

The Association of Diplomatic Studies and Training  
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

**AMBASSADOR JAY PIERREPONT MOFFAT**

*Journals*

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Background

Entered the Foreign Service in 1919  
A typical work day at Department of State  
Treaty of Versailles  
Senate League of Nations debate  
Senator Lodge  
President Wilson

Warsaw, Poland; Third Secretary (?)

1919-1921

Journey to post  
Minister Hugh Gibson's  
The "Blue Palace"  
Chief of State Pilsudski  
Prime Minister Paderewski  
Role in Peace Conference (1919)  
Pianist  
Assets and deficiencies  
Poland dread of war  
Support Germany or Russia?  
Kosciuszko Squadron reception  
Pilsudski  
Bolshevik atrocities reports  
Jan Sobieski  
Merian Cooper  
Herbert Hoover  
Boys Legion (Vigilantes) massacre  
Poland's scrambled frontiers  
Poland/Russia relations  
Patek failed mission to enlist UK support  
Poland's fighting force  
Berlin visit  
German unrest  
Poles invades Ukraine  
Cossacks enter Ukraine  
Paul Dukes

Journey to Kiev  
Merian Cooper  
Train travel  
Countess "X"  
Budienny  
Red Cross  
Brest-Litovsk  
Collapse of Polish Front  
Bolsheviks (Soviets) reach Warsaw then collapse  
British support of Polish/Soviet armistice  
Plans for evacuation  
Embassy documents burning  
Diplomatic Corps  
Government move to Posen  
Russian peace delegation  
Warsaw martial law  
Exodus towards west  
Refugees  
Club des Chasseurs  
Wielki Pans of 1920  
General Weygand  
Soviet retreat  
"Miraculous deliverance of Warsaw"  
Cathedral "Te Deum"  
"Fall of three great empires of Europe"  
Russian  
Austria-Hungary  
German  
"Congress of Poland"  
Return of Polish nobility  
Warsaw post-war environment  
Polish Cardinal  
Polish aristocracy  
Exploring post-war Poland  
Free City of Danzig  
Letts and Balts  
Riga's "White Terror" and "Red Terror"  
Warwick Green writings  
Views on Polish philosophy

Tokyo, Japan: Second Secretary

1921-1923

US-Japan relations  
Hugh Wilson  
Washington Conference  
Carrying the diplomatic pouch  
Ambassador Charles Beecher Warren

Tokyo  
Environment  
Russo-Japanese War  
Conference on Limitation of Naval Armaments, Washington  
Prime Minister Mr. Hara stabbed  
Prime Minister Takahashi  
Visit to Nikko  
    Chrysanthemum Garden Party  
    Court  
Typical wedding reception  
The Family Council  
Japanese Spring  
Mt. Fuji excursion  
Prince of Wales visit  
Ika (Ikaho) excursion  
Japanese house and daily routine  
Visits of mother and brother  
Monastery visit  
Earthquakes  
Bath houses  
Japanese leave Siberia  
    Refugees  
    Reds enter Vladivostok  
    US Consulate Vladivostok closed  
Geisha parties  
Wrestling matches  
Movie theaters  
Imperial duck hunt  
Departure

## JOURNALS

Warsaw:

In the spring of 1919 I returned to America to take my examinations for the diplomatic service. They were not as much of an ordeal as I feared, and I was fortunate enough to pass in first of my group with a grade of 90.65. Before being sent to our posts we were given a few weeks training in the State Department during the summer months. In those days the Department was still like a club: the outsider was regarded with a faint air of suspicion, but a member, even a junior, was treated with absolute trust. With rare exceptions, the day's work ended at 4:30; an occasional afternoon off for golf was considered normal, and no one raised a disapproving eyebrow at generous weekends. Naturally, my work was pretty routine in character, making summaries of dispatches for Bill Castle, keeping the minutes of interdepartmental meetings, and the like; but I did

have access to most of the telegrams, particularly those relating to the new states in Europe. For the most part they told of a series of clashing nationalistic ambitions, which neither hunger, nor poverty, nor revolutionary mutterings served to quell. But our forcing policy was as a standstill; there was little the United States could do until the Senate had ratified or rejected the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations.

Wherever one went, this was the sole subject of conversation. At first there were many who studied the subject with an open mind, but as the weeks sped by the lines became drawn, and feelings ran so high that even among friends argument risked degenerating into abuse. I made it a practice in the late afternoon to go down to the Senate galleries and follow the debate. It was probably the last great forensic battle of modern times. The Administration supporters had the advantage of unity of purpose, while Senator Lodge as the leader of the opposition had the difficult task of keeping in alignment a disparate group ranging from “mild reservationists” to “bitter enders.” To counterbalance this, the Administration senators lacked inspiration – only President Wilson himself seemed able to fire the American public with his burning zeal – while supporting Senator Lodge was a galaxy of outstanding debaters who had the gift of dramatizing their beliefs. More than once I saw the Senate galleries, in defiance of the rules, burst into applause following a speech by Borah or Johnson or Knox. The President who was slow to believe that the country would support an attempt to “break the heart of the world” became apprehensive and started West to plead in person for the League of Nations. His speeches, as they came back to us in Washington over the wires (this was before the days of radio) seemed more and more to have a Messianic ring, which aroused his visible audience to boundless enthusiasm, but did nothing to dispel the growing fear of millions that membership in the League would inevitably involve us in Europe’s perennial wars. Then came the President’s collapse, and a long interlude when the country felt that it was drifting, without a hand at the rudder. Slowly but relentlessly the tide of American idealism began to recede, while from his bed in the White House President Wilson tried to stay the ebb. He came to think of his opponents as the forces of evil, and refused to compromise with them even to save the League. In November the Senate was willing to agree to the Covenant, provided the President were willing to accept a series of reservations. Most of us who later served in Geneva felt that even if the reservations did in theory give us a mildly preferred position, yet they would in practice have done little to hamper, or even retard, the development of the League. But on the ground that “the resolution in that form does not provide for ratification, but rather the nullification of the Treaty”, the President instructed his followers to vote against the proposal. Because America would not enter the League all the way, he refused to countenance her entry nine tenths of the way. Having created the League, his was the hand that sterilized it. To my way of thinking, the tragedy of Woodrow Wilson centers in that one decision.

Late in September I was posted to the Legation in Warsaw. It is hard to recapture in memory all the excitement of the next few weeks. Poland sounded infinitely remote and faintly exotic. True, I had taken a course in Slavic history under Professor Lord, and I had more than once read Sienkiewicz’s great trilogy “With Fire and Sword”, “The Deluge”, and “Pan Michael”. But of modern Poland I knew nothing. I recall my impatience to be off. An enforced delay of some weeks due to a longshoreman’s strike in New York; an

uncomfortable crossing on a transport amid heavy autumn gales; two or three rather hectic days in Paris; a long, slow journey across Central Europe in the Courier train; a first sight of emaciated faces and hungry stares; long hours looking out over plains of unutterable dreariness, where the sticky brown mud was waging a winning battle with the early snow; a sudden passage, without preliminary warning in the shape of suburbs, into the heart of a large and active city – at long last I had reached Warsaw and set foot on the lowest rung of the ladder called career.

I was lucky in drawing Hugh Gibson as my first chief. He was only thirty-six at the time, the youngest minister in our service. President Wilson had promoted him to Warsaw over the heads of a score of seniors at the joint instance of Mr. Hoover and Colonel House. Mr. Hoover had gauged his abilities in Brussels during the early days of the war, when as secretary Gibson had done most of the work for which Brand Whitlock received public credit; Colonel House had subsequently used him on roving errands as a political intelligence officer. He had a scintillating mind and a razor-like wit, fortunately tempered by a keen sense of fun. He knew Europe as did few Americans; he was on terms of intimacy with the key men in a dozen Foreign offices; his use of French was not only fluent, but so accurate that he could convey shaded meanings. Many a time he had to tell his Polish friends some unpalatable truth, but the happy knack of wrapping it up with a quip or a jest enabled him to convey his message without leaving a sting. He quickly became a prime favorite with Polish society, and no gathering was complete without “our dear Gibson”. He had not yet married, but he knew his world well enough to understand that importance attached by the Poles to outward show. He had accordingly rented for our Legation the historic Blue Palace with its sixty rooms and its priceless collections. His means however were slender and he found the upkeep a strain until someone suggested a happy arrangement, equally advantageous to all, whereby he invited the two secretaries of the Legations to occupy available apartments in the Palace, and in return to share the running expenses of the establishment, prorated according to the size of their official salaries.

The evening of my arrival Hugh Gibson and Arthur Lane, the first secretary, took me to Fukiers, a diminutive restaurant built over the entrance to one of Europe’s great wine cellars. After we had eaten a roast duck and consumed a bottle of Burgundy, which gastronomically speaking laid the proper foundation, our host brought us up a bottle of golden Tokay, its heavy incrustations testifying to its venerable age. “Hungaria natum, Polonia educatum”, this old Tokay of Warsaw, which is matured in casks and not even bottled for sixty years, is the prince of dessert wines. It does not travel even for short distances, and thus is little known, but he who has once tasted it does not forget.

We sat late into the night before an open wood fire, sipping the Tokay, while Hugh Gibson talked to us about Poland. He wove a veritable tapestry with pictures of war and famine and plague slowly fading into the task of reconstruction. Two central figures dominated his theme: Pilsudski and Paderewski, Chief of State and Prime Minister. In the clash of their personalities, as in the clash of their political beliefs, could be found the symbols of the inner struggle that was agitating Poland. Pilsudski represented change: Paderewski, the established order. Pilsudski was always a Slav; Paderewski a citizen of

the world. Pilsudski believed in the inevitability of war; Paderewski trusted in the finer arts of diplomacy. For a few brief months Poland had hoped that the two men could work in double harness, but this was not to be. Oil and water would not mix. If Poland were to have unity, one would have to displace the other.

Pilsudski was born in the dark forests of Lithuania where for generations his Polish forebears had owned a small estate. He grew up with a fanatical devotion to his race, which found vent in his joining while still a student a Polish society of revolutionary tinge. He was denounced, condemned, and deported for a term to Siberia. From that hard school he returned an arch-enemy of Czarism and an accomplished conspirator. He was again arrested, sentenced to execution, and escaped from the Death House in the Citadel of Warsaw only by successfully feigning madness. The story goes that after seventeen days under observation he became discouraged and gave up his playacting, whereupon the doctors promptly certified him insane, on the theory that lucid intervals were a normal occurrence, a fact that a malingerer would not be expected to know. Eventually he made his way across the border into Austria-Hungary where for some years before the war he found sanctuary.

No race in Europe dreaded the outbreak of war more than did the Poles. Such a war would be fought over Poland's broad plains. Polish cities would be sacked, Polish supplies would be confiscated by hard-pressed commissaries, Polish citizens would be held hostage. Worse still, there were few Polish families where there was not divided allegiance. A war would mean cousin pitted against cousin, sometimes brother against brother, in each instance fighting for an alien overlord.

Thus when fighting at last broke out in the summer of 1914, the Poles for the most part saw nothing but darkness and disaster ahead. Only a few, like Pilsudski, were gifted with longer vision. Pilsudski sensed that with Poland's three hereditary foes locked in a death struggle, there was a chance, albeit a small one, that they might mutually destroy each other. He urged that Polish support should be thrown against the strongest and most relentless, which his every instinct told him was Russia. He therefore organized a Polish legion for the Austrian army, which by the end of 1916 comprised two battle-worthy divisions. But when in March 1917 the first revolution overthrew Czarism, Pilsudski intuitively knew that the scales had shifted, and that henceforth not Russia but Germany was Poland's most potent enemy. Taking counsel of no man, and acting in cold blood, he resolved on the hardest maneuver in modern warfare: encouraging his fighting force to shift from one side to the other. His attempt failed. The Germans would undoubtedly have shot him but for fear of goading Polish feeling, already disaffected, beyond the breaking point. Instead, they locked him up in the grim fortress of Magdeburg, where he languished the last eighteen months of the war, brooding upon events, and preparing himself against the day of his liberation and of Poland's destiny.

The armistice ended Pilsudski's captivity, and he made his way, a free man, to Warsaw. The city was in confusion and without a master. Pilsudski with his instinct for command assumed charge. He disarmed and expelled the remaining Germans, took over the powers of the Regents, authorized the election of a Parliament, and set to work to create a Polish

army. His acts were immediately ratified by the force of public opinion. The left turned toward him because of his revolutionary background; the right acclaimed him because he imposed public order.

As much as possible he avoided the lime-light, preferring to dominate the scene from off-stage. When, a few months later, Paderewski, fresh from his triumphs in the United States was received throughout Poland with unparalleled ovations, Pilsudski asked him to head the Government as Prime Minister while he himself would remain outside the political arena as Chief of State. To Paderewski the words "Chief of State" meant the equivalent of a constitutional monarch, who reigned but did not govern, and who was bound by the advice of his ministers. To Pilsudski the words "Prime Minister" meant the western equivalent of a Grand Vizier, who took orders from the Chief of State, and by assuming nominal responsibility, protected him from the consequences of a mistake.

This difference of opinion was accentuated by divergent cultural outlooks. Pilsudski knew nothing of the Western world and viewed it with deep suspicion; Paderewski regarded it as the region of promise, where help for Poland must be sought and found. Not merely material assistance in the form of guns and ammunition or even credit, but help in the form of encouragement, advice and guidance. Hugh Gibson's sympathies were strongly with Paderewski, alike on personal and political grounds, though as time passed it had become clear that he lacked the attributes of political leadership.

His genius had many facets. Quite apart from his music, he was an outstanding linguist, orator, and diplomat. With the outbreak of the war he had dedicated all his gifts to Poland. His patriotism was like a burning brand that illuminated his every action. He transmuted into a Polish triumph each personal success that he won. He was able to dramatize the tragedies of Poland's past, the anguish of the war years, and the possibility of redressing historic wrongs by the recreation of a Polish state. He healed the rifts in the groups of Poles living abroad, and became the spokesman of united committees. His views were moderate. He made no exaggerated territorial or ethnic claims. His vivid personality and crystal clear character made a deep impression on many, including President Wilson and Colonel House. In fact, the thirteenth of the Fourteen Points which read "An independent Polish State should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputable Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant" was in no small measure Paderewski's handiwork.

Shortly after the armistice he sailed aboard HMS Concord for Danzig. For a year or more he had given up playing, and the only time he touched the keyboard was on the rickety ward room piano, when he played to the ship's company a hymn of triumph. While in public life, he resented any allusion to his former career as a virtuoso. A writer who entitled his article "Pianist and Premier" received no further favors. I recall that he would show us his fingers, the great muscles gnarled, and tell us that at his age he could never work them supple again. "In the old days" he used to say, "if I stopped practicing for a single day, I knew it; if for two days, my managers knew it; if for three days, my public

knew it. No, I shall never play again.” Yet the time was to come when he did work his fingers supple, and returned to the concert stage, once more to hold his audiences in thrall. But I digress.

As Prime Minister, Paderewski kept for himself the portfolio of Minister of Foreign Affairs, and divided his time during the spring and early summer of 1919 between Warsaw and Paris. In the galaxy of statesmen who assembled at the Peace Conference, Paderewski was one of the stars of first magnitude. He stated Poland’s case fairly and strongly. He was constantly pressing for action, but never to the point of antagonizing. If he could not get everything he wanted, he neither sulked nor threatened; instead, he expressed gratitude for what he had in fact received. His technique was refreshing. There is a story of those days which I like to believe is not apocryphal. He and Benes were arguing before the Supreme Council about Teschen. Benes had advanced a reasoned argument on the economic need of Czechoslovakia for coal. Paderewski rose for rebuttal, speaking slowly and with dramatic emphasis. “Mr. Benes” he said “has shown that for Czechoslovakia, Teschen means coal, -- coal, -- coal; I tell you that for Poland, Teschen means Pole, -- Pole, -- Pole. Mr. Benes asked for half of Teschen; I ask for all of Teschen. Which, O Solomon, is parent of this child?”

With the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, Paderewski reached the apogee of his career. From the great popular ovations, in which the public cheered him in a sort of rhythmic litany, he recharged his batteries of energy and inspiration. But he could not, alas, repeat in Poland the successes he had won abroad. He could more accurately gauge the reaction to a given problem in the United States or France, than in his native Poland. He had lived too long abroad, and his fellow Poles fell short of his idealization. He made a series of blunders, chiefly in the choice of his collaborators. He was himself so transparently honest that he could not bring himself to question the motives, much less the integrity of others. Slowly he lost the confidence of the public, though never its affection. His opponents, once they discovered his Achilles’ heel – that while he thrived under adulation, he wilted under criticism – threw shaft after shaft of venom in personal, as well as in political attack. He felt hurt, baffled, discouraged.

And now, concluded, Hugh Gibson, Pilsudski had whispered that the moment had come for Paderewski to go.

Our evening at Fukier’s ended and we walked back through dark cold streets to the Blue Palace. As we passed the Zamek, the old castle of the Polish Kings, we saw the lights in Paderewski’s rooms blazing brightly.

