ENGLISH

Jan Doets and André Birukoff

"It was a farewell to Russia, a goodbye to everything"

The emigration of the Baranovsky family after the Russian Revolution of 1917

Editions QazaQ

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I

Kerensky will come back, woman says

The Altoona Mirror, January 17, 1918
KERENSKY WILL COME BACK, WOMAN SAYS

Kerensky Will Come Back, Woman Says.

Madame Vladimir Baranovsky.

The Evening News, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, Friday, January 11, 1918
SAYS KERENSKY WILL COME BACK
"When the Hour Strikes, He Will Help to save Russia." Sister-in-law, in America, Says He is ill in Finland

San Francisco, Cal., Jan 5
“Kerensky, though today a physical wreck will again become the strong man of Russia.” This is the confident prediction of his sister -in-law, Madame Vladimir Baranovsky, who has just reached the United States with her husband, a Russian engineer. “He has been recuperating in Finland”, she said, definitely setting at rest the rumors of imprisonment, death and suicide which have shrouded Kerensky’s fate in mystery since his flight from Petrograd. “And he will come back when the hour strikes!”

Madame Baranovsky, childhood playmate and confidante and relative of Kerensky, has kept secretly in touch with the revolutionary leader overthrown by the Bolsheviki.

“It was his nerves, his shattered health, not the threats and power of counter revolutionnary forces, that shook him from the helm of Russia’s destiny,” she explained. “His body was too frail for the wonderful mind and patriotic fervor of the man. But that dominant mind will restore the body, and that he will again be a controlling power in Russia. “I have known him since childhood. I know his temperament and his great inspiring faith in the people. He has qualities which Russia’s present men of power seem to lack - the winsome personality, the zeal, the crusader’s intense convictions and devotion to the common well which made him the hero of the masses.”

It was in his sister-in-law’s home that Kerensky took refuge when the Bolsheviki ordered his arrest. She was the last to see him before he fled to Finland. “He was sick - shattered with the strain. “He flung himself upon the couch and covered his face with his hands. He poured out his hopes and fears to me - as he used to confess his boyhood troubles. It seemed to me that he had become a child again. “If only I could get some rest,” he lamented. “If only this body had been strong to withstand the demands upon it.

“It was never himself he thought of, except as an instrument for the guidance of our country. And it is that unselfish devotion to Russia’s people which will restore him and bring him back. “When the psychological moment arrives, Kerensky will emerge from his hiding place to bring order out of chaos”.
Vladimir Baranovsky has come to the United States to study government operations of railroads with the intention of applying

his knowledge to the reconstruction of Russia's demoralized transportation system.

His wife Maria, one of Petrograd's acknowledged beauties, will assist him in his investigations throughout the country."

El Paso Morning Times (El Paso, Tex.), January 10,918
RUSSIA'S KRUPP COMES TO UNCLE SAM'S RAIL SCHOOL

About the last thing in the world Russia seems to want today is guns. The cry for bread, meat and shoes has left the Russian "Krupps" without much to do. That is why Vladimir Baranovsky, son of Petrograd's famous cannon manufacturers and brother-in-law of Kerensky, has turned to the study of American railroads to prepare himself for a part in the reconstruction of his country's transportation system. He is now in the United States on such a mission.

Poverty Bay Herald, New Zealand
BROTHER-IN-LAW SAYS KERENSKY WILL COME BACK..
SAN FRANCISCO, January 4 1918

Alexander Kerensky, deposed Russian leader, is safe in Finland, and some day will emerge from his hiding place to take anew the reins of the Russian Government.
The opinion was expressed by Vladimir Baranovsky, whose sister is Kerensky's wife.

The Baranovskys arrived recently on the steamship Ecuador from the Orient. With them is Rear-Admiral T. Bosse, who commanded the only Russian ship to escape from the Japanese at Port Arthur. He is now retired due to his friendship for the late Czar.
Baranovsky is the son of the greatest munitions maker in Russia, and he is here to study American engineering methods. Like other travellers coming from Russia, he predicts the early fall of the Bolsheviki.

"At the psychological moment, Kerensky will reappear," said Baranovsky, "Kerensky is a strong man, the strongest in all Russia. He stood out as long as he could, and then fled, but he is now safe in Finland. It is known in Russia that Lenin and Trotsky are paid German agents, and their fall is certain. When it comes, Kerensky's star wil once more be in the ascendancy." Former Czar Nicholas and his entire family are safe in Tobolsk, Baranovsky declared. He laughed at the story of the escape of the Princess Tatiana.

II

Preface

Jan Doets

About 4 years ago, when I was searching the internet for details on Maria ("Moussia") Baranovsky, I found the above newspaper clippings among a multitude of other similar stories published by newspapers all over the United States and around the world. All these stories were based on a single interview the couple gave to the press upon arrival, by boat from Japan, in San Francisco on 4th January 1918.

Having a natural penchant for investigating the mysterious, I became curious. Who was this Vladimir Baranovsky ? Was his sister really married to Alexander Kerensky, whose Government of Russia was overthrown by the Lenin-led Bolsheviks in the 1917 October Revolution? Did Moussia really know Kerensky in those days?

