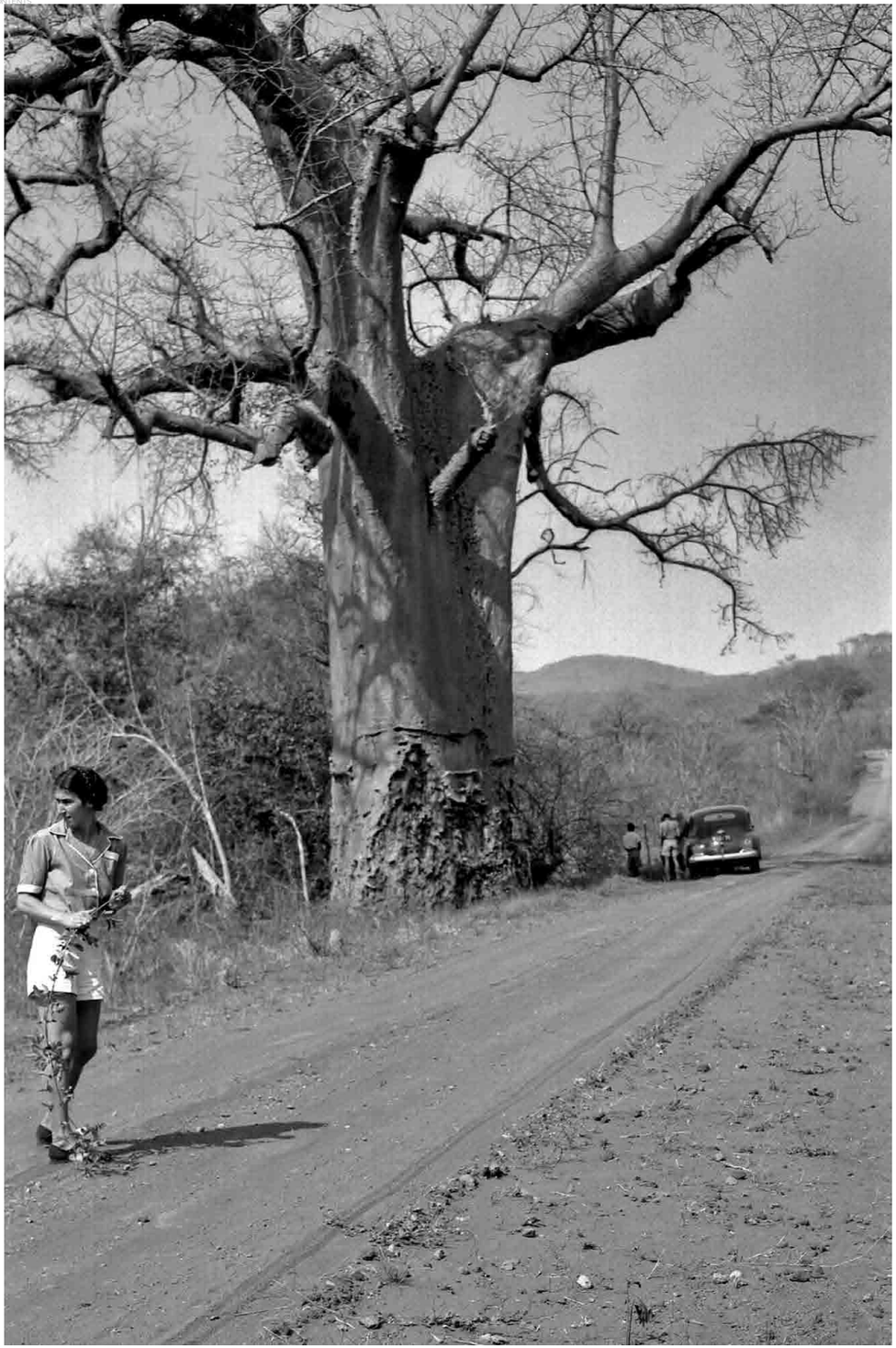
Please attach one International Postage Coupon and three 1d. Southern Rhodesia Stamps or if International Coupons and Rhodesian Stamps are not obtainable at your Post Office, please send Postal Order for 9d.

via Southern Rhodesia Central Council of
The British Red Cross Society,
King's Crescent,
Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia.

Date 31st August 1943.

August 1943: Red Cross Message sent from Richard, Ellen and Fritz Rothschild. in the hope of reaching Ellen's mother Bella - left behind and lost back in Europe in the fog of war.

'My dear, We have not heard anything of you since 1941. We are fine. God keep you hopeful and in good health. With all our hearts - from us'



Highway Baobab Pit Stop

foot in the house gone is the cleanliness, the tidiness and often the peace. If not the external than almost certainly the inward peace. 'You mustn't do this or that, those vegetables are no good, they should have been planted over there'. He hasn't a clue about these things. Just in order to say something in order to show us that we don't know anything. He is not a bad person at heart, one just cannot exist in peace with him. Especially Fritz who always has rows about financial matters.

April 20, 1942: 'I am so weak. It is good to be with him and to feel safe. When I am close to him, I feel nothing could hurt me. Last night as he drove me home from the cinema, I put my head on his lap and I could have driven through eternity with him. He stroked my hair. It was like snuggling up to Eugenie's bosom and all unhappiness forgotten. Later on, when we kissed while the moon and stars watched us, I felt I could not tear myself away from him. Then when I saw his face as a black silhouette in the moonlight, I felt afraid, it looked like a Negro - even an ape - I would like to snuggle up to him and sleep in his arms.'

April 22, 1942: I wish he could take me away, where we would be alone and I could just feel his nearness. I wish we were far away where time did not exist and remind one of returning home. Just to be happy to be together. Without destination. To kiss and not to think of tomorrow. To embrace and to shut out the thought of father, Helmut and Fritz.

I often imagine us, at home wandering over the sunlit snow in the mountains. Or to sit on the old park bench by the lake by the old castle under the crooked old weeping willow while autumn painted colourful pictures around us. I see us, pale sun in spring walking over the cowslip covered meadows under a blue sky. I hear the monotonous chirping of a cricket which vibrates the otherwise still summer air, while we lie in the tall grass and feel the sunlight through closed lids. We go wherever I have gone as a child. I show him the peach tree that I raised from a stone and that, by now, will be tall and bear fruit. I lead him up the old rusty winding staircase where we were soldiers in a castle or where Fritz would deliver speeches to the members of his 'friendship club' - we go to the river in Frankfurt and feed the seagulls - we wander hand in hand and are in love...'

afternoons can we be together just the two of us and even then, there are hundreds of cruel little things that stop us from being together. What will this Saturday bring? Probably father will come home and tyrannise us, especially me and not leave me even a little time with Chudy. He has the great need to shine to be the centre of the discussion. He thinks that people are offended if he doesn't contribute to the entertainment. He will interrupt one in the middle of a conversation in order to tell some unimportant, dull matter. My fear that he will return to live with us grows from week to week. Just now, when, so to speak I have tasted freedom, I become aware how he has kept me down. When he planned to leave, I was afraid. He had so successfully suggested to me that I could never manage without him, that everything would go wrong, I would forget things. I looked towards his departure with fear so completely had he convinced me of my dependence of him. How he has been gone for over two months. The house is cleaner, tidier, more comfortable. I haven't forgotten anything (in fact I did forget things out of fear of him when he was here). The moment he sets

I was free to really be David's girl, though everyone knew. I felt, and it becomes apparent from the multitude of letters that went by hand, 'black' on bicycle, from the mine single quarters to No 2 shaft, everything conspired to keep us apart and I could never look forward to his visits without the galling feeling that someone would turn up and deprive us of our precious time together. Father was suspicious, Fritz was suspicious and jealous. I was insecure. David's notes were very prosaic and I wanted confessions of love. The result I only felt sure of him when I was with him.