A day or two later he sent for Hugh Gibson and told him that he was on the verge of giving up and leaving Poland, but that his final decision would depend on the reception accorded a policy speech he was planning to make in the Diet the following afternoon. With no little trepidation we drove out to the long low building in the Frascati gardens which housed the Assembly. From our seats in the Diplomatic tribune we could watch the expressions of the deputies seated at low desks, crowded closely together, a narrow aisle separating the Conservatives from the radical groups. Peasants were numerous and



came in their national costumes, and there were enough women deputies to be noticeable. When, after some preliminary business, Paderewski arose, the house was so still that one could hear a pin drop. Not being able to understand a word he said, I was able to concentrate on the technique of his oratory. At first his words were received with marked coolness. Soon by a chauvinistic reference he won a round of applause. Then, having broken the ice, he proceeded to play upon his audience, using all the tricks of eloquence, speaking now loudly, now dropping his voice to a whisper, first scolding and then pleading, exhorting and then explaining, and finally pounding the rostrum before him, not with his fist but with his fingers outstretched as if striking a crashing chord. He sat down nearly exhausted while the Diet burst into a spontaneous storm of applause. Five minutes later, however, it voted to adjourn rather than to pass an immediate vote of confidence.

Paderewski had scored a success, but not an overwhelming victory. The intrigues against him began again with doubled force. He sought advice from a dozen friends and emerged confused by the welter of conflicting counsel. His daily life was so arranged as to add to his confusion. He would rise about noon and putter about his room until two o'clock when he sat down to an elaborate luncheon with his household, a group of individuals, some devoted followers and others mere parasites, who in one way or another had attached themselves to the Paderewskis and lived on their bounty. Thence he went for an hour or two to the Foreign Office before going on to the Diet where he habitually remained until dinner. Another elaborate meal, a rubber or two of bridge, and finally at midnight the day's work seriously began. His secretaries and stenographers arrived with dossiers bulging with telegrams, letters, and reports, his household retired to bed, and in uninterrupted quiet Paderewski put in four or five hours of concentrated labor.

This schedule had several disadvantages: it isolated Paderewski too much from assorted human contacts, and it exaggerated the influence of his household. We always suspected – maybe most unjustly – that there were one or two whose advice was not disinterested, who were alarmed at the way Paderewski was dissipating his capital (his gifts to alleviate distress throughout Poland were princely), and who lamented the carefree days of old when the master pianist traveled from country to country accumulating honors and a fortune. Be that as it may, we heard whispers that Madame Paderewska was alarmed by reports reaching her that a well-known medium had visions that if Paderewski remained in office, he would be murdered. One day she would be in the depths of despondency and urge Paderewski to order his special train. The following day she would be encouraged by some trifle and forget her previous urgings. Paderewski was so sensitive to environment that he was subconsciously affected by Madame Paderewska's moods. More than once the ministers of Great Britain and the United States felt called on to counteract her influence by reminding Paderewski that in threatening to resign he was thinking more of his own peace of mind than of Poland's welfare. Paderewski would agree, but the effect would soon wear off and again he would be tortured by doubts and indecision. It was not that he was a weak man, but he was fighting in an unfamiliar arena and he had been irreparably hurt.

The final phase came when Pilsudski took matters into his own hands. Three nights in a row he drove the length of Warsaw's main avenue from the simple whitewashed

Belvedere where he lived, to the great lavishly decorated Zamek, and sat for hours staring straight into Paderewski's eyes, relentlessly beating down his will power. The third night he drove back with Paderewski's signed resignation in his pocket. The following morning the Paderewskis moved out of the Zamek.

The outstanding aviation unit of the Polish army was the Kosciuszko squadron, organized and manned by American veterans of the World War. Under the leadership of Cedric Fauntleroy, a young Saxon giant from Chicago who had been chief test pilot in the AEF (American Expeditionary Forces) and of Merian Cooper (of whom more anon), ten or twelve aviators had banded together in Paris during September 1919 to fight for Poland. Some joined from sheer animal joy in adventure; others from a deep-seated idealism they did their best to conceal; but differences of character notwithstanding, they built themselves into a close-knit unit which was held together by danger, discomfort, and an unbounded loyalty.

In Paris they were treated as heroes by the entire Polish colony and sent on their way rejoicing, but at Warsaw they were given a reception that was as different as night is from day. Pilsudski, who to them was a semi-legendary personality trying to create a Polish army out of nothing, sent for them. His deeply-lined somber face and penetrating eyes showed no sign of sympathy. He did not even greet them with a perfunctory compliment. Instead he said:

"Poland is able to fight her own battles and does not need any paid mercenaries. On what basis are you coming here?"

The pilots recoiled as if struck. "Upon a like basis with Polish officers of corresponding rank. Equal pay, equal privileges. No more than that." Fauntleroy spoke for the group.

"Our pay is low and our privileges are few", answered Pilsudski. There was a pause, and when he next spoke he revealed his inner thoughts: "Besides, it is not clear to me what aviation can do for Poland. Its units are not sufficiently mobile; they are anchored to their airdromes. What I need is cavalry, for this is the only arm that can spread out over the countryside, fight with sabers and lances, and bivouac wherever night overtakes them."

Fauntleroy and Cooper in turn argued that for scouting one airplane was worth thousands of horsemen. It could travel in an hour further than could a horse in three or four days, and could bring back reports with corresponding celerity. As for mobility, the Kosciuszko squadron could improvise an airdrome out of any reasonably flat field. Give them a train with locomotive, two railway cars to be fitted up as repair shops, and two more for the pilots and mechanics to live in, and the unit would be as mobile as the Marshal dared wish.

Pilsudski sat a while, inscrutable. It required more than mere words to dissipate the instinctive distrust which he, as a cavalryman, felt for all new-fangled mechanical inventions. But he was sizing up the pilots as human material. At length, the long awaited approval was grudgingly given. "You will have trouble with our language; our aviation

equipment is not what you hope for; you will find difficulties at every turn. But if you insist on fighting for us, well, so be it. Report to the aviation service at Lwow.” It was many months before the group saw Pilsudski again, but meanwhile they were placing him deep in their debt.

Pilsudski’s depreciation of Poland’s aviation equipment was not an exaggeration. The only planes available to the squadron were some Albatrosses, with Austro-Daimler engines, already obsolete, which had been taken over from the German and Austrian armies after the collapse of the Eastern front. They were described as “slim, laminated, wooden-bodied planes, fast but somewhat weak, with fuselages none too trustworthy.” There was little flying for the squadron during the leaden days of autumn and winter, but constant work in the machine shop where Fauntleroy virtually reconstructed the planes and reengineered the machinery that synchronized the firing of the twin machine guns with the whirling propeller blades. Later, the squadron obtained some Balila planes which had been condemned as unserviceable, and again the Americans had to put in weeks of repair work before the planes could take the air. Fortunately time was available: it was not until spring came that the armies began to move, and the squadron was called on to fight.

Whenever any of the pilots came to Warsaw they were welcome at the Legation. I don’t know which they enjoyed most – American food and smokes, Hugh Gibson’s infectious humor, or the chance to blow off steam and tell their experiences. They grumbled aplenty, and damned Polish administrative inefficiency with a will. But their enthusiasm for Polish heroism and self-sacrifice never waned. They told us stories of hunger and cold borne without complaint; of instances where there was only one heavy overcoat and one pair of boots to a platoon, worn in rotation; of frozen limbs and amputations without ether. There were also full of yarns of Bolshevik atrocities, which were fanning the embers of hatred between Pole and Russian into living flame. They had come to accept the Polish thesis that their war against Bolshevism was a holy war, a twentieth century Crusade that would turn back the westward flow of Bolshevism, just as three centuries earlier, Jan Sobieski at Vienna had saved European civilization from the scourge of Islam. Living as they did, day in and day out, with the Polish fighting forces, they gave us a truer picture of developments in the field than we could obtain from any other source.

Of all the men in the Kosciuszko squadron, the one I found most intelligent as well as companionable was Merian Cooper. Small, weather-beaten, in appearance almost insignificant, he had a brain and a soul that belied his looks. He had flown in the AEF, been shot down in flames behind the German lines, had known the rigors of a German prison camp. After his release he somehow won the confidence of Mr. Hoover and was the First American sent to Southern Poland to supervise the distribution of food to starving children. By sheer personality he succeeded, despite his mere twenty-six years, in building up and dominating an organization of individualistic and highly quarrelsome poles. They seemed to regard him as a being apart, some strange phenomenon from the New World, who had a smile for everyone, no interest whatsoever in intrigue, and an uncanny way of carrying out his promises. Contact with widespread suffering affects individuals in different ways. Some it makes callous; a few break under the strain; but its

effect on Cooper was to make him want to fight. Let others who were older distribute the food; let the young take up arms and help Poland survive at least its birth pangs.

Lwow, where Cooper was stationed, was a city where a distinctively Polish culture overlay a conglomerate population of antagonistic nationalities and religions. The Polish element alone stood for discipline and the established order; the other groups were slowly being undermined by propaganda from Moscow, and were making plans for the day when land and property would be seized and redistributed. There was a semblance of public order in the city, but the surrounding countryside was ravaged by roving bands of horsemen who “lived off the land” and left behind them trails of arson, pillage and rape. To combat these bands, Polish vigilante committees were formed, and among them a special Boys Legion, composed entirely of lads ranging in age from twelve to sixteen. For a while it helped police the city streets, and then was sent to guard the Eastern suburbs against hostile raids. But the boys were given a task beyond their strength. One summer evening they were overwhelmed by a mounted band twice their number, and the horsemen, not content with dispersing them in fair fight, pursued the boys as they ran, hewing them down one after another with great slashes of their sabers. Only a few, left for dead, survived to tell of the massacre. Cooper, who had known many of the boys, saw red. He resigned his post as director of relief, made his way to Paris, and within a few weeks returned with the Kosciuszko squadron in Polish uniform.

Poland at the time was neither at war nor at peace. Except for occasional local clashes where Polish and Soviet troops were massed against each other, there was as yet no actual fighting. But an unfought war was being waged, with the Bolsheviks employing every resource of propaganda to stir up dissension within Poland and to paralyze the Government. The diplomats at Paris and Versailles wanted a Poland strong enough to prevent the virus of Bolshevism spreading to the “uninfected” states of Europe, but the country they actually set up was sorely handicapped. They gave neither men, nor money, nor directives. They did not even lay down the final frontiers, and much of Poland’s energy which should have been otherwise, was consumed in trying to extend her territory. This was particularly the case in the East, where the members of the Supreme Council could not agree on a boundary between Poland and Russia. True, they had drawn a line across the map and called it a “minimum line”. To all land lying westward, Poland was given an unchallenged title, but the door was not closed to a later award of territory to the East. Such a compromise was courting trouble. Polish troops were already far to the East of the minimum line, and its provisional nature was advanced by certain Polish groups as an argument for insisting on the frontiers of 1772 as they existed before the First Partition, by others for “liberating” the Polish landlords in Podolia and Volhynia, and by still others for putting the maximum distance possible between the Russian army and the city of Warsaw.

To make matters worse, the French and British were giving the Poles contrary advice. The French, through their minister Monsieur Pralon, lost no opportunity to proclaim that Poland was Europe’s champion against the powers of destruction, that any measures she might take were licit, and that France would assist as soon as she could with equipment, munitions, and credits. The British, through Sir Horace Rumbold, an old-time diplomat

who concealed an unusually acute intelligence behind a monocle set in an expressionless face, kept reiterating that Poland's only salvation lay in attempting to make peace with the Soviets; if war should nonetheless ensue, Poland could count on more support than she could possibly hope to obtain as an aggressor; meanwhile in default of arms and credits, the only thing Britain had to offer was disinterested advice. It is not surprising that French influence was the more potent in Warsaw.

During the course of the winter months, the counter-revolutionary armies of Kolchak and Denikin succumbed, and the Bolsheviks thereby became free to concentrate against Poland virtually all their armed strength. Pilsudski calculated that he had until April to complete the organization of his army. He shrewdly discounted all promises of Allied aid, and once snapped out that it would be time enough to talk about this, when some equipment had actually reached Polish soil. Nevertheless in January he authorized his new Foreign Minister Mr. Patek to go to London to make one final attempt at persuading the British to reverse their policy and to supply the Poles with military stores.

Mr. Patek was a close friend of Hugh Gibson and frequently dined at the Legation. He was one of the leaders of the Warsaw bar, and had made his reputation by defending in the Russian courts Polish patriots who were charged with political crimes. A little man, with flashing eyes and fierce mustachios, inclined to strut, he had an overweening confidence in the persuasive power of his eloquence. Unfortunately this was a gift that was largely wasted on the British. He was politely received, given full opportunity to present his case, but returned – as Pilsudski had foreseen – empty-handed. As a parting thrust, Lloyd George had told him that if Poland decided to take the initiative and attack the Bolsheviks, the inevitable result would be the resurrection of a national spirit in Russia. This prophecy must have rankled, for some months later in the only conversation I ever had with Pilsudski (third secretaries have scant opportunities for consorting with a chief of state) he went out of his way to tell me that a national spirit had been reborn in Russia the day the last effective counterrevolutionary army had collapsed, and that it had been artificially fostered by the Bolsheviks ever since.

After his return from London we saw little of Mr. Patek. He seemed too busy to spend even an occasional evening at the Legation. He was closeted for hours at a time with Marshal Pilsudski at the Belvedere, and we heard rumors that he had been seen more than once in the strange company of Petliura, the brigand chieftain of the Ukraine.

Meanwhile, the men at the front were enduring in stolid silence all the miseries of a northern winter. The ranks kept up their spirits by checking off the days before the coming of spring; the officers, with so much to do and so little time in which to do it, prayed that the cold weather, which permitted training and prevented fighting, might drag on beyond its normal season. Drill, drill, drill, day in and day out. Slowly, almost imperceptibly, what had been an amorphous mass of half trained individuals was welded into a cohesive fighting force. What it lacked in equipment, it made up in eagerness and unity of purpose.

Colonel Farman, our Military Attaché was impressed. So too was General Carton de Wiart, the chief of the British military mission. They told Hugh Gibson that in their judgment the Polish army was superior to the Soviet army. Its training, if elementary, had been on orthodox lines; its morale was high; it would fight with patriotic fervor. On the other hand the Bolshevik forces, even if they did outnumber the Poles, were dispirited, war-weary, and confused by the divided authority of military officers and political commissars.

Early in April Hugh Gibson was called back to Washington for consultation. I accompanied him as far as Berlin, spending a day in Posen and a few hours at a frontier town which had the unforgettable name of Stench-am-Oder. We reached Berlin in the late afternoon and were soon at the Opera listening to a flawless performance of *Fidelio*. The following day I spent at the Embassy, where Ellis Dresel as Commissioner headed a picked staff which included Hugh Wilson, Fred Dolbeare, Allen Dulles and Reggie Foster.

Their report was ominous. Germany was rife with social and political unrest. The Ruhr was in revolt, and in all the big cities the rumblings of revolution could be heard. The conflict of interest between the proletarian and peasant – between Red and Green – was nearing the danger mark. So tense was the situation that if the Soviets succeeded in establishing a common frontier with the Reich, Bolshevism would probably flare up across Germany as far West as the Rhine. The impending campaign between Poland and the Soviets might well determine the future social order in Europe. The men of Moscow knew the stakes for which they were playing and would throw in their last resource to win that common frontier. Were the Poles grimly in earnest? Could they be counted on to hold the Bolsheviks at bay?

After the chill despondency of Berlin, Warsaw seemed positively buoyant. Our friends told us that “great events were in the making”. In a few days Poland would launch an all-out offensive. She could not wait to be overrun, she must strike before the Bolsheviks were ready and force Moscow to offer a just and lasting peace. If the Western world thought that Poland was imperialistic and planning to annex the Ukraine, Mr. Patek had a surprise in store. A few days later he revealed his secret: a treaty with the brigand Petliura, who was thereby legitimized as the head of an independent Ukraine. The Polish army would help him liberate his territory, set up a viable government, and would then retire. By this treaty Mr. Patek counted on chalking up three successes: he would win foreign approval for a “Preventive attack”; he would create a buffer state between Poland and the Soviets; and he would acquire indirect control of the resources of the rich Ukraine, for during the years of its immaturity it would have to lean heavily on Poland for its security. It all seemed delightfully simple to my Polish friends; and they were still naïf enough to believe that it would seem equally simple in Berlin and London and Washington.

With the diplomatic stage thus set, military operations began. Polish legions marched proudly eastward. Soviet resistance was easily, much too easily, overcome and in a few short weeks the White Eagle was flying over the citadel of Kiev.

Warsaw went wild with enthusiasm. Pilsudski was given a triumphal entry into the city. There were parades and fireworks. Patriots burst into public speech and their allusions to the days when the Polish overlords ruled from the Baltic to the Black Sea were no longer covert. But Bolshevik counterattacks were already beginning. A flotilla of river boats, secretly massed in the hidden reaches of the Dnieper steamed slowly toward Kiev from the Southeast, while new Soviet forces drove down the railroad from the North. The Poles beat off these attacks, but only by throwing in their reserves. The staff became worried about its lines of communication, which were long and exposed, and telegraphed Warsaw for additional units.

For a month the Kosciuszko squadron had been where the fighting was thickest. Flying at all times and in all weathers, it had carried out a variety of missions, and was even accepted on equal terms by its rivals, the cavalry.

One still evening late in May, just as darkness fell, a Kosciuszko pilot burst unceremoniously in at headquarters with an alarming report. He had been on a routine flight, south and east of the walled city of Uman, where in other times the camel caravans from the east had rested in its Oriental khans. Just before turning back, he had noticed some miles ahead long columns of dust rising over the broad highroads. Flying low to determine the cause, he had come upon a new Bolshevik army: horsemen, eight abreast, stretching as far as the eye could see. He had counted ten, twenty, thirty thousand of them, moving in a compact mass. They wore sand-grey uniforms, with astrakhan caps, and for weapons each man carried a saber, and had a carbine slung across his back. They were headed northwest, with the obvious intention of outflanking the entire Polish army at Kiev.