I had been interested since long in Moussia, a remarkable Polish/Russian woman who in a later marriage was the wife of Giacomo Antonini, the best friend of a friend's father, a Dutch diplomat/author under the literary name of F.C. Terborgh. My friend had allowed me to read the manuscript journals of his father who was posted to Spain, China, Portugal and Poland in the 1930s and 1940s . That is where I found Moussia, a woman of the world. The newspaper clippings wetted my appetite to find out more about her.

Little did I anticipate that this research would take many years and bring me into contact with many persons in the USA, in San Francisco, in several cities in the State of Indiana, and in Cambridge, Massachusetts. They all knew something about Moussia and her husband Vladimir Baranovsky. They gave me the material for a very interesting beginning of a story, which I started on my internet blog under the title "Moussia, Russian by birth, French by taste". As I was writing it, more information became available from new contacts, in England, France and Italy. The story about Moussia grew as I was writing it because new information became available all the time and it was finally completed in 50 episodes, the last one appearing in July 2013.

It was read by many people around the world and, in the USA, gained the distinction of being included as number 16 in Free People Search's 50 Best Family History Blogs .

I had assembled much more information on Vladimir's Baranovsky family than I could have published in the Moussia story. So, I had an idea to write a separate book on this family. But fate intervened: in the summer of 2013, I started a literary blog in the French language : Les Cosaques des Frontières – refuge pour les dépaysés which took up all my time from then onwards.

Then, fate hit me once more. At the beginning of 2014, I was contacted by a far-away reader of the Moussia story, a lady from Quito, Ecuador, her name is Madame Christine Montoussé. She put me in touch with her uncle André Birukoff in Suresnes, France. André Birukoff and his half-sister Anne Marie Montoussé-Birukoff (mother of Christine), proved to be grand-children of Elena, one of Vladimir Baranovsky's sisters. Their great-grandparents and their whole family (apart from Vladimir) had fled from Russia to France via Turkey, from 1917 onwards. I knew a little about them and their flight, but not in too much detail. I phoned André Birukoff and we further made the acquaintance later, in France, before visiting his half-sister in Marseille. She proved to have various old albums of family photos. André Birukoff himself had a few envelopes filled with papers of his grandmother, all in Russian. We said bye-bye, promising to meet each other again. It took us about 4 years to do so …

André Birukoff

In the foregoing, my friend Jan Doets calls twice upon 'fate' to explain the birth of our book on the Baranovsky-Vassiliev family. The word is well-chosen because it has indeed been destiny which fetched my hand to contribute to this work of which Jan is no doubt the inspirator, the initiator and the project manager.

Russian by my father (who fled Russia with his mother, Elena Baranovsky), French by my mother, I have since long had but a rather relative interest in my family's histories.

My paternal grandmother Elena had really tried her best to tell me the story of her Russian family but without much success, in view of the

little interest I had in her stories. Some of them have been engraved in my mind however, and to my great astonishment, I found them back about 30 years later, written in black and white by someone my relatives had not heard of since almost 50 years.

In 1994, when I worked in Colombia for Agence France Presse (AFP), I received a letter from Monsieur Georges Krassovski. He told me that in the course of a recent trip in Ouzbekistan he had met in Tashkent a person he had known, years before, in Paris and who was looking for her relatives in France. That person was no other than Elena Vassiliev-Baranovsky, a cousin of my father.

Neither my father, who died in 1982, nor my grandmother, who died in 1967, have been able to share the joy to learn that the three members of their family who had returned to Russia in 1947, two years after the end of the Second World War, had survived. Contrary to what they had imagined, Elena Vassiliev-Baranovsky, her husband André Vassiliev and their daughter Ariane Vassiliev, had managed to avoid the stalinist concentration camps where most of the « vozvrashchentsy » had perished. The ones who had chosen to return to their old fatherland were called the « vozvrashchentsy ».

Deceived by the stalinist propaganda, some 10,000 « vozvrashchentsy » have made the return trip at the end of the 1940s. But hardly a thousand have managed to avoid the trap that Stalin had set for them. The three members of my family have had the unbelievable luck to be among those survivors.

After having received Monsieur Krassovski's letter, I wrote to my father's cousin and gave her the address of my aunt Irina, half-sister of my father, with whom she had shared her childhood in Paris and of my sister Anne-Marie whom she had known as a child.

Thanks to that stroke of destiny – the trip of Monsieur Georges Krassovski in Ouzbekistan and his improbable meeting in Tashkent with Elena Vassiliev – contact was re-established.

I then learned that my cousin Ariane had written a fictionalized novel of our family. I read her novel in one go. She had changed the names but certain episodes were precisely the same as my grandmother had told me.

In 2013, I decided to translate this novel and to put it on-line in my blog Sans rature , under the title « Eternel Emigrés », different from the original title because my cousin Ariane has called her book « Return to emigration » (vozvrashchenie v emigratsiyu). The meaning is the same because my « vozvrashchentsy » relatives have always been emigrants whether in Turkey or in France and even in the URSS, in that fatherland they thought to have found back but which looked at them with mistrust, most of the time as if they were enemies.