At this stage we all, Fritz, David and I explored going to Israel. But it wasn't easy to get permission. Seemingly it was Walter who told the authorities that we were unsuitable. David who, with his easy nature and practical talents, would surely have made an excellent Kibbutznik. Fritz in his own way, a Jewish Scholar who had studied Arabic could have fitted in admirably into a religious group and I, I could have milked the cows and sung folksongs to the rather clumsy dance the Hora. This was unfathomable. At this point

Fritz. Ellen, unknown and David with converted passenger Avro Anson

Walter knew nearly nothing about us. He met me once as a child and spent an hour with me waiting at the trains station when I was refused a visa to stay in Bulawayo on my way to Chingola in 1940.

David, who, I think I mentioned before, was determined never to get married. He had read certain philosophies especially one Weiniger, who considered women had no moral sense. Women loved their children irrespective of their worth as human beings etc, etc. Also, I think he felt that an artist ought not to tie himself to

Flat in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia (Harare, Zimbabwe)

a family. It was also rather bourgeois and he too felt that he hadn't experienced enough love affairs. All the girls he had taken out were of very mediocre calibre and he dreamt of great experiences. I had accepted the fact that our affair would end one day and at times

felt sure that it would be better if we parted because I was not at all sure that I would be happy with him. I think I also mentioned that he got furious when people asked him when he would marry Miss.

So, one day he decided to go to Mufulira to get a job. He asked for a job underground so that he would be able to paint pictures of underground scenes, but because he knew that he would never be able to break off our relationship unless he moved away. So he got a job as a pipe fitter and duly moved to Mufulira.

'Ellen accepted the inevitable' and then - Chudy (I called him that till we got married) went to work on his bicycle every day and saved his petrol ration (the war was still on and anyway rationing didn't just top when it was over) which made it possible on an average, to visit Chingola twice a month. Now I really felt happy and carefree because now the only reason he could come to visit me for was that he was indeed in love with me and that both my and his doubts disappeared. I spent a happy year looking forward to his visits, which were still beset with difficulties because of father and Fritz and people who wanted lifts and then visited us and stole precious hours. But our own relationship was so much freer. Then we decided to go on a holiday together and then one day David (the Bohemian) said, since quite obviously we would get married one day, why not then and to make the holiday our honeymoon. He even got me an engagement ring and at last my father accepted him without too many reservations. Of course, he still was only a Pollack and that wasn't what a good German Jewish father had planned for his illustrious daughter. But at least Chudy was going to make an honest woman of his daughter and the fact that he'd been to school in Danzig made it a little less shocking. Fritz, by then I realised would have gladly settled for my living in sin with David rather than leave him in Chingola and become a respectable married woman. I had to go to the 'Boma' (the police station cum Magistrates Court etc) to put up the Banns - had to give notice to the accountant of Nchanga Trading Co (which apparently, I found very embarrassing and had the girls in the shop in fits of giggles).

While David was in Mufulira he arranged for me to go underground where he was working. Do I need to tell you that all the Mines on the Copperbelt were Copper mines? I got a lift to the Pit head and was shown into the office of the shift boss who was very friendly and supplied me with a hard hat. Just before I got ready, he said:

'What do you want to go down there for?' 'To see it,' I said and he remarked 'I think it's ghastly'. Suddenly I remember that all my life I'd been afraid of enclosed places and remembered the woman, who gave me a lift saying: 'Why do you want to go down there? I hated the idea of all that rock on top of me'. 'What on earth possessed me to arrange to go down into the bowls of the earth? If only I could think of a way out'. However, since I am a coward, but mostly cowardly to admit that I am a coward, I had no choice but to grit my teeth and follow the shift boss to the huge cage which was to take me down. I was almost sick with fear and yet stepped into the lift with a miner and several African labourers looking light hearted and smiling. The cage door was shut and it was now too late to protest. It started to shudder and creak and then, down it went at a pretty fast pace (I also always hated lifts especially going down). We entered the ground and only the bare light bulb supplied some light. Where was I going? Then the cage entered a lit-up area and stopped - two Africans got out and the cave they entered wasn't all that small and dark and dingy as I imagined.

Clang went the gate and we went down and I thought of all the earth and rock above and felt misgivings again. Then we reached level 1300 (I may remember wrong) and we stopped in, what seemed a huge cave all painted white with lots of bright lights and a few people moving about. Suddenly all fear disappeared and I was taken over by a man who led me to a 'side cave' even more brilliantly lit up with a desk, a workbench and a smiling David. This was his 'office' or 'workshop'. Hee it was that he wrote little notes to me, carved a little ivory figure, studied a course in radio maintenance and, when there were any pipes available did some work from time to time. We went to the underground power station which was huge, noisy and absolutely spotless. The floors highly polished and everything gleaming. The noise was so powerful it was practically impossible to speak to each other. I was also shown the crushing plant which was a cave about 3-4 stories in height. The huge rocks were dumped from higher levels into the crusher which broke the rock with two very strong thick steel plates that moved away and towards each other and the smaller rocks then fell further down. The reverberations were incredible in this huge otherwise bare rock-cave which enhanced the echoes from the falling rock.

Cranborne Hostel

We also walked along the narrower, lower ceilinged caves that had practically no light into the newly developed areas where Africans stripped to the waist sweating, with their miners' helmets and small light attached to them wielded Jack hammers that made such a noise I covered my ears. It was dark and dank and I wanted to get out. My ears hurt and even my teeth were on edge. Then one of the bosses said to me 'Why don't you try to drill a little yourself'. Again, coward Ellen couldn't say 'No' yet I felt, how can I drill myself when I can't even stand the noise with my hands clapped over my ears? I removed my hands; the cacophony was impossibly shattering. Then I was guided to hold the handles of the huge drill and to my amazement found that once I held the thing and my whole body vibrated in unison with the sound that assailed my ears, it became bearable and actually gave me quite a thrill. We wandered around even narrower, more spooky looking channels, saw little coko pans (tip wagons) roll along narrow-gauge rails then onto an uneven rail (one side higher), so that the truck was tipped sideways and spilt the rock into a long tunnel that made the rock thunder down to another level of the mine. Also stood still in a quiet part to await an explosion not so far away that shook everything around us. I came up into the sun again at midday and felt very satisfied that I'd not lost my head and showed my fear, because it taught me that it is always worth trying something new and that often one's greatest fears are groundless.