At the head of his Cossacks Budienny, like a modern Bodgan, was sweeping into the Lower Ukraine.

\*\*\*

Thus far I had been following the Polish-Soviet war from afar. It was exciting, but it was unreal. I was now to see it at closer range – in fact, at very close range indeed. It happened in this wise.

General Carton de Wiart was sending two British officers to Kiev on government business. They were Captain Maule, his aide-de-camp, and Colonel Graham, a railroad expert. He had given them his private car, and as it accommodated two more he had invited Paul Dukes, the correspondent of the London TIMES, and then, happening to run into me, he asked if I too wouldn't like to make the trip. "You won't be wasting your time", he said, "you'll see the Ukraine, you'll see an army at or near the front, and you will have two or three days in Kiev while my officers are transacting their business."

We left Warsaw the day after the Kosciuszko pilot had discovered Audient's army. No hint had as yet reached Warsaw that anything was seriously amiss. We rolled eastward, across the Bug, down past Kowel, through Rowno, and on toward Szepetowka.

Paul Dukes talked the whole time. He was one of those rare Englishmen who is not reticent in telling his story or in airing his views. This was not so much due to egotism as to a detached way he had of observing and judging his own actions, apportioning praise or blame where he felt it was due. He had lived many years in Russia, spoke the language like a native, and had held high rank in the British secret service. During the Revolution his activities had been discovered, and he had to escape in disguise. By the simple expedient of removing one of his front teeth which was false he had changed the entire expression of his face. Convinced as he approached the border that the GPU was laying for him, he doubled back to Petrograd, and to hide the more successfully, enlisted in the Red army. After some months his unit was sent to the Baltic front, where he had deserted. His narrative is of importance only insofar as it shows that if there was any one man in whose company it would have been inadvisable to fall into Bolshevik hands, that man was Paul Dukes.

As our train pulled into Szepetowka station, Maule and Graham immediately sensed that there was something wrong. The station platform was crowded with a seething mass of humanity, joining furtively in little groups, separating, and looking apprehensively down the railroad track toward Berdyczew as if expecting some imminent trouble from that direction. While Colonel Graham went to find the station master, Maule, Dukes and I mingled with the crowd. Suddenly I heard my name called:

"Moffat, what in the name of all that's holy are you doing here?"

A small man, in overalls, covered with oil and dirt, and staggering with exhaustion, drew near. I had to look twice to recognize Merian Cooper.

"Come aboard, wash up, have some food and drink, and then tell us what's gone wrong."

Cooper needed no second urging. His story was not told consecutively, but we were able to piece it together. Budienny's army -- the proletarians on horseback as they called themselves -- had advanced with incredible speed. The Cossacks ate as they rode, and by commandeering peasant carts to which they tied their unsaddled mounts, rode as they slept. Despite the warning given by the squadron, the Poles had only forty-eight hours in which to prepare for the shock. Budienny had struck at the railroad junction of Berdyczew, far behind the front lines, and had severed all communications between the Polish army at Kiev and its base by way of the southern route. Fortunately the northern railroad via Korosten was still open. It was a magnificent cavalry raid, one of the greatest in history, surpassed if at all -- added Cooper who was a southerner -- only by those of Jeb Stuart. But still it was only a raid, and the Poles would be able to restore order in a few days. The trouble was that the raiders had come up in such numbers that they were spreading over the entire Ukraine like locusts. Groups would detach themselves from the



main columns, travel through woods and gullies, and fall upon unsuspecting Polish commands.

He himself had barely escaped capture. The squadron, in pursuance of orders, had fallen back from Bila Tserkva to Novograd Volynsky. Only Fauntleroy, Crawford and he had remained attending to last minute tasks, and were preparing in leisurely fashion to follow when the sun had risen high. Fauntleroy had gone aloft on a reconnaissance flight, but within a few moments had returned, circled over the airport, and fired twice – a signal that danger was so close as to admit of no delay. At the same time leaning out of his cockpit he had waved toward the southeast. Cooper and Crawford jumped into their respective planes, but the engines had not been properly warmed. He saw Crawford's plane taxi across the field, rise a few feet, and then crash. He could not stop to see anything more for at this moment Bolshevik horsemen appeared in sight. He opened the throttle of his plane, only to experience the anguish of feeling his engine sputter and die. He set a match to the plane, emptied his revolver into the gasoline tank to add fuel to the flames, and plunged into some nearby woods. He had been on the road since early morning. From time to time he had been given a lift on some peasant's cart, but he thought that he had been on his feet a total of ten or twelve hours. Poor Crawford, it was doubtful whether he could have escaped; it would be incredible luck if both of them had reached safety. Meanwhile, could he sleep? If Crawford turned up, would we tell him that Cooper was with us? He didn't think the Bolos would get as far as Szepetowka that night, but in any event there was nothing we could do about it. His voice grew thicker and thicker, and the first thing we knew he had fallen asleep in the middle of a sentence.

Colonel Graham came back with much the same news about Budienny. He told us that the line ahead could not possibly be repaired for several days. We would therefore retrace our steps in the morning as far as Kowel and continue to Kiev via the northern line. The car would be shunted for the night on to a siding a quarter mile or so away. There was always the possibility of a sudden Bolshevik raid on the station; if that occurred it would be just as well not to be too close. No one knew just where Budienny's main forces were. There had been a complete breakdown of Polish communications. All he had been able to learn for certain was that three hours ago, the Bolos had not yet appeared at Polonnae, the next station down the railroad in the direction of Berdiczew.

Our car was soon hauled back to the siding where we spent the night. As a precaution we darkened the car. All through the night there was desultory rifle fire nearby, though whether it was peasants shooting at marauding stragglers, or hungry stragglers threatening peasants, we never knew. In happier days Szepetowka had been the station for Count Joseph Potocki's fabulous estate of Antoniny, and we tried to picture it as it must have looked with coaches and four drawn up for the laughing and carefree guests arriving from St. Petersburg, and the fourgons to transport the servants and the mountains of baggage.

About midnight Paul Dukes who was restless and worried, made his way back to the station. Knowing the language he hoped to pick up the latest rumors, if nothing more. Almost the first person he saw was an earnest individual talking English, trying to make a

weary stationmaster who knew only Polish understand his questions by repeating them over and over, each time more slowly, but each time a trifle louder.

“I say”, said Dukes, “you’re not Crawford, are you?”

“Yes I am. Why?”

“Because we’ve got Cooper with us, safe and sound asleep in a car a few hundred yards up the track. Better come along.”

When Crawford reached the car, Cooper opened one eye, muttered “Thank God”, and went sound asleep again. But at half past four, with the first streaks of light, Cooper was awake, shook Crawford into consciousness, and the two of them disappeared on their trek to find the squadron at Novograd-Volynsky.

About nine o’clock a long train was assembled and started back toward Kovel. The countryside, that early June morning, was smiling. The wheat was waving green, and the great fields of sugar-beets were laid out in mathematical nicety. The villages has a certain air of prosperity, and behind small woods we could see the country houses of the gentry, many of them still standing despite the surges of war which had passed over this particular countryside three or four times between 1914 and 1918.

The news of Budienny’s raid had already spread over the countryside. At each station men and women who had special reasons to fear the Bolsheviks were storming the train. We noticed one poor white-haired woman, obviously a lady, trying in vain to find a place large enough for herself and her few possessions, the most important of which was a large basket containing her pet cat. We invited her to share our car. She was Countess X; her estate was a few miles out of Rowno; her son-in-law was sending her to relatives in Warsaw, but he himself had so much to do in saving what he could and in hiding the rest, that he had not been able to spare the time to come to the station to see her properly installed on the train. Having thus explained the situation, and expressed real gratitude for our hospitality, her worldly instincts came into play, and for an hour she talked to us in the most polished French about the latest novels, the plays in Paris, in short about everything in the world except her own troubles and misfortunes. I am sure that the aristocrats during the Terror of 1793 were such as she.

It was after midnight when we reached Kovel, and no train was scheduled to start eastward till late in the morning. We therefore had a sound sleep – our last for several nights.

The railroad from Kovel to Kieff being broad gauge, we had to abandon General Carton de Wiart’s private car, and the best that could be offered us was a dilapidated fourth class coach, with broken windows, whittled wooded benches, and an underfed population of bedbugs and lice. We took over a blanket apiece, a little food, and two bottles of whiskey. The coach was coupled onto a long troop train which we were told was to rush

reinforcements to Kiev. "Rushing" in those parts did not preclude a stay of six hours in the Kovel station, or a maximum advance of fifteen miles in any one hour.

We passed the Stochod River where the broad marshes, rather than the skill of the Austrians had halted the Brusiloff offensive in 1916. We made out row upon row of barbed wire, still standing, the remains of corduroy roads, and the individual shelters built up above the level of the ground water which human ingenuity had evolved as a substitute for trenches. From the marshes we passed into forest land, nor did we see the open plain again until we came within a few miles of Korosten the following morning.

Korosten is a junction of some importance where the east-west road running from Kovel to Kieff is intersected by the north-south road running from Moghilew to Zitomir and Berdiczew. The station was filled with Polish troops. Colonel Graham went to consult the stationmaster, and did not return for a full hour. He looked very serious.

"We can't go on to Kiev as planned for the bridge over the Teterev some forty miles ahead was blown up last night. There is only one way left to enter Kiev. That is to proceed south by train to Zitomir and try to find automobile transportation there. Zitomir was raided by Budienny yesterday, but I am assured that the Poles have recaptured the town and are now occupying it in force. I don't see how Kiev can be held much longer, but until it is evacuated Maule and I must carry out orders and try to reach the city. The military are preparing a special train for us which should be ready about noon."

The train consisted of a tank car filled with water, calculated to explode any mines that might have been set under the track; an open car, with two machine guns mounted behind several cords of wood, stacked high as a protective shield; the locomotive, facing the wrong way (so that it backed the entire distance to Zitomir); our coach; and a caboose carrying thirty to forty armed soldiers and three or four officers.

Thus prepared for trouble our train pulled out of Korosten and with frequent halts for consultations between the engineer and the Polish officers aboard, we covered the ninety miles to Zitomir. Instead of finding the town held "in force" by the Poles, we found it deserted, with neither side in occupation. What had been the station was merely a mass of glowing embers; the station yard was in confusion; and some twenty or more civilians who had been hanged in open-doored box cars and not yet cut down bore eloquent testimony to the recent passage of the dread Budienny.

The only official in evidence was the station master. He almost wept tears of joy at seeing our locomotive, and promptly informed us that it could pull out at least forty empty box cars and thus save them for the Poles. As it was Poland's war, Poland's rolling stock, and Poland's locomotive, we could not gainsay him. We asked how long it would take to assemble the train. Three hours. "But don't worry" he continued, "Budienny rests his horses during the heat of the day. He has raided the town twice, but each time at dusk, between nine and ten o'clock. It is only five now and you should be able to get away by eight."

To while away the time the four of us walked over to the town. As is so often the case in Russia, the railroad station was a mile or so away. The reason for this was graft, the insiders buying up at cheap rates the land between the town and the site selected for the station, and holding it for speculative profit.

Zitomir was a ghost city. Not a solitary soul was abroad, and as a measure of rude precaution, rough planks had been nailed across front doors and ground windows. As we walked along the deserted streets, our footsteps reverberating in the silence, we could see through cracks and peepholes the whites of human eyes following our progress. We could sense the terror to which the populace was prey.

In the centre of a large square we stopped to hold a council of war. I remember advocating an immediate return to the station, in order to be near the only available means of retreat. It was always possible that the train would be assembled more quickly than expected, and I for one did not put it beyond the engineer to maroon us in Zitomir if he had a chance to make good his own escape. Maule and Graham told me that I was arguing like a civilian. The station was the most dangerous locality in the vicinity. If Budienny should make another raid, it was the first place his Cossacks would overrun. While we were still discussing matters, we heard an automobile dashing up the street at high speed. Instinctively we all looked for the nearest cover.

It turned out to be a Red Cross car, and its occupants spoke English. They told us, with a fine sense of the dramatic, that Kiev had been evacuated, that they had watched the White Eagle being lowered from the Citadel, and the Polish troops march out as if on parade, with General Rydz-Smigly his bride riding a pillion behind him on his charger, bringing up the rear. Where were the Bolsheviks? We walked back to the station resolved to make the Polish officers leave with as much rolling stock as had been gathered together, and no more.

Even this turned out to be difficult. With one single locomotive to do the shunting, and only a few untrained soldiers to man the switches, the tracks had become clogged. Colonel Graham watched the inefficient handling with growing indignation, until he could stand it no longer, when he stepped forward, assumed charge, barked out orders through a Polish officer who volunteered as interpreter, and slowly – very slowly – brought order out of chaos. By the time a train of reasonable length had been assembled, it was close to nine o'clock, and the sun was sinking below the horizon.

The engineer was at the throttle, we had all climbed aboard, and were waiting for the wheels to begin turning, when suddenly a man, wearing parts of a Polish uniform dashed into the station, waving a piece of paper, and shouting to the engineer not to start the train. He told us that he had been sent post haste by the colonel of a Polish regiment stationed some three miles back of Zitomir. The colonel had received a wire that reinforcements were being sent down by train from Korosten. As the line was single track, with only occasional sidings, our train was on no account to leave the station. Was the message a true order, or was it a decoy to facilitate our capture? Opinion among the Polish officers was divided, and precious minutes passed while they palavered. Did the

messenger carry any credentials? No, the colonel had given him the message, nothing more. As a bold half measure, the officers finally decided to run the train as far as the next station, some eighteen kilometers up the line, even at the risk of having to back the entire distance if we met the troop train on this stretch of track. Further plans could be held in suspense for the time being.

It was nearly half past nine when we finally pulled out of Zitomir. Maule produced some whiskey, which we drank neat, and never before or since has drink tasted better. With each passing mile our spirits rose, and although the train was fired on during the night as we steamed through a thick copse of trees, we reached Korosten safely at dawn. There had never been a plan to send reinforcements by rail from Korosten. The messenger had been a Bolshevik agent, and the Polish soldiery were loud in their laments that by not bringing him along they had missed the pleasure of shooting him for a spy. From Korosten it took us two days to reach Brest-Litovsk, where I had a chance to visit the citadel and see Trotsky's famous words "no war-no peace" scribbled on the whitewashed walls of the fortress, and another half day to reach Warsaw. My dominant impression was that a large city conveys a comfortable sense of security.

A month later the Polish front collapsed. Warsaw became a vantage point from which to watch two concurrent dramas.

The first drama was purely military. For six weeks the Bolshevik flood flowed relentlessly westward till it reached the very city limits of Warsaw. It seemed as though nothing could save the city and for three days all Europe watched with bated breath. The fall of Warsaw was to be the signal for uprisings in Germany, Austria and Northern Italy. The outlook for European civilization was in many ways as dark as when the Hun stood before Chalons, or the Saracen before Tours. And then occurred the "miracle of the Vistula". The tide was not merely stayed, but turned back. A few days more and the Bolshevik army in its turn collapsed, the victorious Poles advanced to reoccupy the Eastern lands, and the groups in Europe that were on the point of revolting slowly subsided to await either improving conditions or a more propitious day.

The second drama was political and diplomatic. An onlooker could sense enough of the plot to see that all the characters were agreed in wanting to create a new dike against the westward spread of Bolshevism. But so intent was each in seeing that the dike was built according to his particular specifications that Paris was still bickering with London, and in London Lloyd George was still bickering with the Foreign Office, when the battle of the Vistula disposed of the issue. The inability of France and England to fuse their efforts even in time of crisis was not forgotten in Eastern Europe for many a long year. The United States made only one appearance on the stage: this was during the last set, just before the curtain fell, when the Secretary of State, Mr. Bainbridge Colby interrupted the dialogue to read a statement of what America thought about Bolshevism, bowed to the audience, and made an un-applauded exit.

During these crucial weeks, the Legation at Warsaw reported fully day to day developments; it gave useful advice to the eight American relief organizations that were

functioning in Poland; and at the appropriate moment it evacuated all American citizens from Warsaw. So vivid were the events of July and August 1920 that today, after the lapse of \_\_\_\_ years, the story is still etched in bold lines on the tablets of my memory.

It started one afternoon early in July when Colonel Farman, our Military Attaché, came to the Chancery to tell us of the defeat of General Szepticki's army group on the northern front. The General had for some time been rumored to be discouraged about his position. He had whispered too widely his fears that his lines could not be held in the event of an attack in force. But never in his most pessimistic mood had he foreseen that within the space of a few days the enemy would succeed in separating the Polish and Lettish armies, in capturing Minsk, in forcing the evacuation of the North Pripet region and in turning the Polish retreat into a rout.

The Polish Government reacted to this news by swinging from an unjustified optimism to an exaggerated pessimism. Frantic appeals were sent to the Allies for help, and to reinforce them the Prime Minister, Mr. Grabski, was dispatched to Spa where a reparations Conference was conveniently in session. Lloyd George dominated the conference and Lloyd George had no liking for the Poles. He brushed the French delegate aside, summoned Mr. Grabski to his rooms, and browbeat him into accepting then and there a set of stern conditions. The clash between the two men must have been pathetically one sided: to overcome the prejudices of the masterful Lloyd George, the Poles had sent a round shouldered and myopic ex-Professor, whose whole career had shown him to be stubborn when he should have yielded, pliant when he should have stood firm. By his own admission, he made no attempt to set forth the role that Poland had played in staving off Bolshevism; he made no threat to "open the front" if Europe did not assist; he did not even verify if Lloyd George was speaking for the French as well as the British Government. Instead he agreed to an armistice based on the withdrawal of Polish troops to the "minimum line" laid down by the Peace Conference, a bare 120 miles east of Warsaw, and to meet Soviet negotiators in London and arrange peace terms under the aegis of the none too benevolent Lloyd George. Only if the Bolshevik armies crossed the "minimum line" would Allied help be forthcoming.