David introduced me to an old friend of his. A Belgian, Alfonse Nottebart who worked as a fitter (I think) on the mine. He had lived in Africa about 20 years. His visiting card said Alfonse Nottebart, Entomologist (oh damn - I forgot the letters after his name, there were several) (Alfonse A F Nottebart CMC (Palmers) Enginieur Médiancien (Arts and Meheis) Bach, Phil L Sustitut sup. Philos. University Louvain), Membre soc. Eulomogane de Belgique, Membre British Institute of Philosophy Etutel. then; Address permanente, Rue So and so, Bruxelles, Belgique, addresse temporarie, P O Box so and so, Mufulira, Northern Rhodesia. He was a pretty stocky man with a shock of white-grey hair, a fat round face, bright dark eyes, bushy black eyebrows and a white moustache. He lived in a rondavel which housed a large four poster bed (the posters joining a frame above which accommodated a mosquito net). Next to the bed was a table crammed to the edges with pill bottles and liquid muti's. Then a table with a large microscope. He studied amongst others, the termites and also

plants. Next came a music stand and a violin case. Bookshelves with books on all subjects. Then an easel with a painting of the Victoria Falls with a mermaid floating down, hair streaming behind waved like the waterfall. Quite terrible like all his pretty amateurish and awfully sentimental pictures. There was a kitchen dresser with cups, saucers and provisions, a large wardrobe trunk and that was the circle closed.

He was a most likeable, warm, amusing, stimulating man and we both loved him. He apparently suffered from diabetes and sundry other complaints. Usually, he went to bed as soon as he got home from work. If we visited him, he would put on his bath robe with a cord around his ample waist. When he laughed, and he had a most infectious laugh, the cord, around the largest part of his anatomy would moved up and down which always amused me. He had a great deal of knowledge on all manner of subjects and while neither a good painter nor musician he was a very creative person. He could have been the mayor in a small French town or village he was so typically continental.

He'd warned David not to get married (he was divorced himself) but when he met me, he took to me immediately and we became great 'buddies. We kept in touch with him when we left Mufulira a few years after our move to Salisbury we received a letter from him saying that he wasn't at all well and was returning to his native Belgium, more or less to die in his home country. A few months later we received a letter from Belgium to say that he was returning, that he had married the daughter of his erst while Philosophy Professor, that she was young and he was very happy. He included a photo which was small and not very good. We assumed that she was neither as young as she had told him or as much as he described and was simply a little gold digger. A telegram announced when the newlyweds would pass through Salisbury and we both went to the station. He jumped off the train, lifted heavy suitcases and introduced us to his new wife who was all he had told us. Young, attractive, intelligent etc. Gone was the ailing Nottebart, he wouldn't let David carry his suitcases. They spent a day with us and then moved on to Mufulira. We never saw them again.

We decided to get married on October 12th, 1946 and I had a special dress made by a dress maker, usually I made my own

clothes. It was a fine grey, fully pleated skirt with a fitted jacket with a mandarin collar and covered with small round buttons close together all the way down. I bought a hat (I think it was navy blue) wore stockings and navy blue court shoes. I even wore navy blue gloves.

David came to fetch me from Chingola about October 19th and I felt bad about leaving Fritz, who although my superior by far, intellectually, was dependent upon me in many ways. Before we departed, I said to David that I had to go for a walk by myself. I walked along the Congo Road and cried, but not because I was leaving home or Fritz, but because I felt I was abandoning him the way one leaves a baby on someone's doorstep. Eventually I returned and we went off to Mufulira where father was working at that time . I stayed with Susan and Helmut, recently married and Susan highly pregnant. Fritz came for the wedding which took place at the Magistrates (Boma).

Father arrived early at Helmut's place and from sheer nerves I had a row him. He was furious when I said I didn't expect David to be on time (since he never was on time). Actually, he came well before the appointed time which shook me. The four of us went to the Boma and stood around looking rather foolish dressed-up as we were.

Eventually someone escorted us to, what in retrospect, seemed a dark large basement room. Very much like a school room with rows of form benches and a sort of desk. Nothing Romantic or even dignified about it. We waited until the Magistrate came in, struggling to get his arms into a well-worn alpaca jacket. He called us over while his secretary appeared on the scene too. We all stood opposite him and he read the civil marriage lines with much coughing and bungling and stumbling over words. When he had done and we had both said 'I do' his secretary nudged him and whispered to him, so he said to David, 'You can now put the ring on,' which he did, while whispering to me 'do I kiss you now?' I kicked him on the shin saying 'no'. That really was all, oh yes when telling David to 'place the ring on my finger' he said 'this' pointing to our signatures 'is the most important part'. Saying that, he just rushed out of the room (father and Fritz had signed as witnesses). The secretary was very embarrassed that the old fool hadn't even shaken hands or wished us happiness so she did shake hands all round and smiling uneasily wished us luck. And that was that. We all

trooped out and drove to Helmut's flat. There, father opened a bottle of French Champagne. When the cork shot out it hit Helmut's brand new centre lamp which was a very large thick plate glass disc, it exploded in pieces. Father thought this was a sign of good luck (at Jewish weddings the bride or groom actually breaks some glass (usually in a bag to prevent accidents) with their feet. Helmut was not enchanted, he had bought the lamp in South Africa and though we eventually managed to bring back a plate from our honeymoon, it was not as big or nice as the original one. Although no reception was planned it was fairly certain the local Jews would come to congratulate us. For this purpose, father had laid in several more bottles of champagne (South African this time). Also, Susan had fried little sausages and made other snacks and the local friends and acquaintances started to troop in. When the drinks were nearly gone and the snacks eaten, David and I went off on the first lap of our honeymoon, namely Ndola. We had booked a room at what was then supposed to be the most attractive hotel (there were two hotels) in Ndola. To our horror and amusement, we found that we had been accommodated in the annexes and had a dormitory (six beds) to ourselves, of course. It wasn't awfully clean and the mosquito nets were a sort of uniform grey.

The second night we, in fact spent in a dingy hotel at Kafue, south of Lusaka where we met a man from Chingola. He met us with 'hallo Chudy, Hello Miss Rothschild' whereupon David said, rather stuttering, 'We are married now'. The man said 'Really - show me your ring'. Then David really sounded very guilt because I didn't wear it. (Sonya had purchased a platinum ring that was both too big for me and had rather hideous little flowers on it). He tried to convince this man, who by now felt sure we were just off on a dirty weekend, that indeed we were respectably married. I didn't really care, was in fact secretly hoping he'd tell the whole Copperbelt that Miss Rothschild and Chudy had shared a room etc. That night we went to sleep with buzzing mosquitos and the croaking of frogs and the sound of myriads of insects. (The hotel was served by a petrol run plant that produced the electricity it made a monotonous noise and produced enough light to get about by but certainly not to read and combined with the insects etc made the place dinghy and isolated. Kafue of course was near the banks of the Kafue River. Next morning, we went on the ferry that was manually moved across the river with pulleys. The bridge across the Kafue River was built quite a few years later. After Kafue we travelled down the

escarpment of the Zambezi Valley where we crossed the mighty Zambezi River. Then up the other side, looking back leaving the hazy vast valley. We travelled as far as Bulawayo, where we stopped at the Hollanders in Grey Street. Wilma had just got married by proxy to Alex Neuman, so that she could obtain permission to enter South Africa. She was frightfully officious didn't approve of our holiday mood and aimless wandering etc.

Walter, I feel pretty certain was in Israel already. From Bulawayo we went to South Africa crossing over at the Limpopo River and thence via Messina which is beastly hot and gets an average of about 3-4 inches of rain annually.

Next morning, we had breakfast in the main hotel which was really very pleasant. We set off after breakfast and that day went as far as Louis Trichard or rather this side of Louis Trichard where we stopped at an Inn called the Punch Bowl. I was enchanted to find the road lead up into Mountains (Northern Transvaal) and the road near the top was flanked by huge sheer rocks which, at night looked very impressive. We decided to return next day to see it in

Cranborne Hostel. Southern Rhodesia

daylight. The Punch Bowl was a charming farm homestead and I think we were the only guests. Next morning, we found huge fields

behind the house planted with flowers, blue with delphiniums, pink, red and white with carnations and the veranda had huge buckets full of cut flowers. I wore shorts and had my hair in plaits and the owner looked disapprovingly at David who seemed to have gone off with a teenage, when in fact I was

From there we travelled through bare Baobab country to Johannesburg. We stayed with Sonya Hude and Aaron. Martin was a lodger. We also managed to attend the Bar Mitzva of Issy (your secret service cousin) and met the rest of the family

We travelled for about 2 months; garden route to Cape Town where we stayed in various Hotels in Stellenbosch to Outshorn - saw the Cango Caves (then pretty primitively organised), Somerset West, Cape Town itself etc. I think I enjoyed Stellenbosch best. It is inland with blue mountains and delicate green valleys with vineyards.

We met a woman photographer from Frankfurt, who, it turned out, was the girlfriend of the talented Polish Silversmith who I wasn't allowed to be apprenticed to, 'on account of his 'bad name'. She told me he had been a harmless, gentle young man. When the Nazi's sent all Polish Jews back he was sent as well. I wonder whether he survived the Holocaust? Also, this photographer woman knew my sister and had, in fact, visited our place on visits to Bad Homburg.

David and I also stayed in the Grand Hotel (Cape Town) where I had spent 2 days and one night on my epic journey from the UK to Chingola. Had actually the same room in the attic. The sea in the Cape was a great disappointment to me. I'd only been to the seaside once, in Belgium and the narrow beaches with the steep mountains at the back gave me a feeling of claustrophobia. Also, they were packed with humanity. All strenuously trying to enjoy themselves. At Stellenbosch we met a most handsome German who worked as a gardener but was a very well-educated man. Your father painted his portrait. This is the only painting he ever sold. To a man from the BBC. Through this gardener, who really was most picturesque we met a German who collected all kinds of Graphics. He lived in Green Point, Cape Town where he kept his vast collection in a huge cupboard the outside of which was covered in pictures etc done by Irma Stern a very well-known German artist in Cape Town. Mr Eick (Eick was a homosexual which in German one

called schweil so the local refugees combined SCHW with Eick and made is Schweick of the soldier Schweik fame) had etchings, wood-cuts, stone prints, ink sketches etc from just about every artist one ever heard of from Rembrandt, Dürer etc to Matisse, Picasso, etc. We brought a small print of wood cut of horses by Franz Marc (tower of blue horses etc).

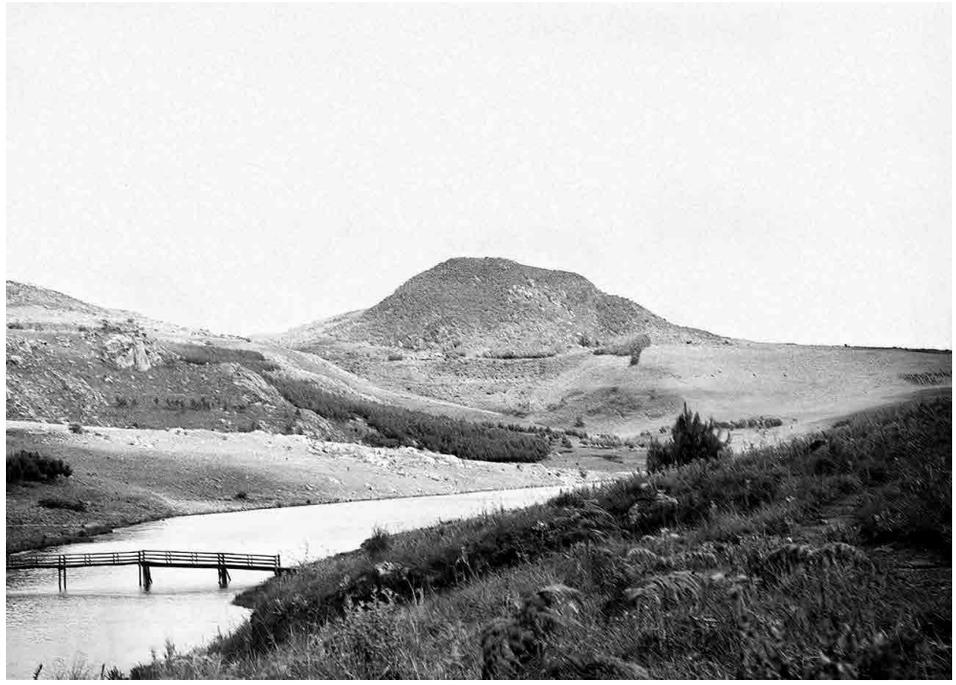
This was meant as a wedding present for Wilma and Alex Neumann. Later on, we decided to keep it ourselves and gave them had made table cloths and serviettes (from Madeira) and was I glad when we visited her in 1967 and saw her house that we'd kept the Marc for ourselves. It is a house full of opulent bad taste and the Madeira table cloth was dead right.

I think we returned to Mufulira during January 1947. This time we went via Salisbury which we fell in love with. On our way to Fort Victoria, just after leaving Beit Bridge we had a puncture so we returned to Beit Bridge to get it repaired or a new tube. We set off cheerfully again on the very torn strip road (most roads in this part of the world were just dirt roads. The best had two tar strips that were spaced sufficiently to accommodate a set of tyres. The edges often were about 4 or more inches above the rest of the road and hence the puncture. We were coasting along gaily when I suddenly saw a car wheel rolling ahead of us. David stopped shudderingly and bumpily and we realised that the wheel was ours. Obviously, it hadn't been screwed down properly at Beit Bridge. Now we had to search the bush to collect the bolts and nuts that had spread all over. I think we found two complete sets and - here we were having to return to Beit Bridge again to get two more, since a couple wouldn't really have been safe all the way for Fort Vic. I think we had one more puncture en route which we fixed ourselves. From Salisbury we went to Marandellas where Dick and Janet Southey were living on Churchill Farm, Dick working as the tobacco manager. Eric Hards, his boss the, was killed in an ambush in Mutepetepe District of Rhodesia in 1978 having returned from Canada where he went to live years ago and then returned again.

Dick and Janet had a lovely airy and spacious house and we spent several very happy days there. We were shown tobacco growing, being reaped, tied and ready for curing. Especially the tying we found fascinating. It was done by women who worked so fast one couldn't really follow what they were doing. In fact, they tied a given

number of leaves together by the stalk and then on to a stick which, when festooned with bunches all the way along were hung high up in the curing shed to be dried ready for blending and then packing.

It was this visit that decided us to come to live in this country. We got a little brick house in Mufulira and our former garden boy was elevated to the status of house boy. I started to cook which I didn't have a clue about (In Chingola I had only baked cakes and made jams and pickles). I became really friendly with Rose Messerer who was so much older than myself that she almost seemed a



Subalpine landscape - Inyanga (Nyanga)

mother figure (all of 10 years). We used to go to the local swimming pool (we never had one in Chingola) which we had invariably to ourselves. We had music evenings having bought a few records on our honey moon, I remember the Brahms 4th Symphony, Handel's ballet music suite. I also came across the first Correlli in Mufulira and arranged record evenings. Through Hands Langer whom we got to know before our wedding we met Poppy Rowley who has remained a friend to this day (she married a Kenyan and became Poppy Granger, had a son Peter and then was widowed and now lives on the Isle of Wight).