Grabski returned to Warsaw trembling. He knew that if he made public the conditions he had accepted, he would receive short shrift from his chauvinistic countrymen. We half suspected that he hoped the Soviets would refuse the armistice so as to free him from his undertakings.

It was a week or two before the Bolsheviks replied to Lloyd George. The answer was sent by wireless from Moscow to London, and as it was en clair had been intercepted by the Poles and given to Sir Horace Rumbold and General Carton de Wiart. It was a rambling message, later termed "incoherent" in London and "impertinent" in Paris. But its purport was clear: the Soviets did not desire to discuss with the British the question of war or peace with Poland. I have not forgotten the first reaction of my British friends on reading the text. They refused to believe that it was an official communication addressed to His Majesty's Government; probably it was merely a bit of Radek's propaganda put out for home consumption. But London soon confirmed its authenticity, declining to take

umbrage at its tone and telegraphed Sir Horace Rumbold that its essential feature was a not unreasonable demand that Poland should make a direct application to Moscow for an armistice.

Sir Horace at once drove to the Belvedere where the Council of National Defense was sitting and urged the Poles to despatch the requisite telegram that very evening. Each hour's delay might make the Bolsheviks, intoxicated with daily victories, less inclined to accept.

Yet neither that evening, nor all the next day was the request for an armistice sent. The Council was engaged in what was termed "an essential preliminary", the creation of a coalition cabinet, and thirty hours were unprofitably spent in haggling over who would or would not be given the various portfolios. Finally the peasant Witos, the socialist Daszynski, and the prince Sapieha were agreed upon as Premier, vice-Premier and Minister for Foreign Affairs. Only then were two telegrams sent off, the first to Chicherin, the second to the Commanding General of the Red Armies. The Bolsheviks were by now at the gates of Grodno.

The time had come to make plans for evacuating the American colony. There were no diplomatic relations between Washington and Moscow, and stories of ill treatment meted out to Americans in Soviet territory seemed to be well authenticated. So far as we knew there were at least a thousand Americans in Warsaw. Most of them were naturalized citizens who had come to Poland for the sole purpose of persuading their relatives to return with them to the United States. They had come, they said, to save these poor unfortunates and they were not going to leave without them. The great American Republic would surely not stand on a technicality and inquire into their citizenship! Surely the protection granted a citizen extended to his relatives unto the third and fourth degrees! On this theory the thousand would soon swell to ten thousand and there would not be accommodation for more than a fraction.

The Polish authorities when approached became exercised at the mere thought of evacuation. The Minister of Railroads told me that any concerted exit of Americans would produce a panic in Warsaw. The Government had not yet envisaged the possibility of moving the capital. Were we not acting prematurely? Would we not withdraw our request for rolling stock? Under questioning he had to admit that with each day's delay there would be fewer and fewer railway carriages available. At last I got a contingent promise of a special train to take the Americans to Danzig, though the Minister made it clear that no luggage or heavy effects could be transported. One freight car would be reserved for the chattels and records of the Legation, but that was the limit of what he could do. I spent a good part of the next day trying to rent some barges to float heavy luggage down the river. Normally they held eighty tons each, though the extreme low water in the Vistula due to a prolonged drought made it inadvisable to load them so heavily. The various American relief organizations and the Legation agreed to pool their requirements, and the contracts were drawn up and signed several days before any other Legations even so much as suspected the existence of a river barge.

As a matter of fact we had “jumped the gun”, for at this point there came a three or four day pause in the Bolshevik drive, and all evacuation plans were suspended. We now know the reason for this pause. Moscow wished to reassure itself that if the Red Armies crossed the line laid down by Lloyd George as the permitted limit for their advance. Allied aid to Poland would be confined to advice and encouragement. While awaiting reports from Soviet agents abroad, a little comedy would not be amiss. So the Bolshevik high command radioed the Polish command that delegates would be received four days hence along the road from Brest-Litovsk to Baranowice, that they would be accorded the customary treatment meted out by the Red Armies to emissaries, and then added for good measure that they had selected the date to coincide with the expressed wishes of the Poles themselves. The station then signed off and although it exchanged messages with points south and east it refused to make contact again with Warsaw for several days.

Meanwhile Lloyd George, with his inveterate distrust of the profession of diplomat, decided that perhaps Sir Horace Rumbold was being unduly pessimistic. In any event he would welcome a report from an emissary of his own choosing. He would therefore send a special mission, with high powered civil and military representatives, and the French could be counted on to do likewise. This was action, or at the very worst could be construed as action.

The British mission was headed by Lord D’Abernon, the newly appointed Ambassador to Berlin. He was a banker trained in the devious bypaths of Levantine finance. He was later conspicuously successful in Berlin in the days when his talents could be devoted to adjusting the reparations embroglio. But in Poland, he was plunged into the vortex of a major crisis without any background, either political or psychological, and did what many a lesser man would have done – either reported what his master desired to hear, or did not report at all. It was Sir Horace Rumbold whose political analyses though unpopular at the time showed true political acumen.

The French mission was headed by Ambassador Jusserand, Ambassador to Washington, who happened to be in Paris on leave. He was a wise old man, a curious blend of the cynic and the idealist. He saw from almost the first day that only the soldiers could influence the course of events. The role of a diplomat, particularly a French diplomat, was to see that if Poland survived the crisis, France would get as large a measure as possible of the credit. He therefore effaced himself in favor of his principal military adviser General Weygand, and accented his role as chief of staff to the redoubtable Marshal Foch. For the rest, he kept urging Paris to send munitions and more munitions, and above all to put pressure on the Czechs who because of Soviet sympathies were showing reluctance to let them pass. Lord D’Abernon, on the other hand, took scant notice when Sir Reginald Tower, the inter-allied High Commissioner at Danzig declined to force the German stevedores to unload supplies for Poland, justifying their stand on the ground that it was due to an industrial dispute and not to political bias.

By July 27<sup>th</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup> the Bolshevik armies again started their advance. Evidently the advices from Soviet agents in Britain had been reassuring. To be sure His Majesty’s Government was adopting an increasingly ominous, not to say minatory, tone in official



communications, but to counterbalance this, a group of labor leaders styling themselves the “Council of Action” was beginning through the voice of Mr. Ernest Bevin to suggest the possibility of a general strike if Britain risked involvement with the Soviets. The public at large showed little sympathy with the attitude of either the Government or the Council of Action. The average Englishman was apathetic and war weary. Eastern Europe seemed far away; the Poles by their incursion into the Ukraine had forfeited any claim to British support; the alarm of the French could be written down to emotionalism. “No adventures” was the order of the day.

Lloyd George sensed the popular mood, and making it his own, brushed aside the warnings of his Foreign Office, the appeals of his French Allies, and the gloomy forebodings of Winston Churchill. Thenceforth the policy of the British Government was to be one of inertia. The Red Cavalry appeared at the gates of Lomza, thirty miles to the west of the Lloyd George line; London took the news in its stride, and the Red cavalry promptly pushed still deeper into Polish territory. Positive help to Poland was never actually refused; it was merely never forthcoming. The Poles swallowed their resentment, but from that moment on, watched British policy with a jaundiced eye. French influence waned as that of the British waned. Soon Weygand was the only foreigner whose advice was sought, and more important, followed.

Nothing could now be seen that was to save Warsaw from its doom. Certainly a day at the front with Colonel Farman left me profoundly discouraged. We motored out to Brest-Litovsk on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Long before we reached its outskirts we passed village after village filled with tired, dispirited troops, a few of them digging shallow meaningless trenches, most of them merely watching with resigned empty faces the hundreds of peasant carts, which seemed to be the only commissariat, moving either toward or away from the front line. Of motor transport we saw none. The roads were so bad that twice our car stuck in the dried ruts. We called at General Haller’s headquarters and spoke with his Chief of Staff. At best he talked of holding the line of the Bug, but even while we were speaking word came in that the river had been forced. We returned convinced of the need to order out the American colony, and to move the Legation records.

Jack White called in the heads of the various American groups and told them in unmistakable terms that the time had come for the evacuation to begin. Two hundred places were reserved on the Danzig train the following night. But to our chagrin, many declined to go, selfishly declaring that they wished to be the last to leave. We warned them that if they waited too long, they might never get a place on the train. If panic should grip the city, the station would be stormed, and such trains as pulled out would be packed to the limit by humans who had the physical strength to beat their way in, with others riding on the roof or clinging to the outside steps. In vain. All too many preferred to believe that somehow the magic words “American citizens” would suffice to hold against all comers the compartments that were to be reserved.

Meanwhile I went upstairs and started burning documents. For four hours on a summer day I stood before a huge open hearth, feeding papers to the flames, neither too fast nor too slowly, and breaking up the glowing ash with a heavy poker. Let no one who has not

done as much belittle that fatigue. We then packed the remaining office files in numbered containers and loaded them on the freight car that had been assigned us, where they remained under guard pending the decision of the Government to transfer the capital to another Polish city

Paradoxically, the nearer the Bolshevik armies thrust, the more calm and indifferent the Polish ministers seemed to grow. First they had hinted that they would leave if ever the Bolsheviks captured Grodno; later, if they reached Lomza; and now, if they reached Modlin, barely thirty miles away. With few exceptions the diplomats had instructions to follow the Government. Yet if the Government did not leave in short order it might well be too late to leave at all. The Government might even be captured and the diplomatic corps with it. In consternation at this possibility, they turned to the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Ratti, and asked him as dean to summon a meeting of the chiefs of mission.

For several hours their Excellencies sat stiffly on the uncomfortable upright gilt chairs that lined the walls of the reception room in the Nunciature, while they debated a collective move. Archbishop Ratti, not yet a Cardinal though destined within three years to be chosen Pope, opened the meeting by announcing in a matter of fact tone that he was not planning to leave Warsaw at all. The Bolsheviks might overrun the land, but millions of Catholics would still be there. As Papal representative, he chose to stay with them. He had laid by a small store of tinned provisions, and would not be in want. Yes, he knew that the Bolsheviks were bitterly hostile to the Vatican, and that many a priest had been the victim of physical violence. He had made his decision after deep thought and it was not subject to change. But as others were making different plans, he suggested that he be authorized to ask the Government to inform the diplomatic corps when and where it proposed to go.

This was too simple a solution. The diplomats, one and all, thought it could be improved upon. The Nuncio therefore gave the discussion free rein. He made no attempt to keep the speakers to the point, and strange and far afield were the bypaths explored. He sat erect and motionless in his armchair, his hands folded in his lap, peering benevolently at the gathering through the thick lenses of his gold spectacles. He was watching for signs of fatigue. At last, two or three hours later, judging the right moment to have come, he repeated his original proposal and this time it was unanimously carried. The Government promptly selected Posen as the alternative capital, though Prince Sapieha privately told us that the ministers would remain in Warsaw till the end. If the city fell, the Government would fall with it, and a new group would establish itself in Posen and try to salvage anything that was left.

The last desperate week had arrived. The Bolshevik armies driving from the north and east were fast closing in on Warsaw. Further south Budenny's cavalry was moving on Lwow, tempted by its rich booty. The Armistice delegation at Russian insistence had been replaced by a peace delegation, which was busily trying to locate the body with which it was supposed to conduct negotiations. Refugees from the east were pouring into the city with lurid tales of Bolshevik atrocities. Every Polish officer carried a tablet of poison as in the event of capture, death was preferable to torture. The landlords were no

longer safe as in many regions the peasantry was in a ferment, stirred up by infiltrating Soviet agents. (The term fifth column had not yet been coined.) Dzerzhinsky and \_\_\_\_\_ masters of the dread GPU were not far from Warsaw, waiting to take it over and purge it of counterrevolutionary elements.

And as the refugees poured in from the east, there began the great exodus toward the west. Nearly all who had funds abroad, or had any liquid assets, or relatives in Posen, fled before the approaching Red. Those who remained, like old Count Joseph Potocki, were few. He spent those days of anguish repairing his palace and rehangng his masterpieces. He had fled from the Bolsheviks before. This time if they came he would meet them at the front door, and fall with his house and his order.

But the great mass of the people could not flee. They would have to accept the dictates of fate. Was Poland, after two brief years of life, doomed to perish? Had she united after her hundred and fifty years partition among three military empires merely to fall under one single overlordship, and an anti-Christian one at that? There was little the people could do, but they could always pray. And so that last Sunday, in answer to a spontaneous urge, Warsaw devoted the day to public supplication. From dawn until dusk long processions of men and women marched through the streets of the city, bearing the religious banners and sacred relics from one church to another, chanting the old and well-beloved Polish hymns. A look of fervor glowed in every face. The city was praying for a miracle.

The next day martial law was declared and curfew imposed. Life became grim. Prices were skyrocketing and the poor were already having difficulty in finding nourishing food. Fortunately the Club des Chasseurs remained open, and every evening Jack White and I walked over for a meager dinner. The group at the long table dwindled from day to day but never by so much as a gesture did those who remained betray their emotion. Conversation, which was invariably in French, was full of anecdotes, seasoned with mild raillery. In a crashing world the Wielki Pans of 1920 observed all the well-bred ritual which had marked for them the free-masonry of caste.

It was only when General Weygand joined the group that the talk became serious. He sat there quiet, modest, inscrutable. He parried with kindly tack questions about the current campaign, saying with a smile that the Allies had come through worse moments during the Great War. That would lead him to talk of Marshal Foch and of the small group that comprised his “military family” at Bonboms. It was the picture of a band of officers, united in hero-worshipping their chief, who felt that they had a double mission – to save France from the military might of the Germans and from the irreligious doctrine of the Communists. It was over his cup of coffee that he talked most freely, speaking in low even tones and rarely using the personal pronoun. His story finished, he would rise, bow to the group, and walk slowly back through the fragrant Saxon gardens to headquarters.

On Thursday August 12<sup>th</sup>, Farman again asked me to spend the day with him at the front. We motored out of the city toward the height of Serock, a strong position on the river Narew some twenty miles away. But Serock had been abandoned and the Bolsheviks were approaching Zegrze, the property of our friend Prince Mathias Radziwill. We left

the automobile at the gateway, and walking through the well-wooded park, past the empty chateau, came to a machine gun post at the far end of the copse.

In front of us lay five miles of open country, sloping gently upward toward Serock. A charge across the fields in our direction would have been too costly. The Reds were accordingly turning our position by a slow but inexorable advance from one point of cover to another around our left flank. Sitting at the edge of the wood, while we munched our sandwiches which we shared with the cheerful group of gunners, we could witness the occasional clashes of cavalry patrols a mile or two away. We could hear the staccato popping of the machine guns, and see the flames devour the thatched huts that were fired as the fighters passed. I can never read the description on Tolstoy's War and Peace where Pierre from the redoubt at Borodino watches with uncomprehending curiosity the unfolding of the battle, without recapturing my feelings that day.

As we motored through the village of Radzymin on our way back to Warsaw, Farman told me that although the Poles had been holding satisfactorily during the day, he had an uncomfortable feeling that all was not well. He would accordingly have a good dinner, send off his daily telegram to the War Department, and then motor back to spend the night at the front.

During the afternoon Lord D'Abernon and Monsieur Jusserand decided that the moment had come to seek safety in Posen. They rationalized their decision which seemed to many Poles like desertion, by stressing the need of maintaining uninterrupted communications with their governments. They were sorry that the Polish Government was not moving with them – the atmosphere of Warsaw was too tense, they felt, for cold-blooded decision – but they could always offer advice to Prince Sapieha by long-distance telephone. Their special train pulled out of the darkened station shortly before midnight, carrying all but eight of the resident diplomatic corps.

When we returned to the Legation, Jack White and I reviewed our own situation. We had instructions from Washington not to risk capture by the Bolsheviks for fear we might be held as hostages. On the other hand, our mere presence in Warsaw after the others had left was an encouragement to the Poles, and we felt that American prestige would be enhanced by our remaining until the very last moment. But what was the very last moment? And how could we determine it? We finally decided to remain until the Poles blew up the two great bridges crossing the Vistula between Warsaw and its suburb Praga. If we happened to be away from the Legation, the sound of the explosion would in any event reach us, and we could make our way to an agreed rendezvous just to the west of the city, where our automobile with the one remaining American clerk carrying the cipher book would meet us.

It had been a long day and bed was welcome. It seemed as though I had barely fallen asleep when I was roused by Farman who came into my room saying, "You had better get up. It's no longer a question if we leave the city but when. The Bolos took Radzymin shortly before dawn and are now inside the city limits. The Poles are counterattacking and may succeed in delaying matters for a few hours, but the game is up."

All day we went listlessly about our business, expecting each minute to hear the air shattered as the great steel spans of the two bridges were blown from the piers and sent crashing into the river. But the long day dragged to a close and the bridges still stood. When darkness fell, we climbed to the roof of the Blue Palace and gazed out, just as the besieged in earlier wars had done, over the Praga plain to where a vast semicircle of campfires proved that the enemy was already investing the city.