Move to Southern Rhodesia 1947

We got permits to settle in Southern Rhodesia and got ready to leave in April 1947. I begged newspapers from everyone to pack all our China and since many were old German Immigrant papers from the USA, I browsed through them all while 'busy' packing. There were so many births, marriages and deaths of former Germans that I read everyone in the hope of finding friends or acquaintances. I suddenly jumped - I found engagement (one year old) of Herta Sickel and Norbert Stiefel the latter, of all places from Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia where we were just going to live. Herta Sickel came from Germany and a relation gave me a parcel for her when I went to London in 1939. I never met her and posted the parcel from Keswick. Since I had written to her several times assuring her, I hadn't gone off with her things we became pen pals and wrote to each other. We never managed to meet and after a few years in Chingola her letters stopped. I assumed she had been killed in an air raid or similar and was of course most excited to find that a. she was still alive and b. engaged to someone, of all places in the world, from Salisbury. Later on, when we arrived in Salisbury, we met David Messerer (there on business) on our first evening there. I immediately asked him whether he knew someone named Vorbert Stiefel: 'yes', he said. 'Can you introduce me to him?' (I wasn't all that sure that he was still engaged to Herta who'd had many near engagements before). David replied 'I don't think so for a moment, he is getting married tomorrow'. So, I went to the local Synagogue the following day and met Herta for the first time. That I found I had nothing whatsoever in common with her and we really never became friends is something else.

We had been promised a small flat in Salisbury by David Foreman whom your father was going to work for. When we contacted him, we found that all that was available was a room in Cranborne Hostel (an old air force camp) and neither kitchen, bathroom or loo. We shared ablution blocks for baths and lavatories with all the people around, who also lived in rooms that had been converted from old barracks that had been divided into rooms and sets of 2 rooms for families with children. At first, we were horrified but when we started to make friends found it became in some way, one of the happiest periods of our lives. David also found that job with Dave Foreman was off but got another one straight away. Dave Foreman's son went

to Junior school with Naomi. His father committed suicide not so long after his older brother had killed himself. That was years later however. We moved from the 'Grand' Hotel (cnr. Speke Avene and First Street) to our room in Cranborne. It had two very primitive beds with chicken wire where you usually have strings and thin grass mattresses, hard and lumpy. We had a rough small bedside cabinet and, I think that was the sum total of our furniture. We had railed our few belongings from Mufulira, but they turned out to take 3 months to arrive in Salisbury. We went to an African carpenter called Telephone in Harari who made us a long bookshelf for the books we had sent from Mufulira. The shelf was ready long before any books arrived. (We still have the bookshelf in the living room. The long one with the drinks cupboard at the end along the stone wall). Incidentally the drinks cupboard was only used as such many years later. We didn't drink and never had enough money, nor, really the inclination to have it to offer to visitors. After only a few days in the camp we saw a little notice in the dining room (we ate communally) that that evening there would be a record evening of classical music in one of the public lounges. We were delighted and turned up early to be met by a tall thin tawney-haired moustachioed English Maths teacher called Tony (Sewell). He wore a navy-blue turtle neck pullover and looked a thoroughly civilised young man to us. This was to be a friendship that lasted till Tonys death in Bath (England) the same month as Mahommet's. We met Dororthy Culkin a large, dark, half Irish girl from Hull who taught music at David Livingstone School. Also, Margot Bent also a teacher (sister to Allan Bent, lately of Inyanga near the Pungwe View). In fact, nearly all the young people we befriended were School Teachers. Valery Stretch (Knox), Rosemary Newman (McAllister now Karoi) etc, etc. We had regular music evenings and got acquainted with such 'difficult' composers as Sibelius, Delius, Brahms, Britten etc. We eventually had these sessions in our one room and sat up till the small wee hours debating on music, painting, politics - the lot. They were happy days; we were all poor and enjoyed everything we managed to do. We would travel to Inyanga, a long journey over bad roads and camp by the Mare River or the Inyangombe.

Those were, in many ways, carefree days, although we had started 'Terrastone' on our little money and with no experience had plenty of headaches. But we were young and after years of stagnation in Northern Rhodesia, we were, for the first time able to make friends amongst intelligent, liberal people.

Our room soon became the sort of 'centre' where people dropped in at all hours. They sat all over the floor and I cooked many a meal on one and later two tiny hot plates. We met Oliver Lawton and Annelise. He English, she Jew from Berlin. They then had one daughter Sylvia and Annelise carried her blue plastic 'potty' about everywhere. Even on outings where there was the whole of Africa available the potty accompanied her in an open string bag. Annelise, we called 'beautiful' Annelise. She was very pretty (still is) looked like Walt Disney's 'Snow White' but had a sort of gormless quality about her. Oliver was very keen on music and was familiar with contemporary British composers, who were still an enigma to us then. He found out that during the war when in the Middle East he had actually met Tony Sewell in Palestine. They were both Maths teachers, both came to Rhodesia and worked as Meteorological Officers and both later on went back to teaching again. Tony at Prince Edward School, Oliver in African Education. We were all so full of enthusiasm and savoured every new musical record and played it until we knew every note. We could tell the difference between different conductors and could recognise various performers e.g., loved Yehudi Menuhin, thought Jasha Haifez schmalzig etc. We also became aware of the awakening consciousness of the Africans who, in Southern Rhodesia were more educated than in the North. One certainly did not think of majority rule then, but felt from a liberal point of view that the educated ought to be integrated into the white society as they became able to be assimilated. We were all very liberal with sympathies for the left. I remember how delighted we were when the labour party came into power in Britain. David and I were amused at the Labour Government that owed allegiance to a King. To us a monarchy was the expression of reactionaries and ultra conservatives. We couldn't understand how modern people could accept an anachronism with all the pomp and circumstance. Tony Sewell in spite of his leanings to the left just loved all the pomp and splendour of royalty and now, many years later I have acquired some sort of understanding for it (1978). We discussed religion till the small hours. The most vociferous being Dorothy Culkin who was a very staunch Catholic and always used the claim by the Church 'to be the only true Church' as proof that it was the only true Church. I used to counter this by asking whether by virtue of claiming to be the most beautiful girl in Rhodesia, I was.

In later years Dorothy became disenchanted with the Church

and religion, at least one of her last letters showed this deep disappointment. That was after she had married a half French, half Irish Catholic by whom she had 3 or 4 children and who was an irresponsible man whom she eventually left (that all happened long after she left Rhodesia.

In those days very few people went on holiday inside Rhodesia, even long weekends did not lure them to Inyanga, the Vumba nor indeed the Victoria Falls. I met many Rhodesians who'd never seen them. We had our first taste of the Eastern Districts when, one Easter, we drove to the Vumba together with Flora and Michael Croft (Crofty). We had no idea what to expect. People had told us that it was beautiful but I wondered (then) what Rhodesians could know of beautiful mountains. Anyway, we had to try. I remember we all went in Crofty's old coupé, rather cramped in the front. We left Umtali hot and sunny and as we climbed the then bad dirt road, we found to our utter delight that the mountains were real mountains and that we travelled through sun pierced mists that gave the hills and valleys the look of Chinese paintings. There were mists overlaid by rainbows, there were patches of gloomy grey cotton wool that would suddenly be ripped open to reveal a sunny valley. The air increasingly became aromatic and I was transported into my childhood and the smell of the Taunus or the Lake District. Soon the hillsides appeared covered in bracken and we saw the odd mimosa tree with its own fragrance. We reached the Vumba Hotel (has been closed for many years now) and asked for accommodation. It was bull up. We decided to stay and sleep in the car so arranged for Flora, Wendy and Michael to sleep in the front while David and I used the box at the back with the metal lid propped up with a stick against the elements. It was a beautiful moonlight night and tired from the trip we went blissfully asleep. Suddenly Wendy started to toss and complain which rocked the car and woke us up. She was rather a querulous child if I remember rightly. Once peace descended, I found that the box wasn't long enough to accommodate my legs and the knowledge that I had to sleep curled up all night made it impossible for me to go to sleep again.

When I realised, I'd not go back to sleep again I got dressed and crawled out from the sardine tin and went for a walk in the brilliant moonlight. I walked over to the hotel which had a view over a valley and mountains beyond and saw, below me a layer of thick cloud now bathed in moonlight. I waited till the sun came up and

watched the silvered clouds turn pink, then orange and gold. Then the clouds began to shift and to dance and rise in ribbons that were pulled in all directions and eventually rose up into the then blue sky to reveal the lush valley below. I had woken the others to watch this fascinating spectacle because, although I knew mountains, had never been above the clouds. That day was the beginning of a love affair with the mountains of Rhodesia which has never flagged and which the children, especially Philip, has carried on. We came back to Cranborne, so excited about the beautiful Vumba mountains, we arranged a trip for Rhodes and Founders weekend with all our friends. We were lucky to get the cottage of a Mrs Wood whose husband was an Anglican Archdeacon and who

Troutbeck, Inyanga (Nyanga) Mountains

had built the cottage for their retirement. A message was sent to the incumbent servant to air the rooms etc - we all set off on the afternoon of Friday and I became very worried that our enthusiasm had led us to think that it was more beautiful than we thought. After all David and I had left Europe many years before and perhaps had made us less conscious of beauty of a more temperate chime. I needn't have worried. We left Salisbury dry and bleached. We drove through tawny and dusty bush, fields and vleis. Suddenly on climbing towards our little cottage the damp, aromatic smells of the wild herbs and bracken over the hillsides, assailed our nostrils and in spite of the dark and no idea of the landscape, we were all

wild with excited. We stormed out of our cars and ran and savoured the mountain air, which, to this day, excites me when I arrive after a dusty ride.

The little cottage was lit up with storm lanterns and in the sitting room there was a crackling fire. There were branches of Mimosas in vases and a smiling man who looked after the place, welcomed us. We decided where everyone was to sleep, the men mainly in a large Rondavel next to the cottage and Margot Bent in true eccentric fashion slept on the dining room table and looked like a corpse laid out in front of the dying fire. Next morning, we were all up at sunrise and explored all around the garden which was bathed in heavy dew and found apple trees and wild mushrooms and for all the world we felt we were in Scotland. We had a wonderful time cooking hearty meal, exploring the hills and valleys. Our water supply came from the stream that had been diverted into a channel next to the house. When we followed it to its source we were led into a real dark, lush jungle where it ran out of a silent small dark pool. It was just like another world. That was, in fact, what I as a child imagined Africa to be. Tall trees covered in lichen, lianas, all kinds of climbers and parasitic plants. Not a spot of sunlight penetrated the trees and the ground was covered in lush undergrowth. When we eventually went back, we felt quite dazed when within minutes we were back in bracken covered hills that only needed a few sheep to complete the picture of the Scottish Highlands. The contrast was remarkable, here the wild, wind-blown northern mountains, there the humid, scent laden dark, dark African tropical jungle where one expected monkeys to swing from branch to branch.

From then on, we started to go into the mountains practically every public holiday or long weekend. We would go to Inyanga borrow tents and camp by the Mare River. Then all there was in Inyanga was the Anglers Rest (which at some staged belonged to Uncle Milo) and the Rhodes Inyanga Hotel, originally belonged to Cecil Rhodes. Quite a bit later the Dannakaye was built at Juliasdale. It changed to Inyanga Mountains Hotel and is now the Montclair. Still later the Troutbeck Inn was built and the road up to it, also the lake in front of the Hotel and the scenic road up to Worlds View etc.

The first time we saw the Honde Valley there were no roads leading down into it from Inyanga at all. I always felt it was a bit like the promised land to Moses, inaccessible. Especially in the hot season

the view was incredibly eery and in a way impressive. The drop to the valley floor must have been all of 2000 feet and the hot haze that was spread over it made it look like another planet. Through the misty hot blur, one could see in ever decreasing size the tops of hills whose base was obscured by the haze and looked as it they were floating.

There were no roads, no civilised habitation at all, one felt awed looking down from the clear, sharply defined edge of the mountain to this mysterious vast virtually uninhabited wild part of virgin Africa. I shall never forget when they started to plough vast areas to prepare for the tea estates and one saw huge, raw, red areas like giant wounds in this hitherto untouched land. All the mystery went out of it, when years later we drove down (there was a new road) and saw the tea estate and all the houses and sheds and neat huts. Once it was accessible it lost its magic. Later on, still someone damned up the Little Connemara Lakes which had a wild lonely beauty, much as I imagine lonely stretches of Norway. Lichen covered silver rocks, wild flowers down to the fairly still lakes. Stone cottages built to blend into the surroundings. Wild aloes grow along the edge and some of the gullies of the 'Worlds View Area'. They look so beautiful amongst the grey aromatic herbs that the mountains abound with.

Also, when we first went to Inyanga in 1947 onwards the only cultivated area was the Rhodes Inyanga Estate, near the hotel. There were apple orchards and fir plantations with trees grown as tall in 20 years as they would in Europe in more than 60. To us this was wonderful, to find a bit of Europe and there were other bits that reminded us of the temperate zones. Along the Mare River grew wild Erica (Heather). There was wild Sorrell, wood clover, brambles, tiny harebells, buttercups and I even found a forget me not and a slightly different variety of violet. There were some wattle plantations that gave their delicious perfume to the area twice a year. Only years later vast areas in the Inyanga downs were covered in wattle plantations which were used for their tannic acid used in the tanning of leather so that in later years the sent of mimosas was part of Inyanga.