A still longer day followed. Early in the morning, it was rumored that Radzymin had been recaptured; later, that it had been lost a second time. But at least the Poles were resisting. Could the city after all be saved? We tried to work, but it was a meaningless shuffling of papers. Our thoughts were far afield. From time to time we would telephone one of the remaining colleagues and barter tit-bits of information. A few Polish friends dropped in seeking comfort, their heads held high, but their eyes betraying the anguish they felt.

It was not until after seven o'clock that we left the Legation, bound as usual for our evening meal at the club. To our surprise the Great Square was roped off, but lined up within the cordon we could see row upon row of unarmed soldiers, standing sullen and sweating in the August heat. We looked again and sure enough, the uniform they wore was Bolshevik. The sight thus vouchsafed of a thousand prisoners taken that morning in battle could mean only one thing – a sizable Polish success. The news spread like wildfire. In a matter of minutes the nearby streets were crowded. Onlookers who approached skeptically, with discouraged steps, straightened up and walked home erect. There was a song of hope that night in every Polish heart.

During the hours of darkness, the Soviet troops that were investing Warsaw began their retreat. Daylight revealed that Radzymin, Zegrze and Serock had been abandoned. The Poles advanced, at first incredulous, then confident, and finally exultant. Bolshevik morale crumpled, their retreat turned into headlong flight. Harassing them day and night, cutting off groups here and there, the Poles never paused until their inexorable compulsion had driven the enemy back into the dark forests of White Russia and onto the distant plains of the Ukraine.

Historians will continue their sterile debate as to whether Pilsudski or Weygand was the author of victory. There was a deeper cause. At the very moment when all seemed lost, there came a transformation in the Polish spirit, born of a realization that if Warsaw fell, there could be no survival for the Polish state, no future for the Polish race. Fired by an idea, the Poles gained an ascendancy in morale and this they retained through the remaining weeks of the war.

Let it be admitted that Pilsudski and Weygand – be it one or the other or both – profited brilliantly from Soviet errors. Budenny was particularly at fault, for tempted by the high booty of Lwow, he dallied for several days before the city, ignoring repeated orders from Tuchatchewski (ed note: Tukhachevsky) to move northwestward toward Warsaw with the utmost despatch. The result was that when the battle was joined under the walls of the

capital, not only were Budenny's Cossacks a hundred miles away, but there was a gap between the two converging Soviet armies near Deblin, the very point where the last Polish reserves were massed. Two forced marches diagonally northeastward through this gap brought them directly behind the Soviet forces that were already engaged with the Poles at Radzymin. This maneuver climaxed what Lord D'Abernon not inaptly termed the Eighteenth Decisive Battle of the World.

A fortnight later, we received invitations to attend a Te Deum in gratitude for "the miraculous deliverance of Warsaw". Even in their hour of triumph, the Poles could scarcely believe that victory had been due to human efforts unaided. They had prayed for a miracle, and the miracle had been vouchsafed. The Service in the Cathedral was conducted with all the pomp and circumstance reserved by the Church of Rome for occasions of especial solemnity. In the choir stood the great ones of the land – ministers and generals, diplomats and magnates. Behind them the vast nave was filled with humbler worshippers, crowded so close that they were pressed together where they stood.

As the service ended and the Cardinal left the Chancel, the organist began to play the ancient hymn \_\_\_\_\_. In the early days of the Partition, the Poles had been forbidden to sing this in public and it had become a symbol of the lost nationhood and taught by mother to child as something very holy. As they recognized the tune, the entire congregation joined in song. Starting softly, the music rose to a fortissimo. Faces were uplifted, as the rafters shook with the ever increasing volume of the song. Then, slowly, the volume ebbed and the hymn ended in a long drawn out pianissimo. The Cathedral doors were thrown open and the congregation, with tears of emotion, poured out into the summer sunlight. The military foe had been beaten; but there was still hard work ahead for the citizens to make their Republic safe.

In his prophetic story on the "Decline of the West" which he completed in 1922, Spengler foretold that we were entering on a phase where civilization would be blasted by "wars of annihilation". The first of these wars was already drawing to a close in 1918 when the book finally appeared in print. The losses in men and materiel had been staggering, but civilization through a century of peace had accumulated such reserves of manpower and wealth that it survived the blow and emerged ready and eager to rebuild a new world on the ruins of the old. The struggle had been portrayed as a "war to end war", and many believed that out of the crucible of suffering would emerge a wiser, cooler brotherhood of mankind. A great surge of hope sprang up throughout Europe. Ancient wrongs would be righted; flagrant social abuses would be swept away; a new world organization would succeed in keeping the peace. Meanwhile the fall of the three great militaristic Empires of Europe, which had mutually destroyed one another, was liberating a group of subject races, and these were entering upon independent statehood with all the exuberance of youthful heirs. Largest of the succession states was Poland, which for five generations had been partitioned among Russia, Austria and Germany.

Of the three Empires Russia, the least fitted to survive in the modern world, had been the first to collapse. As Czar, instead of an unbending autocrat, there was a well meaning weakling; the Imperial family was a house divided against itself; the aristocracy had for

too long abused its powers and privileges and had raised up a sullen hatred of which it seemed entirely unaware; the Orthodox Church, intellectually dormant for nearly ten centuries, pandered to superstition; the bureaucracy was corrupt and inefficient; and the middle class, normally the strongest element in the body politic simple did not exist. In the field, the armies poorly equipped and weakly led, endured staggering losses for nearly three years, and then began to disintegrate at the very front, even before the virus of Bolshevism led to mutiny and massacre. Not one of the piers supporting the great Imperial edifice was sound, so that the crash, when it came, demolished in one vast ruin the entire superstructure of government, religion and culture. As soon as they could Poles, Fins, Letts, Estonians, and Lithuanians set up states of their own, and succeeded against heavy odds in imposing law and order. Russia itself had to endure first anarchy and then civil war, before it finally accepted a regime that was a far more ruthless tyranny than the Czardom it replaced, and that for many a long year offered the people little but hunger and cold, suspicion and bloodshed.

The second of the great Empires to fall was Austria-Hungary. This was an agglomeration of different races, held together not by patriotism, but by loyalty to the Hapsburg dynasty. The spirit was easy-going: the people (particularly the Austrians) were light hearted and pleasure living; the administration was lax and tolerant; the army was gaudy and ineffective; the social structure was based on a pyramid of surviving feudalism, and at the top the aristocrats, archdukes and Emperor welt in an Olympian world, thinking the thoughts and living the lives of a by-gone age. Never was a great state more completely divorced from reality. Even before 1914 the various races were growing restless: their clamor was for self-government, but their dreams were of complete political independence. They were willing to wait for the old Emperor to die, but his passing was to be the signal for a show-down. In this frame of mind the war burst upon them. Disaster followed disaster at the front; at home there was little but fatigue, hunger, and disillusionment; yet still the momentum of the Empire carried on till its strong German partner, which for a generation had been the will-power behind Austrian policy, and had time and again come to the rescue, itself showed signs of defeat. Then, overnight, Austria-Hungary collapsed like a house of cards. The succession states were set up. Each immediately created a tariff wall against the others. The entities proved too small to be viable. The ancient prosperity of the Danube valley slowly disappeared, until in its poverty and distress it became the breeding ground for future wars. The price of freedom was a high one, and it was not alone the privileged aristocrat who yearned for “the days of the Empire”.

The German Empire was the last of the three to fall. For four long years it had fought, not passively, but fiercely, aggressively. Nowhere was an enemy in occupation of its land. Twice its armies had advanced to the very outskirts of Paris. On sea it had come close to starving Great Britain into seeking terms. Against the resources of the world and the arsenal of the great industrial nations, it continued the struggle victoriously until the summer of 1918. “Surely Germans” wrote Winston Churchill “for history it is enough.” But at length the slow relentless pressure of the sea blockade took its toll. Food grew scarce. The soldier at the front was still fed but his family at home began to starve. Civilian morale broke, and defeatism and despair did to the troops what the enemy had

not been able to do. The collapse was swift, but it was a psychological collapse, far more than a military defeat that impelled surrender. Germany was prepared to pay the price of defeat in a change of regime, in territory and in direct reparations, but having paid she expected to be readmitted as a partner in good standing in the community of nations. Had that been done, the world might have been saved twenty years of anguish and a second and more terrible war. But this was not to be. The embers of hate had been fanned into too high a flame. Germany was kept beyond the pale, her resentment smoldering until in time the warped genius of a Hitler canalized it into the creation of a war machine of devastating strength.

From the wrecks of the three Empires, the new Poland sprang into being. German Posen, Austrian Galicia, and the Russian area of “Congress Poland” fused into a single state. There was unity of language – it had been kept alive and pure in Polish homes despite five generations of bondage – and there was unity of religion, but little else. There was not even unity of character. During those generations the Russian Poles had been taught to conspire, the Austrian Poles to compromise and the German Poles to fight back. This meant inefficiency the Departments, the formation of cliques and a jealous scrutiny of all promotions. The difficulties of forming an administration, of unifying three financial systems, three judicial systems, and three sets of military traditions at times seemed almost insuperable.

Fortunately, the Pole is by nature sanguine. He lives in the present. He has the happy faculty of closing his eyes to gathering storm clouds and concentrating on transient sunshine. Although he subconsciously sensed the dangers threatening the country from without and within, the average Pole preferred not to think about them, but to taste the unfamiliar pleasures of national independence and to enjoy in anticipation the prosperity that he felt destiny held in store. He gave free rein to enthusiasm, to buoyancy, to optimism. The future at long last was his, and it called for festivity. Each class made merry in its own way.

Never had Warsaw known such a “season” as the winter of 1919-1920. The great families, Potockis, Radziwills, Lubomirskis, Sapiehas, after having lived in the country for decades, made a point of returning to Warsaw and reopening their palaces. With their eighteenth century standards, they felt that they were testifying to their faith in Poland’s stability by making its capital for one brief winter the most brilliant in Europe. The impact of three emotions – reaction from the privations of the past, pride in the present, and an anguished, if suppressed, fear of the future – combined to create an urge for exaggerated gaiety. Festivities were so frequent that long before the onset of Lent, many of the foreigners began to flag and grow surfeited; the Poles never.

How we succeeded in feasting and dancing most of the night and doing our work the next day, I don’t know. The only explanation is youth, and the intoxication that came from living on the very edge of the abyss.

My counter number at the British Legation was Bill Bentinck. Today he is the cautious and rather conventional representative of his Britannic Majesty at \_\_\_\_\_; then he was



an impulsive youngster, full of dash and sparkle, ready for anything that came along. We soon became boon companions. We were only twenty-three or twenty-four at the time, and the two of us were badly spoiled by our Polish friends. We flirted with the young girls, played bridge with their mothers, and called dutifully on their grandmothers. We frequented the Club des Chasseurs, except for the card room where the play was too high, and we were at the opera house to applaud the prima ballerina assoluta, la Scholzovna, whenever she danced. There was little that we missed, but our chiefs were indulgent, particularly after the austere Papal Nuncio, later Pius XI, went out of his way to say kind things in his thick Italian accent about “mes enfants prodigies”.

I cannot begin to recall all the fetes of that winter, but one or two stand out in bold relief. There was the ball which Count Joseph Potocki gave in his palace on the Krakowskie Przedmiescie. Here it was that Mural lived, when to the eager delight of the Poles he occupied Warsaw in 1860, and it was in the very ballroom where we danced that Napoleon first glimpsed and forthwith fell in love with the Countess Walewska. The whole atmosphere of the house was redolent of the First Empire. The feeling of stepping into a past era was accelerated when at half past one the musicians struck up the mazurka. Instantly the older Poles arose and ten or twelve couples stood out to dance. It was glorious fun to watch, and lined against the walls, we encouraged the dancers with rhythmic applause. The men, holding their partners tightly by the hand, would stand for a moment, tapping their feet awaiting the right measure. Suddenly they would give a bound in the air, and the dance was on. An intricate series of steps was executed to the strongly accented music, punctuated by variations. The men would swing around, holding high their left arms and stamping with their feet, would drop to one knee, would swing their partners first on the right arm, then on the left, and sometimes with such gusto that we wondered whether they could keep their balance. The abandon and primitive strength of the dance shook the old palace to its foundations. The younger Poles were growing self-conscious about the mazurka; I fear that it may long since have become a lost art, to survive only on the stage.

A few evenings later, one of the Papal chamberlains gave a reception in honor of the two cardinals who had just returned from receiving the hat in Rome. It was many years since there had been a Polish cardinal, and the event symbolized the rebirth of the country as one of the larger Catholic powers. We all arrived a few moments before nine. The women, as if to compensate for having to wear high dress, had ransacked their jewel boxes, and never before or since have I seen such a striking collection of stones, notable the great semi-barbaric cabochons in which all Slavic peoples take a special delight. As the clock struck the hour the Primate's carriage drove up. The host met him at the door, preceded by two valets each holding high a lighted taper. The doors of the drawing room were thrown open, there was a theatrical hush, and as Cardinal Dalbor slowly made the circle, all present dropped to one knee or curtsied, and kissed the ring. Half an hour later, the second cardinal, Kakowski, Warsaw's own archbishop, made his entry. He was a superb looking prelate, towering six feet four, and his firmness during the German occupation had endeared him to his diocese. Instead of being received in reverend silence, he was greeted with a cheer and made his circle to the accompaniment of decidedly unepiscopal applause.

It is impossible to reminisce of the old days in Warsaw without evoking happy memories of a galaxy of friends. There was the old Marquise Wielopolska, who could make or break a newcomer by dispatching or withholding one of her prized invitations. She went out very little, but such was the power of tradition plus personality that her social dictatorship was accepted without revolt and without appeal. Then there were the two Princess Radziwills, Isabel and Olga, sisters-in-law who at the parties they jointly gave used to preside at opposite ends of the drawing room and hold court in friendly rivalry.

There was the Chauvinesse Walewska, ugly and misshapen, but with a wit so sparkling that she dominated any group she joined. There was the redoubtable Countess Betka Potocka, still beautiful at sixty and still claiming as of right, and for that matter receiving, the unreserved homage of Poles and foreigners alike. And there were two sisters, Countess Henry Potocka and Countess Benoit Tyszkiewicz, who to me typified all that was finest in the Polish aristocracy. At least half of these good friends died before the second world war, and perhaps it was just as well. Requiescant in pace.

Warsaw was a city where the spirit of history hovered close at hand. After some centuries of glory, Polish history became one of war and turmoil, of jealousy and intrigue, with an aura of tragedy and lost causes. There were flashes of great and heroic achievement, but success was never long sustained. The same Poles who rose to heights in times of reverse, split into selfish factions as soon as success came their way. It was the constant internecine quarrels among the Polish lords that had led to Poland's downfall and ultimate partition.

The scions of these self-same families were still dominating the scene, for where wealth comes exclusively from the land, society remains surprisingly static. They still occupied the palaces built by their ancestors, and lived in the rooms made memorable by 18<sup>th</sup> Century political intrigue. They were resolutely determined to maintain the magnificence of their establishment and carried to a high point the "art of living". But for all its charm, I felt in Warsaw an undertone of decadence; its culture was overripe, a hot-house growth.

The real strength of Poland came from the fields and the forests. The love of the soil was instinctive in every Pole, and from living near the soil he derived all that was finest in his make-up. It was not until I had paid a number of visits in the country, that I began to sense the true worth of my Polish friends. Life was still feudal but it was devoid of sham.

Landlord and Peasant had made common cause during the partition in resisting alien overlordship and in keeping Polish nationalism alive. This had welded a strong bond between them, despite the gulf between the perfectly appointed castle and the poverty of the thatched villages outside the castle gate. The gulf was so great that not even in imagination was it bridged. The more lavish the castle and its invariable hunt, the greater the pride of the peasants.

I recall spending the week between Christmas and New Years with the Henry Potockis at Chrzastow. This was a large eighteenth century manor house built over the remains of an

old fortress, the walls of the ground floor thus being twenty feet thick. It was set in a vast forest which was subdivided into eighty sections, where cutting and replanting were carried on in regular rotation. There were no near neighbors. Friends and cousins would harness their carriages and drive over from a distance to remain two or three days. We never sat down at table fewer than thirty or forty, the generations mixing with perfect freedom. Here for the first time I tasted some old Polish dishes, such as soup made of the hot blood of goose heavily spiced, and drank miod or distilled honey (the ancient mead of the British).

There were some ten thousand peasants on the estate, happy enough, loyal enough, but not to be tempted beyond a point. Each morning Count and Countess Henry Potocki would go to the front hall at nine o'clock to receive one by one any petitioners from the estate who lined up at the entrance. Each man or woman was free to come with his wish or his grievance. To one they would give a few coins; to another a calomel pill; a third would be sent away with a scolding; a fourth would come to announce the birth of a child and go away with congratulations and a small present. And thus it went on for an hour or more. In the afternoon Countess Potocki would go out in a light sleigh to visit the sick and infirm in their thatched huts. The system worked, but it would only work so long as the landlords were willing to give so much of themselves.

Most of the time I played with the younger generation: Anna, now Countess Georges Zoltowska, and her two brothers Paul and Wladek. We rode horseback by the hour through the snow covered forest; we visited the lumber mills; we drove into Czestochowa, and leaving Anna in a church nearby – for no woman unless members of the House of Bourbon are allowed in the monastery – went into the famous (ed note: Jasna Góra Monastery) and relived the famous siege of which was immortalized by Sienkiewicz in “The Deluge”.