Crofty - he was a chapter on its own. He worked either in the chemical or mechanical field and I think had been in the air force during World War II. He came to Rhodesia in 1946 when the big immigrant wave hit Rhodesia. He, like ourselves, had a room in

Cranborne Hostel, which was the most inhospitable place I can think of. It had a bed and a locker. I don't think it even had curtains. Michael was very musical and somewhere in his life in the UK had met Vaughn Williams. His greatest ambition was to write music and be involved in theatre or musicals. He would walk into our room without a word, would sit on the floor, get out his music paper and start to write, once in a while he would grunt and say a few words and then concentrate on his music again. If a visitor came in, he would get up with all his bits and pieces and, without a word or gesture, walk out. When he was in a good mood, he'd tell hilarious stories which would be accompanied with vivid hand and arm movements. Yet the funniest stores he told with an entirely straight face. Very often, more often than not, he would be in a depressed mood. David and I went through quite a few worried periods.
We were so inexperienced. If we came home after work and felt low, we would go to visit Crofty because he was sure to be more miserable than we were and that immediately cheered us up. He wanted to start a professional theatre so he gave up his job to be manager, producer, director, music master, composer - the lot. In Rhodesia it just wasn't done to produce any kind of entertainment for anything other than charity. So he had plenty of opposition. He wrote the music and libretto for a pantomime based on 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. We all helped and ideas were there in abundance. But alas, there was no money. When Crofty auditioned prospective actors, the daughter of a woman whose husband was in a highly placed position, wanted the part of principal boy. You may or may not know that the part of the principal boy in a pantomime is always a glamorous young girl willowy, long legged and able to dance and sing. Incidentally the Dame and ugly old hag is always acted by a male (I have met women who would do as well, in my days). Now this young woman could neither sing nor dance nor was particularly glamorous so Crofty didn't accept her. The mother had some sort of standing probably was on the Committee who tried to get the pantomime going. She was livid. Her daughter had just been through a very bad patch in her marriage and getting the part would have helped her a lot in regaining her confidence. Crofty insisted that he was not a charitable institution and so called the wrath of Mrs Wilson up himself. He always told of the incident when he met her in Stanley Avenue outside Pockets tearoom (the meeting place of friends, farmers in short the only reasonable place to have tea and cakes - coffee no one was foolish enough to order, it tasted like dishwater) and she raised her brolly and shook it and

pointed at him with the sharp tip and yelled 'You didn't take my Sheila or whatever her name might be, and with vicious snarl in her voice, 'I would like to slit your throat (accompanied by a descriptive gesture) and see your blood run down the gutter' and stalked off. Needless to say, the Pantomime never got off the ground. I'd designed one backdrop for the scene when Jack got to the top of the Beanstalk - he found a long road leading to the Giant. The Road was a strip road, entirely unique in the world, in Rhodesia.

We helped produce a play called 'Quiet Wedding' which (at least then) was very funny. In fact, I found many parallels with our own wedding. It was then we met Ken Towsey who didn't live in Cranborne but had many friends there. He was, still is, I suppose, a very good actor. Everybody helped with sets, prompting, lighting etc. It was the only play the 'Cranborne Dramatic Society' ever produced. We started another in which I was cast as a French maid, a part that was wholly unsuitable for me. But then it never got before an audience. Our dentist for many years Hugh Dornhorst was in this play too.

We were friendly with another German - Rudi Kahn who was a great music lover and had a small house in Salisbury Street. We would go there for music evenings or he would come to our room which eventually became the venue for record evenings. Rudi was a Tailor and, in some ways, a strange man. He was often quite aggressive and other times he was very retiring. In later years he became a birdwatcher (the feathered variety) and became almost a recluse. Yet he met and married a very nice English teacher.

Our small yard and makeshift office in Sinoia Street became too small as we got more and more work and we managed to get an industrial stand in the light industrial sites e.g., Hood road with borrowed money and our own materials we built a factory in Hood Road. The front was taken up by 2 offices and a two-room flat, Living Room, bed room bath room and kitchen. We were in seventh heaven.

The kitchen had dull pale green tiles, a green Terrazzo Floor, sink and working surfaces, the bathroom white and our living room had 4 walls each a different colour (all made up by us as one could only buy pastel shades in those days). A dark terracotta wall, with the curtains pale grey with scenes from the Bayeux Tapestries, grey the next, pale mauve the third and lemon the last. Such fun to put

flowers because would could chose just the light background. Say the sharp yellow fruit of the deadly night shade (on branches of course) would look terrific on either the mauve or the grey wall. White wild pear blossom - Dombeya - against Terracotta etc, etc. We went walking in the bush where now is Harari Hospital. It was pretty with trees and many wild flowers and herbs and grasses.

I fell pregnant in 1950 and was of course overjoyed and looked forward to starting a family. I was approximately 6-7 months pregnant when I suddenly discovered that I hadn't felt the baby kick for several days. I told no one but watched with great anxiety whether it had just been a phase. Every now and again I felt the overture contractions, which could just be mistake for movement of the baby. Once I realised that the kicking had stopped and also, I did not feel pregnant any more, I went to Mr Higginson, who was pretty certain that I was right and the baby was dead. This not feeling pregnant any more is very strange. After all I had as large a belly as ever before, yet, what seemed cumbersome, heavy and forever got in my way, seemed not to exist. All actions which due to my size I found difficult and awkward, how were as easy as if the baby had disappeared.

What it proved to me was that our body has an instinctive protective system that makes us feel large and awkward so long as the living foetus requires it. Once it is dead it dispenses with the protective instinct. After a few days Mr Higginson decided not to wait till the actual day of birth, it would have been too cruel to walk around looking pregnant, knowing I was carrying a dead child around with me. David was cross with Higginson for not giving my any hope. I was glad because I knew that to hope and then lose it would have been infinitely worse. At least I knew what to expect. On a hot October day, I was admitted to the Lady Chancellor Nursing Home, then a large single-story building on the corner of 2nd Street and North Avenue (the Circeraxerum Bush is named after the Lady Chancellor because in its grounds was planted the first bush in Salisbury, maybe Rhodesia). I was given injections to bring on labour which died away once medication stopped. I was in labour for at least two days and nights. The loneliness during those days and especially the nights, the uncertainty as to what was actually happening was ghastly. The medication resulted in diarrhoea and vomiting and labour pains - that in themselves are

quite horrid enough, were compounded by wanting to double up to vomit, lie back to relax and sitting on a bed pan. There were funny moments too. It was lunch time and the ward maid had brought in bangers and mash (sausages and potato). I enjoyed them but every now and again had to lie back to go through a pain that was so large I couldn't speak. Yet underneath there was the thought - I hope she won't come back and take my partially eaten meal away - then relax and have another helping - only to go back groaning with pains, till I had another respite and to have yet more sausage etc. In the end I was given an anaesthetic of Pentothal which I'd never had before and thought wonderful. No smell of ether or chloroform, no mask over the face to make you feel that you were being suffocated. Just an easy fading away and an equally floating sensation when coming round. The surgeon ruptured the membrane of the uterus (amniotic sac) which resulted in the waters breaking and the proper abortion sequence starting in earnest. Since there was no baby to consider the nurses didn't bother too much.

Also, when the time came for the baby to be born, they all maintained that the pelvis had not opened up enough yet and would take another 8-12 hours. The pains were getting worse and suddenly I heard someone screaming and then realised it was me. Everybody came running and I was ready to give birth narrow pelvis or not. I obviously had, instead of pushing held back having been told I wasn't anywhere near ready so suffered even worse pain. I had to have the baby in my bed - no time for labour ward, no time for pan killing gas (which they were going to supply liberally because of the baby needing no consideration). The fact that my bone structure was such that the baby could not come out only with great difficulty and might have had its head crushed. Hence Philip and Naomi being caesarean babies). Anyway, once the head was born, I thought 'I must go through this again and then hear my baby cry'. At that moment I put the loss behind me and only though of 'another' one. I was so fit afterwards David didn't want to believe that it was all over. It was in hot October and I remember the jacaranda trees in the grounds of the (old) General Hospital to which I was moved.