One afternoon the whole group, young and old alike, drove into the forest to dig up the family silver which had been buried at the time the Bolsheviks were driving on Warsaw a few months previously. The place had originally been selected with the utmost care and triangulated on natural features (these were few and far between in the flat sandy-soiled woods) that could be recognized even if the trees should be burned. Many a fortune to this day lies buried in Poland which the owner is unable to find because the landmarks were all obliterated when the fires of war passed by. Other fortunes were found by the enemy through sheer accident, such as Count Tyszkiewicz famous wine cellar, which was discovered by a German soldier digging a trench. The Officers altered the direction of the trench and had the satisfaction of digging up in the course of a few kilometers several thousand cases of vintage wines. The Potocki silver, however, was safe. We loaded it aboard two waiting sleighs; the housemen set to work a-polishing it, and we saw it once more in use a day or two later when we all gathered for a midnight feast to welcome in the New Year 1921.

The next day I had to return to work. The railroad station was sixty miles away and the train left at eleven o'clock. This meant rising before dawn and driving the distance behind horses. Over my coat I put a borrowed \_\_\_ with fur both outside and in; over my

head I drew a fur helmet which came down to the shoulders with only a small opening for eyes and nose; next I stepped into a fur lined bag which was tied under my armpits, and thus immunized against the cold I was driven through the forest. The snow muffled the sound of the horses hoofbeats, and the stillness of the forest, during both the hours of darkness and the yellow dawn was startling. Every twenty miles or so we would stop at an inn for a relay of horses, while the peasant driver would gossip for a few moments with the landlord before climbing back on to his high and narrow seat. I was sorry when we reached the station, and stepped back into the bustling hurrying life of the twentieth century.

Another visit I made was to Lancut, the fairy-tale chateau of Alfred Potocki. No description could do justice to the house or to the princely state with which it was maintained. For untold generations each owner had added to the house until it had become a veritable museum. We never dined twice in the same dining room. Once we ate from the plates carried by Napoleon on his invasion of Russia and abandoned during the retreat. We had coffee in a drawing room where the furniture and pictures came from Versailles, bought by an ancestor during the French Revolution. There were galleries, halls of sculpture, an orangerie, even a theatre. I asked how it was that the house remained undamaged through the vicissitudes of war. The answer was that there was no river nearby, for in open warfare the worst fighting always occurs near a river crossing. But a more probable reason is to be found in the fact that the Potockis, and the Radizwills with whom they intermarried, were connected with both the Austrian and the Russian courts, and that when one branch of the family was driven out, another branch took charge of the property on their behalf. Lancut even survived the invasion of 1939. The story goes that when the German motorized columns were approaching an elderly friend tried to persuade Countess Betka Potocka to flee. "Why should I?" she answered, "I'm not afraid of any German living." And when the enemy took possession they found the chatelaine in the rose garden calmly snipping off the heads of her roses. These Polish aristocrats had "panache". They were living in a by-gone world, mistaking the gesture for reality, but they were governed by a code, and that code included intense loyalty to friends and unflinching defiance of foe.

But it was not only in the pageantry of the great estate that I saw the Polish countryside. There was a trip down the Corridor to the Free City of Danzig, which was not only German to the core but already rabidly anti-Polish. There was a motor trip with Colonel Farman to Eastern Galicia with visits to the Battlefields of 1914. Here where the peasantry was Ruthenian the flames of jacquerie had destroyed most of the manor houses. Only an occasional one was left standing, and this was where the landlord and the village were both Roman Catholic. On the way back we drove to the summit of one of the Carpathian passes, the high water mark of the Russian invasion of Austria in 1914-15. This meant spending the night *a la belle étoile*, but so insecure was the countryside that we judged it prudent to build a campfire, then hide the car a mile or so away, and then ourselves lie down to sleep several hundred yards from the car. The next day we visited Lwow, and Przemysl of the unpronounceable name. There were other trips. One was to Teschen and Upper Silesia, where we found hard working international commissions preparing lists for a plebiscite, amid scenes of disorder due to artificially developed

bitterness. There was a trip across the border into East Prussia, “a dry hard land, fit lair for the Prussian”.

But in many ways the most interesting expedition was a midwinter journey by automobile, carrying despatches to our High Commissioner in Riga. Colonel Holliday and I motored up to Vilna, claimed by Lithuania as its historic capital and by Poland as its cultural outpost, while its inhabitants who were mainly Orthodox Jews were only interested in going about their own business.

The city was held by insurgent Poles under General Zeligowski and the Lithuanian lines were not more than ten miles distant. The fighting between the two forces was desultory and it was not uncommon for a local truce to be arranged to allow neutral officials to cross and proceed on their way. We had hoped that they would do this for us, but we struck a bad day when neither side was inclined to forego the pleasure of sniping at the other in order to convenience two traveling Americans. The result was a forced detour of two hundred miles via Lida, and Grodno to Kovno.

During the night we spent at Lida the temperature dropped thirty degrees Fahrenheit to about ten degrees below zero, and when we were ready to set forth the next morning the engine of our automobile was frozen solid. For an hour the chauffeur tried by every orthodox device to start the motor, but in vain. The trouble, he assured us, lay in watered gasoline; obviously the water had sunk to the bottom of the tank where it had congealed and blocked the feed-pipe. The remedy was to build a fire under the tank and melt the ice. We demurred for a while, but as precious time was passing we finally agreed. Colonel Halliday and I retreated to a prudent distance, while the chauffeur laid and lighted a small fire, which burned itself out in four or five minutes. He thereupon stepped on the self-starter, the engine purred, and off we drove without further mishap to Kovno.

I still rate the Kovno of 1920 as one of the most depressing towns it has been my lot to visit. All Lithuania, for that matter, looked hopelessly down at the heel and the people dazed and discouraged. The moment we crossed into Latvia, however, we entered a new world. Riga was a Western city and there was a vitality in the air that was sadly lacking in Slavic cities. Perhaps this was due to the character of its inhabitants, Letts and Balts, neither of whom were Slavs; the one was Turanian, the other German. They hated each other fiercely, and struggled for the upper hand with cruel intensity. Neither race had in its makeup one ounce of the milk of human kindness.

Riga had shortly before my visit been through a Red Terror, followed by a White Terror. I have never forgotten a description written by Warwick Green in which he tried to capture the emotions of those days. He wrote of seeing the White Guard slaughter the city rabble, who squealed like weasels and kissed the soldiers boots for mercy. But when it came to shooting the communists and crack Red Guards, he saw them face the shooting squad unbound, unblindfolded and unflinching. As he watched the scene, he felt law and order on the one hand, anarchy and ruin on the other. Was it not a mere chapter in the perennial struggle between our Western and Christian civilization, and the sons and daughters of Belial? And then, he reflected, so might a minor Roman official in Asia

Minor have viewed the execution of early Christian martyrs. This ignorant rabble! These filthy fishermen! These verminous Jews! Were they not preaching sedition against Rome, trying to drag down her splendid civilization to their own degraded level? This however was but a momentary disturbing thought. It was dispelled by the sight of the funeral processions of respectable old gentlemen and ladies, shot by the Red hordes as they evacuated the city the day before. He hated the foul dictatorship of the proletariat headed by fanatics, “yeastly intellectuals from the dregs of society”. He went to bed and “the crack of rifles through the dark and cringing city, telling where the rats of Bolshevism were being hunted down in back alleys and foul cellars exploded in your mind with strange effects. ... and there came into your dreams strange whispers of a new spirit moving on the waters of history, of a vision of a fresh freer life for man, of an audacious attempt by force of arms and intellect to right intolerable and growing wrongs.”

This same “whispering” kept coming back to most of us Americans in Eastern Europe. Theoretically, communism embodied a conception of life far more advanced than our own system, yet in practice it was reviving the Dark Ages. It required an act of faith to see a happier world growing out of the misery and torture and carnage that followed wherever the early Bolsheviks trod. And yet we instinctively knew that the Polish way of life, twentieth century feudalism however benevolent, was doomed to die. Not so our Polish friends. To them Bolshevism was sheer evil. It was anti-Christ. The memory of relatives massacred, of houses burned over their heads, of properties torn from them was too near, too vivid. It confirmed them in a superconservatism, a resistance to reform. They resolutely closed their eyes to the fact that the world about them was changing, that new ideas were afloat, and that different standards were prevailing. They were satisfied with their world, and ready to die in maintaining it. The two decades that followed were therefore socially stagnant, and politically unreal.

My mind might rebel at their ideas, yet I liked the Poles as I have liked few races. They have a positive gift for friendship, a gift that once bestowed is yours for life. I made a host of real friends during my two years in Poland, many of whom I did not see for another twenty years. Yet in each case we started again just where we had left off. What was still theirs was to be shared, be it only a cup of coffee in the hall bedroom of a dingy boarding house. The ups and downs of fortune never affected the friendship of a Pole.

In March 1962 I went home to be present at the wedding of my sister and Jack White. While in the United States I received orders transferring me to Tokyo.

Tokyo:

In August 1921, I was assigned as Second Secretary to our Embassy in Japan. I welcomed this transfer, not only because it would give me a glimpse of Far Eastern life, but because I foresaw in Tokyo another active post, where vital issues were at stake. It is an open secret that the relations between Japan and the United States were seriously troubling our government, and that the thought of war was beginning to be voiced in the

press. It accordingly did not take me long to pack my trunks, bid a hasty goodbye to the family at Northeast Harbor, and start.

My pleasure in the journey was somewhat spoiled, however, by the fact that I was ordered to take with me a pouch, containing the new secret ciphers to be used by our missions in Japan, China, Vladivostok and Harbin during the forthcoming Washington Conference. What was so euphemistically termed a pouch was in reality a mail bag, weighing twenty-four pounds by the bathroom scales, so clumsy that to carry it required both hands. Needless to say, I could never let it out of my sight, and had to carry it back and forth between my sleeper and the diner, into the washroom, and even to sleep with it in my berth. Between New York and San Francisco, I counted one hundred and eighty-two cars through which I carried it, while I could hear snickers about “crown jewels”, “Bolshevik gold” and the like, as I passed. Fortunately, by crossing on an American ship I was able to lock it in the Captain’s safe between San Francisco and Yokohama.

By good luck, I met my new Chief on the train shortly after leaving Chicago, and continued the journey with him and his family all the way to Tokyo. President Harding had given much thought to the Ambassadorship at Tokyo and had met with several reprisals in his offers of the post. One of his candidates felt himself too old to stand the strain, while several others did not wish to imperil their otherwise secure reputations in taking on a task where the chances of success were far from equal. The choice of Mr. Charles Beecher Warren seems to have been first suggested to the President by Senator Newberry, and I doubt whether a better choice could have been made. That his past career gave little indication of diplomatic talents only increases the merit of his appointment. He was typically a man who had grown with Detroit, his native city. A shrewd layer, he had early in life tied himself up with the automobile and beet sugar industries, which were about to start their phenomenal expansion, and in the process realized a considerable fortune, and gained control of the Republican political organization. For years he had been Republican National Committeeman, and even served on the Party Executive Committee – his chief claim to political reward was his management of the Michigan delegation at the National Convention in 1920, which he kept solid for Senator Johnson until he was able at the crucial moment to swing it bodily for Mr. Harding. He had never run for an elective office and vowed that he never would. But he had done public service as United States Counsel in the Bering Sea and North Atlantic Fisheries arbitrations, and during the war in the office of the Advocate General of the Army, where he drew up the famous “Drift Bill”. When first offered Tokyo, Mr. Warren demurred, as he did not wish to be away from home indefinitely; the President thereupon said that he would only hold him for a year, as by that time the situation would have settled itself, and there would be either a break, or a resumption of cordiality between the two governments.

The journey across the Pacific was pleasant enough. The sea was monotonously smooth, but the trip was broken by a day at Honolulu. Finally on the seventeenth day we sighted the cliffs of the Boshu peninsula, and a few hours later dropped anchor in Yokohama Bay, while the elusive Fuji, newly white with the first snow of the year, showed herself

the entire way to Tokyo. It was the last time we saw her, however, for nearly a month, as that night it began to rain and continued to rain without stop for twenty-seven days.

Tokyo was a city of magnificent contrasts, though still predominantly oriental. There was a nucleus of modern office buildings near the Central Railroad station, there was a main shopping street, with city pavement and two sidewalks, there were a couple of stone department stores, and scattered here and there throughout the city a modern European building. But nine-tenths of Tokyo was still undiluted Japanese. The streets were narrow, crooked, and unpaved; there was not a sewer in the city; hidden away, in magnificent parks were the houses of the aristocrats, but the only type of building one saw was the two story grey wooden house with the inevitable shop downstairs, opening straight onto the street, with its wares spread out within easy reach of any pickpocket. You could drive for miles and miles through one street after another looking so alike that it was almost impossible not to get lost. The houses were not numbered individually, but in groups of twenty or thirty; and except for long distances, the rickshaw was still the easiest means of conveyance.

It was very much the same way with the Japanese themselves; many of the men would wear European clothes in the city when it was convenient, but would not hesitate to shed all or part if it ceased to be so. It was a frequent sight on the commuting trains leaving Tokyo to see a portly Japanese gentleman undress down to a loincloth in the day coach, before men and women alike, carefully fold his clothes into a little pile, undo a bundle containing his kimono, put it on, tie up his city clothes, heave a heavy sigh of relief and subside into a comfortable sleep. Although less tangibly apparent, the Europeanization of their intellects, their morals, and possibly their government, had been carried to about the same degree and no farther.

Somebody once said that in living in Japan you underwent three distinct phases: disappointment, discovery, and disillusionment. The first two phases, at least, I passed through, though oddly overlapping one another; seen by the glaring light of the sun, Japan was a bitter disappointment; softened by the mellow light of the moon, its charm was infinitely gripping. It was sitting before my window each evening in the house of the friend with whom I stayed the first two months, on top of the Atago Yama, overlooking three wards of the city that I first began to sense the beauty of Japan. Looking down, you could see myriads of lanterns illuminating the street booths, with the people walking to and from in the cool of the evening in their loose hanging kimonos; "thinking over the events of an uneventful day" you could hear the perpetual clatter, clatter, clatter, of their wooden getas crossing a section of paved road or a stone bridge; in the distance you could make out the notes of a koto or samisen, or perhaps hear some worshipper clapping his hands as he rocked to and from before a nearby shrine. But with dawn it all vanished; the picturesque street booths turned into tables piled high with a collection of tawdry products from the west; the men turned one of the most graceful of garments into one of the most grotesque by adding a felt hat and a cape of the vintage of our civil war (literally, for the style was established when we sent to Japan a shipment of leftover capes from our army stocks); the houses, picturesque when set forth with long shadows, assumed the unbroken monotony of unpainted weather-stained wood; and the streets



smelled, not of incense, but of the open sewers nearby. But there was little time to analyze our impressions. We were far too busy in the Chancery the first few weeks to notice anything, even the weather.

To gain a superficial understanding of the political situation that confronted us, it is unnecessary to go further back than the Russo-Japanese war. At that time America was frankly and enthusiastically pro-Japanese though in justice, it must be admitted that our enthusiasm smacked of patronizing; we regarded the Japanese as our protégés, and did not hesitate to recall that we had “opened” them to the world. The climax of our partisanship was reached at Portsmouth, when the good offices of President Roosevelt, were perhaps the decisive factor in clinching the Japanese victory. For one, I have always regarded his attitude then, one of Roosevelt’s greatest blunders as viewed in the light of later history. Imagine the reaction in America when instead of uniting in thanks, the Japanese populace conceived that we had robbed them of the just fruits of their war, broke into hostile riots before our Legation, which had to be guarded by troops to prevent its sack. From that moment, a feeling of suspicion and enmity set in that was to grow steadily worse as the years rolled by, one thing after another, the school question in California, the immigration negotiations (only half solved by the gentleman’s agreement), the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, and the California Alien Land Laws, driving the two countries further and further apart. The European war broke out, and from one day to the next every European power withdrew its activities from the Far East and China was left, a rich and defenseless morsel, only too inviting to Japanese greed. The result was first the seizure of Shantung, and secondly the famous “21 demands” by which Japan sought to reduce China to the position of a vassal. Our protests were platonic, as only Mr. Wilson’s protests could be, and quite counterbalanced by the conclusion of the Lansing-Ishii agreement which recognized Japanese – “special interests in China” – whatever that may or may not have been meant to mean. Next, Russia collapsed, and the Allies agreed to send a joint force to Siberia, with contingents of 7,000 men each, to save the Czechoslovak troops; Japan, without explanation, promptly sent 70,000, and their behavior so antagonized the American contingent as to be largely responsible for its sudden withdrawal. In this situation, already tense, a defamatory press campaign and the unfortunate shooting of Lieutenant Langdon by a Japanese sentry, acted as so much fuel to a smoldering fire, and the talk of war was more and more freely voiced.

No wonder the Harding Administration regarded the Japanese problem as the crux of our foreign relations and resolved to bring the situation to a head within the year. By joining the discussion of the Far Eastern situation with that of the limitation of Naval Armaments, we adroitly maneuvered Japan into the position of being unable to decline the discussion without losing every whit of sympathy from the rest of the world. There was little enthusiasm in her acceptance of the invitation to the Conference, and the feeling was general throughout the country that Japan was being called to the bar to justify its actions before a jury of prejudiced nations. This feeling was still in the ascendant when we landed, and was shared by almost all public men except the Prime Minister, Mr. Hara, who saw in the situation a chance to knife his enemies, the Military and Naval Cliques. The Ambassador and Mr. Hara were soon on the friendliest of terms,

the Japanese delegates were selected and speeded on their way, and there came a sudden lull in our work that is so often the forerunner of a storm.

One evening, a week before the opening of the Conference, I was at a dinner party given for the Warrens, when the telephone rang and the message given that the Prime Minister had been stabbed in the railroad station and was at that moment dying. The dinner broke up then and there, and I returned to the Chancery to encipher a series of messages, of which the appropriate one would be despatched as soon as the news was confirmed. In less than an hour Kirk, the First Secretary, had found Mr. Hara's Secretary, learned the details, and our cable "beat" the speediest press service by nearly six hours; the Hearst papers got the news to the general public first, while the Associated Press rarely caught napping, was twelve hours late in wiring the facts.

For a moment it looked as though everything might be lost, and that a Cabinet would be formed pledged to an uncompromising attitude at Washington. Statesmen met and discussed the situation, possible political permutations and combinations were considered, and in the end the advice of the four remaining Genro (or Elder Statesmen) was sought and followed. Takahashi, a wealthy politician who had started life as a geisha's servant, was made Prime Minister, but Count Uchida retained the foreign portfolio, and it was clearly understood that the foreign policy of the former cabinet would remain unchanged. Uchida had come to the conclusion that Japan's best course was to play an honest game, and a transparently honest game; he accordingly used to inform Mr. Warren of the instructions he was sending the Japanese delegation, and our government was thus able to formulate hypotheses and compromises two or three days in advance. It was an unusual procedure to adopt, but one which repaid Japan many fold.

Even during the Washington Conference, which was the busiest period for the Chancery of the two years I spent in Japan, it was possible to get off for an occasional weekend; the first trip I made out of Tokyo was to Nikko, the burial site of the Tokugawa Shoguns. I was often to go there later, but with one exception, I never again found it as beautiful as the morning after my arrival. It had been a dark rainy evening when I reached Nikko, giving not the faintest promise of anything unusual; the contrast was but the more marked when I discovered myself the next morning in a deep valley, surrounded by mountains towering four or five thousand feet above us, their lower slopes covered with the brilliant red of countless maples, their summits glistening with fresh fallen snow. The valley itself was filled with giant cryptomeria trees, among which were a series of red or black lacquered temples, richly carved, and filled with the treasures of the ages. Nearly everything was the gift of some great daimyo, while the cryptomeria trees, beginning twenty miles away, and flanking the road from Utsonomiya to the grove at Nikko, were planted by the poorer daimyos, who had only labor to bestow.

Nikko served to show the Japanese instinct for perfect stage setting. Not a tree or a building could have been set to greater advantage. But then Nikko was built two centuries before. I was wondering whether or not this was a lost art, when I found an answer in the Imperial Chrysanthemum Garden Party. This was staged in the gardens of the Akasaka Detached Palace, a park of about two square miles, set in the heart of the city. Three

thousand or more Japanese dignitaries were invited, the Diplomatic Corps, and a limited number of distinguished foreigners, whose names were submitted through their respective Embassies. Frock coats, in the absence of uniforms, were insisted on, and as few foreigners still possessed such old fashioned coats, the proportion of borrowed or rented clothes was very great, and of well fitting ones correspondingly small. Nonetheless, uniformity is always impressive, and no one had the courage to laugh at his neighbor. The gates were opened at two o'clock, and the guests poured in, strolling through the park for perhaps a mile, under strange exotic trees and past myriad chrysanthemums, of every known variety, cultivated in the most astounding shapes, one stem having as many as five hundred flowers, arranged in a perfect pentagon. At the top of a small rise, the one hundred highest Japanese officials, the Diplomatic Corps and the foreigners who were to be presented, were invited into a small enclosure while the others continued to the buffet. At half past three the Empress and Prince Regent appeared, passed slowly around the enclosure, speaking in turn to each Ambassador and Minister, and then followed by us all walked to the buffet. This was an acre of ground, surrounded on three sides by a pavilion hung the entire distance with Imperial brocade; every one of the three thousand guests was seated, while at the head was a specially hung pavilion where the Empress, the Imperial family and the Ambassadors seated themselves. For an hour or more the Garden Party continued, until as the sun sank, the Empress gave the signal to rise. The guests hastened to both sides of the central path, the Japanese women in their dark kimonos to the front, and as the Empress slowly walked between them to the impressive tune of the Japanese national anthem, they bowed low, giving the effect of an advancing wave, until finally she vanished down a steep path, with the full moon rising directly above her. No effect could have been finer, nor have demanded more painstaking calculation or preparation.

Court, which was held on January 1<sup>st</sup>, was less impressive, though marked with considerable dignity. Its greatest drawback was the eradication of anything Japanese connected with it. The ceremony, the uniforms, the salutations were all rigorously copied from the British Court. To such an extent was this the case that all ladies attached to the Court were required to wear European dress – practically the only ones who did so in the entire Empire. It was scarcely their fault, if they occasionally ruined the effect of a handsome blue silk creation from Worth by wearing white silk stockings and black slippers, and of course no milliner could create a hat that looked as though it belonged on top of a Japanese headdress.

Shortly after the New Year I was asked to the wedding reception of the daughter of a Foreign Office official and a young Japanese functionary I knew. Being one of the few foreigners invited, I felt duly flattered and arrived early. But instead of finding them established in some picturesque Japanese house set in a garden of stunted pines, I drove up to a European building of yellow tile brick, of German architecture, even to the name of "Villa Dorothea" which was emblazoned on the outer wall. In Japan, the wedding reception is rarely held until a month or more after the marriage, and corresponds to a housewarming on the return from the honeymoon. The bride dresses up in her ceremonial kimonos, seven of them at least, one over the other, and receives with her husband and their immediate families. I bowed very low all around, shook hands, and was

immediately invited to go downstairs to refresh myself. Here I found the other guests in a very large basement, duly festooned, with games installed for our amusement. Aside from billiards, there was a ping-pong table, a bowling alley, an archery game, and several weight pulling devices, borrowed from a gymnasium; while in one corner had been built a bar, perfectly copied from some American saloon of bygone days, behind which stood two white-coated attendants in the midst of a sea of bottles, mixing drinks to suit the fancy of the guests. Picture the contrast: upstairs the bride dressed according to the traditions of the centuries; downstairs, every trace of Japan methodically done away with.

There is one tradition, however, that was still rigidly observed: the power of the family council. The great fortunes are still administered in bulk, and incomes apportioned out in accordance with the council's decision. If it stopped there, it might still be palatable to westerners, but the Council would not hesitate to interfere in the most insignificant personal matters. I had one friend, the scion of one of the most famous and wealthy daimyo families, who spent several years abroad and became an ardent apostle of western music. He returned to Japan, married, and began preparations for a new house. Before the Council would give him the funds to start building, it required the submission of the plans for its approval. They were duly submitted and examined, but returned with the query: do you realize that your house would be larger than your father's house? The plans had to be redrawn so as to conform with the size of the father's house. The main feature of the new house was to be a large music room, to hold two magnificent Bechsteins which my friend had brought back from Europe. This caused the new plans to be thrown out with the formula: do you realize that your house would have a larger room than your father's house? As the father's house was Japanese with a multitude of small matted rooms, this decision was a disastrous one. But pleadings and explanations were in vain, and as finally built the magnificent music room had to be cut up into a series of small, ill-proportioned sitting rooms, separated by plush portieres.

The winter dragged on slowly, with long periods of raw, blustering weather separated by snow falls. The sun appeared occasionally to cheer us up, but by and large the weather gave not the faintest indication of spring, when one day in mid-February, walking to the Chancery, I chanced to look up and saw a plum tree in full bloom; pretty soon I found a few others, and then the snow came. To my delight it did not hurt them in the slightest, but the sight of those delicate white fruit blossoms, barely distinguishable against a snow background, is one that is rarely paralleled elsewhere. From the moment the plum blossoms appear in February, spring may be said to have come, for though the trees are not covered with leaves till early May, they introduce a series of blooms and blossoms that are a perpetual joy to the eye: in March, the double plum, the camellia, and toward the end, the simple cherry; in April the double cherry, and the peach; in May, the azalea; in June, the iris; in July, the lily; in August the lotus flower, and thus on till with the chrysanthemum in October and November, nature again goes to sleep.

It was early April that with the Hugh Wilsons and the Warren boys I made the five day trip around Mt. Fuji. I never did go up it, preferring to merit the first strictures of the Japanese proverb: there are two kinds of a fool – one, that never climbs Fuji, the other that climbs it twice. But the trip around it was a continual delight. We left Tokyo one

afternoon by train and traveled a few hours to the village of Otsuki where we transshipped to a miniature railway of, I think one foot six inch gauge. The cars were so small that when I stood up on tiptoes outside I could look over them, and if by chance the miniature locomotive attained the dizzy speed of six miles an hour, it gave you as much of a thrill as the Twentieth Century Limited at sixty. It took two and one-half hours to cover the eleven miles to the village where we were spending the night, and we arrived about 9 p.m. frozen and famished. Like all Japanese inns, this was immaculately clean, and earned my special gratitude by furnishing us with at least one course of European food. Soon the futons were brought in, and our beds made up on the floor, comfortable enough in themselves, but too short for one of my stature. A hot bath in the tub completed our comfort, and we all slept the sleep of the just ill early the next morning when the [shoji] were rolled back and there directly above us stood the peak of Fuji, glistening white with the rising sun touching the summit, while all about us was still night. After breakfast we started walking, and passed a succession of lakes over which we were either rowed or sailed and before dusk reached Shoji, just as the weather broke and rain began to fall in torrents. Here we found a curious little hotel, semi-Europeanized, reminding us for all the world of a log cabin at home, even to the smoke from green wood which escaped from the stove and half blinded us. The next morning it was still pouring, at noon the rain was if anything coming down harder, and the diversions offered by the hotel were running low. Suddenly about half past four someone shouted "Look!" The rain had just let up, and Fuji miraculously appeared covered with new fallen snow against a jet black and still angry sky. From that moment on the weather got steadily better, but we were to be treated to one more unusual view of Fuji-san. After dinner we strolled out on to the little terrace in what was now a calm moonlit evening. A soft mist was hovering over the lake which prevented our seeing the mountain directly; but looking down we were able to see its reflection in the black surface of the water. We were off before dawn in what grew to be a perfect spring day, climbed two or three thousand feet to a hogback with Fuji and the lakes to one side, and the forbidding chain of the Japanese Alps to the other; slithered down the steep northwestern slope, and after nineteen miles of strenuous walking, with an occasional respite on a derelict horse we had hired for the party, we reached the Fujiwara river where we were to take a boat. The river was in flood and the boatmen needed extra persuasion, but at least we were all aboard in a long flat bottomed boat in which all the planking had been laid lengthwise. The crew consisting of four boatmen armed with long poles shoved off and we seemed to be sailing peacefully downstream when suddenly the main current caught us and off we darted at breakneck speed, through fields and narrow gorges, now bow first and then broadside on, rounding corners where we missed crashing into outjutting rocks by the slimmest of margins, and at last rushing over a series of rapids, when the floor of the boat would heave as in an earthquake as it scraped on the rocks at undiminished speed, and the shouts of the boatmen redoubled and the muscles of their necks grew tense as they strove to guide her with their poles. This lasted for perhaps an hour and a half, when we drew into a back eddy and were helped ashore. An old fashioned horse drawn bus was commandeered from somewhere and we were driven to the old monastery town of Minobu, with a half dozen Lotols, undiluted Japanese in style. Here we dined off rice and raw fish, washed it down in sake, and tried our best to sleep while the whole hotel seemed to chatter till long after midnight and to begin again an hour before dawn. The last day of the trip opened

with two more hours on the river, a narrow gauge railway trip and a final three hours on the limited express, closing a friendly trip in which we had traveled by automobile, train, miniature railway, walking, rowing, sailing, riding, punting and driving.

Back to Tokyo to find the city bedecked for the arrival of the Prince of Wales on his return visit to the Prince Regent of Japan. For miles and miles the streets were decked with poles, brocades, greens and magic lanterns; everyone was in holiday attire; even the little children went about shouting "God-oo save-oo the King-oo". Great processions were organized in his honor, and one evening a mammoth torchlight parade was held. The round of gayety became more and more intense, culminating in a ball at the British Embassy where a special dancing pavilion to hold two hundred couples had been built. There was a reception at the Palace, a Duck Hunt, a private golf match between the two princes, (from which the public was prudently excluded) and geisha parties galore. At one of the receptions an English spinster from Yokohama arrived, joined the queue and made her curtsy before the Prince; having nothing better to do she repeated the performance and then took tea. But bored by her fellow guests, and feeling certain that she must be unrecognized in the crowd, she joined the queue for the third time and again curtsied to the Prince, who smiled wanly and said: "We'll soon be very good friends, won't we, Madame?" His one relaxation was dancing and he made it a rule that there at least he was free from etiquette and would select the partners he chose. The bobbed haired girls were sure of an invitation and many a head of hair vanished suddenly in those April days. The British colony became divided with the "sheep" and the "goats" who were soon at swords points, while many a head was irrevocably turned in a few short moments. The Prince's staff was numerous and ornamental. The Imperial Hotel had been requisitioned for its headquarters while the regular guests, much disgruntled, were banished to the Annex. During the Imperial Garden Party the hotel mysteriously caught afire, and a magnificent blaze ensued. The fire department arrived on the scene with the most up-to-date fire fighting equipment, and four hideous effigies of the fire-god which they solemnly set up beside the hydrants. In vain; the main hotel was burned to the ground, gala uniforms were completely destroyed while the guests who were in the Annex escaped almost untouched.

As spring advanced the work became lighter and lighter, and the Department assigned us another Secretary for whom we had no need, while other missions were lamentably understaffed. However, it enabled more side trips, and one in particular I remember, a three day walk over the pass from Nikko to Ika [Editor note. Probably Ikaho] in what was almost virgin territory. The scenery was splendid, my companions agreeable, and the weather ideal; but the trip stands out as a nightmare to me, for I soon discovered that rice, raw fish and sake were not a sufficiently sustaining diet for me to walk on. The second day we struck snow and for miles floundered along, sinking in it up to our knees, which is at best heartbreaking work. The little inn that night was nothing more than a glorified peasant's hut, and if you wanted a soothing hot bath you had to repress your inhibitions and climb into a barrel filled with hot water in the courtyard, while the entire village congregated to get a better view of the foreign devil. The third day was almost unendurable but when at night we reached Ika and were welcomed at the Irwin's luxurious house, every care was forgotten. The hot springs were connected with the plumbing in some way so that day and night water was pouring into the bathtubs and

overflowing at a uniform temperature of 108 degrees Fahrenheit. From my bedroom upstairs I had a view ten miles across the valley to snow-capped peaks with not a single human habitation in sight.

On June 11<sup>th</sup> the unybai [editor note: baiyu] or rainy season officially opens, and is scheduled to last until the night of July 10<sup>th</sup>. In preparation all but our white clothes were safely packed away in tin lined boxes, the cracks sealed with glue and paper, and especially cool raincoats had been bought. And then it never rained. My Mother came out to spend the summer with me, arriving on June 19<sup>th</sup> and of all her stay the three remaining weeks of the unybai were the most perfect – constantly clear and reasonable cool.

I had rented at Hayama, near Kamakura and within commuting distance of Tokyo, a delightful Japanese house, with sliding outer walls of wood and inner partitions of paper. Although we had chairs, tables and beds, yet in all other respects it was true to type. The floors were covered with fresh matting, which meant that we had to take off our shoes before entering and either live in stockings feet or paddle in around in special felt slippers which were kept in readiness at the front door. The house opened onto a terrace some eighth of a mile back from and say two hundred feet above the ocean and commanded a superb view of Sagami Bay with Oshima an active island volcano to the left, Kamakura and Enoshima, the magic isle, to the right, while directly opposite us, sixty miles away, rose Fuji. Life was delightfully simple; every morning at half past seven I left for Tokyo and returned at half past five, cross and hot, my fresh white clothes lamentably wrinkled. It took about five minutes to jump into a bathing suit and get down to the beach, and then followed one of the most delightful of swims, in water of delicious temperature, straight out into the bay toward Fuji, behind which the sun would set in a wealth of brilliant colors. Then tea, followed by a motor ride, a quiet game of cards, dinner and early to bed. Over weekends we had the house full of people from Tokyo, who were on the whole almost as enthusiastic as we. The only flies in the ointment were the heat, which when once it arrived never let up until autumn, and the mosquitoes when a land breeze was blowing. But fortunately discomforts do not linger in our memory, while the agreeable phases of a place do not readily fade from remembrance.