Once it was all over, I was pleased to have my old slender figure back again. In 1951 I fell pregnant again and I had the caesarean section done 2 weeks before the expected date of birth. I had

a spinal injection that made every part lower down impervious to pain, not to feeling. They are not all the same. I actually felt everything and at first feared, 'once he gets deeper, it will hurt' but there was no pain at all and as David wasn't all that keen to have children and was more keen on the female of the species, I thought a girl might be more acceptable. The anaesthetist chatted to me (while a towel was hung up so that I wouldn't see al the gory details) and said, what it is going to be, I said better be a girl. When Mr Higginson yanked out the baby and held it up like a rabbit by its ears (or so it seemed to me) she said 'it's a booooy' in that gloomy voice that was used when the state lotteries were drawn and a ticket that got first or second prize went to Johannesburg.

Philip had very thick hair, very low forehead and deep wrinkles from nostrils to mouth. He looked a bit like Aaron Huge. He was perfect with no blemishes and not having to struggle out as most babies do, had a perfectly shaped head. Then I was put to sleep while the surgeon sewed me up and I woke later in my bed. We lived in a flat on the Industrial sites next to the offices and had a dog called 'Pecksniff' whom we got from Janet and Dick Southey (bred by Jean and Basil Farrant) all from Marandellas. Since I took delivery of Pecksniff a 'pure bred' adorable Scotty, it remained my dog. If I got up from a chair (Pecksniff underneath), Pecksniff would go with me. Greeted me like a long-lost friend when I went even to the bottom of the road.

I came home, Philip, all tightly wrapped (that's what one did in those days). I walked into the living room and Pecksniff just looked and me and never 'said a word' of welcome. We were friends but the special relationship was gone. When Philip started to crawl, I always had the feeling that Pecksniff intimated to Philip, that as long as he left her alone, she was fine. He never tried to tp be friends but eventually they were.. We had a cat whose name I have forgotten. She had kittens but was a very neglectful mother. Whenever the kittens mewed and wanted her to feed or comfort them, Pecksniff would jump into the box and lick them. When mother cat was pregnant again she fed them till quite large but suddenly ceased this completely and ran away anytime they approached her. Pecksniff got into the box and made very undog like sounds to which the kittens responded and - all three of them jumped in and started to suck from the dog, who'd never had pups before. She let them do this several times a day. Always calling them with that

David Chudy Sculpture of Ellen - circa 1957

strange call. Soon the kittens got tired as Pecksniff could be no better than a comforter (dummy). Pecksniff went on heat several times and had dogs crowding around to mate with her - but when it came to the crunch, she scared them off.

We decided she wasn't interested in sex and took no precautions. When she was on heat several seasons later, we weren't worried and on a Sunday afternoon with one elderly lady amongst the tea visitors, Philip stormed in and announced voice, come 'Mummy, Daddy there is a large black dog stuck inside Pecksniff'. The old lady looked distinctly uncomfortable. Anyhow, though the dog was twice Pecksniffs size, he was black and not entirely unrelated to a little Scottie (with a curly tail, much to Jeans Farrants chagrin who presented her as a thoroughbred). She had several rather delightful puppies that looked very much like Pecksniff, which we gave away. Later on, one of her off spring mated with her brother and we got the result of that Union - Scamp.

Philip was a very active child and was never satisfied with the state of development he was in. While lying he wanted to sit, when sitting he wanted to crawl, when crawling he wanted to walk, which he did one day (about 13 months old) and never crawled from that day on - I forgot to mention about his name. Not being observent Jews, we didn't bother with the custom to call a child after the nearest dead relative. In our case David's parents or my mother. David was neutral and I felt if I made up a name for a boy based on Bella it would be ridiculous. I reckoned if we called him Philip Eugenie it would give Eugenie Philippi great pleasure to be considered family (she was like a mother to all of us Rothschild's, since before Fritz and I were born). David was happy with the choice especially as his favourite second so called uncle (was married to his real cousin) was a Philip too (Philip Landau).

Much later we brought out a member of this family from Holland – Rosa. She one of two daughters of Philip Landau, The other was LyiaThey survived the war after both her parents were taken to the gas chambers. Lyia was rolled in a carpet in the neighbor's loft when they came and took her parents away.

I would have most liked to call him David, but knowing his father I reckoned if I called 'David!!!' I would not have 2 Davids come running, but none and the excuse 'I thought you meant the other one'. I did tack on the David, so that later on in life he could chose

to be called after his Papa. I forgot to mention that we moved out of our industrial property in Hood Road after building larger premises and a larger flat, strangely enough the land we bought was also in Hood Road further along in what was on the 'heavy' industrial sites. We had a pleasant little place with a larger, living\dining room and two bedrooms - so that Philip had his own room, curtains with hand woven, striped yellow, red and grey stripes and a red cot (or was it grey?). We kept a part of the now 2-acre plot as a garden and planted lawns on the side and front. Put in a Cyprus hedge and had small borders with flowers. We looked across a vlei with a very wide deep channel concrete lined to drain the swamp. This area was full of frogs in the rainy season and you heard every kind of croak and song you can imagine. They also came into the house - very flat ones and those that got under furniture that was moved about twice a month, dried out with fluff and dust.

That part of Hood Road had no other buildings and in the rainy season outside was clay which turned into a sort of bog. If you walked on, what eventually was made into a road, your shoes were sucked from your feet. At the end of winter when the weather warms up there appear dust devils, that look like funnels high into the sky where there is dust. They are very powerful forces and I once saw a whole corrugated hut lifted into the air landing quite a distance away.

When we still lived in the first factory building a neighbour (a builder) had a flat over his officers for an overseer or such like. In fact, they just rented it out to an elderly couple. Philip called Dorothy Ahrens 'auntie up the stairs. Theirs being the first place upstairs he'd ever see. Ever since the time we met Tony Sewell in Cranborne, we organised 'music evenings' about once a week and through that we met new people like Carl and Muriel Baraf, Rudi Kahn and others with whose lives we were intertwined almost to the present day. I recall that it was Muriel Baraf who introduced us to Brahms' clarinet quintet and Mozarts clarinet concerto. Also, to Brahms' German Requiem. The latter has very emotional connotations. At David's cremation we had 'Denn alles Fleisch, es ist wie Gras +(All flesh is like Grass) and will forever move me to tears.

Philip was born in April 1952, by caesarean section - 'an operation that was performed on the wife of Ceasar' a considerable time ago'. Having said that with conviction, my history may not simply 'shaky' - it might actually be non-existent. After the loss of our first baby and a miscarriage (early on in my second pregnancy, I was determined to make sure that the next one was going to be OK even if I had to 'cough it up the child'. When I carried Philip I was pretty large and he weighed 7lbs 11 oz which is a good weight. I had what is now called an epidural which is used rather than a general anaesthetic. With general anaesthetic t is imperative that the baby

Visting the Eastern Highlands: Jenkinson and Chudy families

to be removed within 3-4 minutes. Any longer than that it could negatively affect the its wellbeing with dire consequences. With an epidural, speed is not so essential. An advantage is also that the mother can see her baby as soon a s it is born.

Well, Philip had a lot of dark hair, a sort of autumn with ginger lights in it. By the time he was 2 years old he had blonde curls. He had the most unusual blue eyes. They were very large and had a quality of violet in them (the colour of a particular Datsun 120Y I saw around). People used to stop in the street and remark on the colour which stayed for a long time. I thought they'd stay that way, alas they turned into grey with brownish specks.