In July my brother joined us on the first lap of his journey around the world between college and law school. His energy was unbounded, his curiosity limitless, and the stimulus of his enthusiasm soon impelled us to start traveling. I had a month off between August 10<sup>th</sup> and September 10<sup>th</sup> and during that time we visited Nikko, Chusen, Miyamshita, Kyoto and Nara, stopping home for a day or two between trips to rest up and get our trunks filled with fresh linen. In most of the places we ran into the Burdens and Barbara Murray who were touring Japan and joined with them in many an excursion. The only out-of-the-way spot we visited was Kazasan, a collection of monasteries perched high on a mountain plateau by the side of the most sacred of Japanese cemeteries. My brother and I walked up the eight mile pathway through the forests, while my mother was pulled up in a rickshaw to which three coolies were harnessed in front, while a fourth one pushed from behind. At the gate to the settlement we were challenged, and informed that if we did not have a preference we would be assigned to a monastery as guests. Formerly no women were allowed within, but this rule had been abandoned a few years earlier. We

expressed the desire to be lodged at the Shojo-shin-in and were duly led there; the monks were most cordial and led us shuffling through endless corridors of shiny wood, flanked with priceless screens, to our quarters which consisted of one small room for the three of us. We then produced our gift offering, carefully prepared in advance and wrapped in three layers of white paper, and presented it with much bowing and intaking of breath to the abbot in lieu of payment. In a few moments a meal was brought in, and was served on small lacquer tables standing from six inches to a foot from the floor. Only a vegetarian dish is allowed, even eggs being classed as meat, but curiously enough sake and other alcoholic drinks are tolerated. Thereafter we went out to visit the graveyard, and strolled for a mile or so under the cryptomeria trees; of all cemeteries I have visited it clearly stands out as the most poetic and dignified. All the great of Japan are buried here, daimyo and poet, samurai and artist, with only stone to mark the place. Buried is an inaccurate word, for in most cases it is only the Adam's apple and the teeth, surviving from the cremation, that are born hither by the family and piously laid to rest with the rites of centuries. At the end, stands the hut of Kobadaisha, the VIth Century scholar who succeeded in welding Chinese Buddhism and Japanese Shintoism; here the Barbarossa legend is found, for tradition has it that Kobadaishi is merely sleeping and will awake and come forth in the hour of Japan's great need. When we got back to the monastery, we asked for a bath and were shown to the common tubs. Do in Rome as the Romans do was too much for Mother, so we were stationed as guards outside the two doors to preserve the inviolability of the bathing establishment until she had finished; the monks regarded us as curious folk, whose unaccountable whims should be humored and left us in peace until at 5 a.m. the next morning we were awakened a half hour before daylight and invited to matins. Dressing hastily we followed the neophyte who had called us to the sanctuary where a curious droning chant was in process, and sat down on the matting in a corner. Gradually as daylight drew nearer we made out the monks in full vestments kneeling on a row of yellow cushions facing the principal shrines, and following response of the Abbot who led the liturgy. The service lasted about a half hour, after which one of the younger monks who wanted to practice his English, asked me if I wouldn't accompany him to a temple at the other end of the settlement for a second service. I accepted, more for a chance to talk with him, than to listen to further chanting, and was amply repaid by learning of their life and studies; English is an optional course, and for exclusive textbook, both for grammar and literature, the "Vicar of Wakefield" is provided. Was it surprising that his English was at times quaint?

For all practical purposes our stay at the monastery was exactly like stopping at a luxurious Japanese inn; for instead of having the appurtenances merely good, everything was a work of art, the gift of some rich pilgrim in bygone days. The kakemonos in the rooms were priceless, the bronzed and lacquers admirable, and so forth. But in spite of the luxury, the positive discomforts were as great. If one wished to wash in the morning it was necessary to go to the stone fountain in the courtyard, and it was virtually impossible to find a place to brush your teeth or at least rinse your mouth. Similarly everything can be heard from one end of the building to the other and I observed that whereas the Japanese go early to bed they chatter like magpies late into the night and start in again at dawn the next day. Tipping in inns is not done to the servants; upon departure a present is made to the house, and according to our standards, a very considerable at that, usually



from twenty-five to fifty percent of the bill and at times even more. The Japanese are extraordinarily generous in tipping, far more so than the American or European: for instance, on the steamer from Koh to Dairen, two nights, the average American gives the cabin steward \$2.00 and the dining-room steward the same; the Japanese traveler averages \$5.00 to each.

At this point I bring myself up short and ask myself how I can have written so much about Japan and not mentioned the word “earthquake”, for in the last analysis it is the most outstanding impression I retain of my stay there. The great earthquake of September 1, 1923, I fortunately missed, but I endured two major quakes in 1921 and 1922 that I shall never forget. Like thousands of other foolish persons I said on arrival that I should rather enjoy feeling an earthquake, much in the same spirit that I said I should rather enjoy tasting sake and roast eels. Two minutes on the evening of December 9 cured me once for all of this folly. I was at a large dinner at the Embassy, half Japanese, half Occidental, when suddenly everything began to shake. At the end of a few seconds, instead of subsiding, the shaking grew worse and worse, but nobody moved. The Japanese waited for us to jump up, and we waited for them; the result was that we sat through the entire quake, holding on tight to the table. Some of the guests grew very white and some, very red, and one poor woman, part of whose skull had been removed and who knew that any plaster falling on her head would kill her instantly, nearly fainted during the strain. The candelabra on the table began to rock, a wine glass upset sending a splash of red across the white table cloth, and looking up I saw a crack start at the ceiling and gradually extend down the wall right over the head of my neighbor. All this while a dull rumble was going on outside, which joined to the creaking of the frame of the house and the clatter of rattling china and glass made it sound like pandemonium let loose. There was no loss of life in Tokyo, but the principal water main broke and the city was for four or five days without water except for what was brought from Yokohama by barges. As a matter of fact, this was the largest quake recorded in Japan since 1892. Five months went by before we were again visited. This time I was sitting in my office working when suddenly I felt a jolt as though a heavily laden five ton truck had crashed into the wall just under my window; a bit of plaster fell the other side of my desk, and then the floor started dancing up and down. In one bound I was in the door jamb and in another outside the front door; I was the second person out of the building, immediately after Hugh Wilson, who in his hurry, had crashed through the glass panels of the door, cutting his hands quite badly in the process. A large stone retaining wall of the Higashi Fushimi palace directly opposite the Embassy collapsed, together with a few houses, but the loss of life was once more astoundingly small. After that earthquakes became very numerous, though for the most part so slight as scarcely to be felt. The last month I was in Japan over one hundred and sixty were recorded. People began to remember that a gigantic quake was about due, for nearly every seventy years with surprising regularity a devastating one occurs. The last had been in 1854 when one hundred thousand lives had been lost. Curiously enough that year a certain deep well had run dry, and again in June 1923 it dried up. One old inhabitant told me then that she expected the big quake soon, but that there was nothing to be done about it – if it came, well, she could only hope to survive it and save something. No precautions would be of any avail. This is not a

prophecy heard after the event; I heard it myself two months before Tokyo and Yokohama were destroyed.

During an earthquake many people are necessarily caught in most awkward attitudes and none more than those bathing. The bath houses of Tokyo would disgorge a crowd of men and women, absolutely nude and dripping with water, none of who seemed to realize until the quake had been over for a minute or two that their presence on the sidewalk in a state of nature was in the least bit out of the ordinary. For one, I always admired the absolute disregard the Japanese has for nakedness; it is to be seen, but not looked at. But the average American has difficulty in growing accustomed to it. Mixed bathing was still in effect, except in Tokyo where it had been stopped by municipal ordinance, but even there, so little could the people understand it that for certain establishments the men and women disrobed in the same room and afterwards separated, a bamboo rod marking the dividing line in the bathing room. The Japanese bathes in hot water daily, including a long soak in water ranging from 108 degrees to 115 degrees. It is so contrary to our ideas of hygiene that it is interesting to note that it does not appear to weaken them, but rather to clear their system of poisons, and in the winter to warm them up. Several of them confessed to me that they were only warm in wintertime for about an hour a day immediately after their bath, and that if they got unendurable cold, they would promptly take a second.

Autumn came and with it an increase in work, for the time approached when the Japanese had agreed to get out of Siberia. Their record there had been a poor one. They had entered Siberia, together with the Allied troops, on the understanding that no nation should send a contingent of over 7,000 men; yet inside a month there were over 70,000 Japanese troops on Russian soil. Friction had immediately developed between the Japanese and American troops and to a certain extent between their commands, and finally reached a point where the American forces were withdrawn without previous notification to Tokyo. From that moment on, America watched the Japanese with the eyes of a lynx. A Japanese garrison was sent to a town near the mouth of the Amur for winter quarters, was butchered by the Bolsheviks, and its extermination served as an excuse to Tokyo to seize Northern Saghalien. Semenoff and other Russian leaders were in turn in the payroll of the Japanese, but the latter found that they could not control the region, and gradually withdrew until only Vladivostok and its immediate surroundings remained under their control. Here, through the White government of Merkuloff, which was established with their assent, if not their connivance, they settled down for several years, and the opinion was generally held throughout the world that nothing could dislodge them. At the time of the Washington conference, Japan re-examined her position, found that she had spent nearly half a billion dollars in Siberia, was growing increasingly unpopular in the region and decided to liquidate the venture for three reasons: 1) for purposes of economy, 2) to propitiate foreign opinion, and 3) because Japan discovered that she could kill Vladivostok economically and to the advantage of Dairen, by a system of rebates on the South Manchurian Railroad. Count Uchida informed Mr. Warren of this resolve, with the approximate date of withdrawal as early as 1921. Mr. Warren in turn reported this to Mr. Hughes; yet until they were actually out of Vladivostok as agreed, subsidiary American offices kept bombarding NID, and ONI, with

information that they would never give up Vladivostok. This is but one of many cases when additional proof is given that only the Foreign political Service should report on foreign political affairs.

Prior to the Japanese evacuation as many White Russians as possible fled the city, for without Japanese troops, the Merkuloff government could not stand, and the Bolsheviks would enter the town. The retreating Whites divided into two forces, some escaping by land to Chinese territory, the greater number migrating with Admiral Stark by sea. They wished to take the icebreakers with them, but were prevented by the foreign consuls. Admiral Stark's fleet duly set sail, with a new block of refugees, and made for a Korean port. There the Japanese refused to allow the refugees to land, and only after considerable negotiation, gave them enough food and coal to proceed to a Chinese port. The ships were unseaworthy, the refugees more or less mutinous, disease was breaking out, and there seemed no hope for the future. In an attempt to cheer his people, Admiral Stark shifted his flag from his one good ship, to a small and condemned vessel, and continued his odyssey thus. At a Chinese port they received the same treatment and were again forced to continue on their way. One vessel foundered off Formosa, the remaining ships finally crept into Manila, where General Wood, assuming full responsibility, allowed the Russians ashore on parole.

The very day the Japanese and the Merkuloff governments left – I think it was October 31, 1922 – the Reds marched into the city. The foreign consuls had arranged this, in order to prevent rioting in the city with no police or military protection. Our consul was an excitable young man, who, instead of waiting for instructions from the Embassy at Tokyo as to his attitude, quarreled violently with all his colleagues, sent home the most extravagant cables about what he termed “British duplicity, connivance and intrigue”, and finally distinguished himself in aeternum by writing to the Red General a letter congratulating him on his “triumphal entry” into Vladivostok. Not being able to consign him to everlasting fire, the Department promptly sent him to the next warmest place – the Dutch East Indies, and ordered Kitty Tuck to replace him. On the surface of things, Vladivostok was immune from the “terror” but this immunity was more apparent than real. Some seven hundred and fifty Whites were expelled – a most humane proceeding – but they were expelled to Harbin in the dead of winter in open box cars and all but three died of exposure before the end of the journey. American interests were soon attached, property confiscated, and before seven months our government had to withdraw the entire consulate, and most of the American colony chose to withdraw with it.

All this time Japan continued to devote much of its energy to building. The section of Tokyo immediately before the Palace and surrounding the station was being filled with office building; on account of earthquakes none might be built over seven stories in height, yet even thus, it towered over the surrounding wards, where the one or two story wooden house alone existed. Each month the skyline changed and the feverish construction continued. Plans were made to build a large boulevard to Yokohama, fifteen miles to the south. The two cities were connected only by a narrow road, invariably so filled with merchants' carts, rickshaws, etc., as to be almost impassible to automobiles. It

sounds almost incredible, but is nevertheless true, that there was only a single telephone wire, and to telephone from the Embassy to the Consulate averaged three hours.

The foreign diplomats saw more of each other than at most posts, as there was relatively little intercourse with the Japanese, and further there were few if any diversions. Geisha parties, which sound so alluring, proved quite the reverse when sampled. I remember the first I ever went to on a cold and boisterous winter night. Our shoes were taken away at the front door, and we proceeded in our silk socks through a series of cold corridors to a neatly matted room, temperature about fifty, where a few cushions were spread. In the center were two *lubachi*, or fire boxes, containing some live charcoals embedded in ashes and sand, which were gratefully viewed as enabling one at least to keep fingers warm. Soon a series of giggles and chuckles were heard as a bunch of "Nicos" or apprentice geishas bounced into the room, looking for all the world like a series of overdressed dolls. One sat in front of each guest and commenced a chatter that never let up. It was unquestionably supposed to be funny, and for all I know may have been witty, but as jokes fell flat on our uncomprehending ears, they soon took to laughing at us, at our clothes, watches, manipulation of chopsticks, etc. The food when brought consisted of various courses of raw fish, raw turnip, and others of unknown ingredients, served on small individual tables about ten inches in height, in fact the meal was only justified at the end when a great bowl of steaming rice was brought in that we washed down with warm sake, a native liquor distilled from rice, which rather resembles poor sherry in taste. And then when dinner was well over, the geishas appeared, graceful creatures with long oval faces, dressed for the most part in dull blue, and of impeccable respectability. Holding back their heads and tightening every muscle of their throats they proceeded to let forth sounds which would have raised a ghost. Metallic and harsh, their singing, in which they pride themselves to an inordinate degree, was enough to stimulate no other emotion than horror first and suppressed laughter after. But their dancing was charming; light and graceful enough to have been enjoyed, if by this time the cold had not penetrated to our very marrows. The party concluded by our joining the geishas in playing their favorite game of musical cushions, an adaptation of "Going to Jerusalem" wherein as the guitar stopped we all were expected to drop to the floor with a bang and if possible upon a cushion. A six footer like myself had relatively little chance, however quick. Such in brief is a geisha party; something to be tried but not repeated, unless in a heroic attempt to entertain and disillusion some transient American friend.

Far more amusing was a Japanese wrestling match. This is staged with great formality befitting the importance of the wrestlers, who boast an over-weening vanity and an elaborate name such as for instance, the "Mountain of the Hokkaido". The wrestling type that has evolved through the centuries is that of the fat man. Two hundred and twenty to two hundred and forty is an average weight; three hundred is not unknown, and in forming a mental picture, do not forget that the Japanese is a short man. The game is to push one's opponent out of a circle six to eight feet in radius. Once the actual grapple has begun, it is a question of seconds, but a match with its preliminary usually lasts some twenty minutes. After some stereotyped formalities the two wrestlers, clad only in loincloths, get into position, pose for fifteen or twenty seconds, climb down from the platform to obtain some salt which they throw into the ring before again mounting and

resuming their position. This may happen as often as twelve to twenty times before they actually grapple. As the afternoon wears on, the quality of the wrestling is said to improve, though the only difference I could see was that the wrestlers grew fatter and fatter, and their pot-bellies protruded further and further. The fine points of the game are appreciable to a Japanese audience; to an Occidental, it is the stage setting and the humor of the thing.

The theatres are spectacular and worth visiting occasionally; the acting above the average and the stage setting distinctly good. Concerts were almost non-existent, and movie houses unattractive to us because lacking in seats. I rarely admired a film enough to spend three hours squatting on the floor to see it.

There is however one sport that is worth describing in some detail, and which is made available by the Court once to each Secretary – namely, an Imperial Duck Hunt. The weapon is a butterfly net; the sporting costume, until just recently, a frock coat and top hat. The hunt takes place in a marshy garden, with numerous canals leading into a central lake, flanked by mud parapets. Behind one of these the hunter stands, firmly grasping his weapon. In the canals are placed a goodly number of tame ducks with clipped wings and these have attracted the wild ducks to the water. When everything is ready they are discreetly disturbed, and as the victims fly away, the hunter's opportunity arrives. If he pinions his duck in the net, a keeper comes, extracts it, wrings its neck and the hunter goes back for more. The sport becomes thrilling. One Latin American so far lost control of his emotions as to lean over his parapet, cast his butterfly net over a poor lame duck that was placidly swimming and proceeded to drown it. A few years ago, Mrs. Burnett, moved by humanitarian principles, liberated the ducks as she caught them. This was not considered good form, however, for the following year a sign was posted. "Guests will please not liberate their ducks. They might fly back and warn the others." On the train back to Tokyo the ducks are apportioned among the company, according to rank and not to prowess. It was on one of these hunts that an amusing incident occurred. One of the Imperial family accompanies each party, and Hugh Wilson, then our Chargé d'Affaires, was placed next to His Imperial Highness on the train journey. Wilson, who is a graduate of the Ecole des Sciences Politiques, is an admirable French scholar and addressed the Prince in that language. He looked a trifle puzzled, and finally whispered something to his interpreter who leaned over to Wilson and whispered, "His Highness says that if you will talk French, he can converse with you."

During my second winter in Japan I fell on lean days, went through three attacks of "flu" with attendant complications and was finally ordered home by the doctor. I left early in the summer of 1923, thus avoiding the great earthquake of September. I was not sorry to leave, for when you are run down you are apt to be discontented and besides, it was a lonely spot. The evening before I left the Wilsons gave me a good-bye party, where each guest brought a poem that was read aloud. It was more than a successful occasion. Outside the heavy rain of the nyubai was falling and everyone said, "That proves that you are going for good; for when you sail from Yokohama without seeing Fuji you are saying good-bye and not au revoir to Japan". But their pessimism was false, for the next morning early the weather cleared and as the Empress of Russia sailed out of Yokohama,

past Mississippi Bay, Kuriyama and the Perry Monument, the Plains of Hairu and the Island volcano of Oshima, there was Fuji, standing high in the sky, its white capped cone beckoning for an eventual return.

*End of interview*