In 2014, I made a trip to Tashkent to finally meet those who, in my view, had made a choice I consider to be tragic, even if Ariane, her husband Dimitri Solodennikov, their daughter Elena Avanesova and their three grandchildren have been able, by sheer courage, to manage overcoming the difficulties in order to lead a peaceful life.

Thanks to Jan Doets, the history of this family since its origin, has now been written. And I can even say that it is destiny –yet again! – which has made me cross Jan's path because it seems that he has sent me a signal very early on that this encounter had to take place.

In fact, I have had my primary education in a Russian School, the Russian Lyceum on the boulevard d'Auteuil, installed in a large private house, at two paces from the Bois de Boulogne. The founder of this School was Lady Deterding (born Lydia Pavlovna Koudeyaroff), who was the wife of the Dutch petroleum magnate, Sir Henry Deterding, founder of Shell. Shell, an enterprise for whom Jan Doets has worked all his working life !

André Birukoff and Jan Doets, at the grave of Albert Camus, Lourmarin, May 2014

III 1 The Baranovsky family in the 19th century

Viktor Ivanovich Baranovsky
X ?
Olga Viktorovna
Peter Viktorovich

Vladimir
1.9.1846 - 7.3.1879
x Olga Viktorovna
Baranovsky
Peter
Valdemar
X Paulina Grigorkoff
Maria "Maj" 7.5.1878-
25.9.1966
X Kyrill « Kika »
Grigorkoff

Eugenia
11.9.1851- ?
X dr Wadislaw Sila-Nowicki
Daughter ±1888

Vera
7.4.1885-
5.12.1935
x 1) Yuri
Nikolalevich
Pomerantsev
X 2) Alexei
Alexeivich
Pavlov

Vladimir "Volodia"
5.6.1889 -
12.7.1975
1) Maria Sila-Novicki
x 25.1.1895- 2.8.1959
X 2) Fern Scull
22.9.1899
20.3.1996

Stepan Ivanovich Baranovsky
23.12.1817-17.10.1890
x Sofia Johanna Otilia von Wittenheim
1822—1856

Vsevolod "Volia"
26.11.1853 – 19.3.1921
x Lydie Vassilievna Vassilieva
19.11.1860 – 18.10.1949

Olga "Olia"
31.7.1891-
5.9.1940
x 1) Alexandre
Alexandrovitch
Sumarokov
x 2) "Kostia"
Constantin
Kloboutski
X 3) Gricha Doudinko

Elena* "Lilia"
12.10.1892 -
22.5.1967
x Nicolas
Pavlovich
Birukoff
3.6.1873
- 6/1919

Elena (Sumarokova)
1914-2012
x André
Ivanovich
Vassiliev
1907/1990
Ariane
29.4.1942

Vsevolod "Olik"
28.7.1913
11.4.1982
x 1) Yvonne Gaudry 1915-2010
Anne-Marie 27.7.1937
x 2) Fernande Renaud 1906-2005
André Birukoff 9.1.1951
x Anne-Lise Durand 15.7.1954

Irina
12.1.1918-8.3.2015
x 1) Igor de Poligny
x 2) Michel Dhé

Sviatoslav "Tossia"
7.8.1894
- 14.4.1960
x 1) Klaudia Serdiuk
Lydie 1917-1991
x 2) Olga
Sergueievna
Zavalichina
Nathalie

Nathalie

Lev 1852
6.5.1852 - ?
x 1) Marija Vassilievna Vassilieva
25.9.1863 - ?

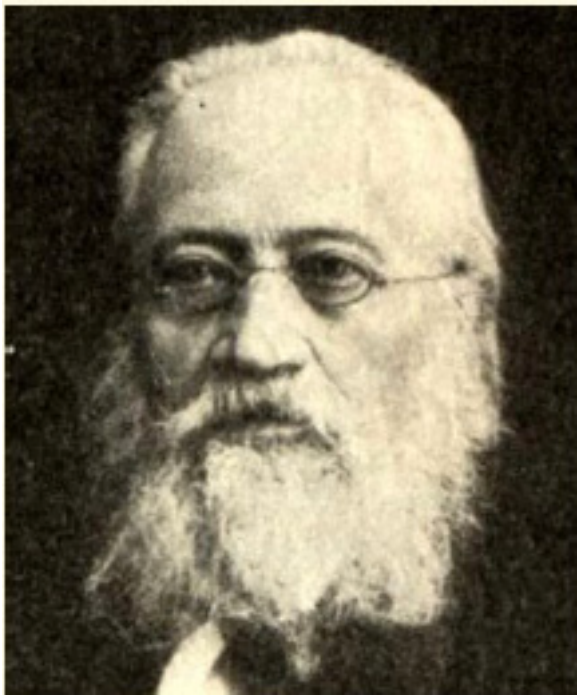
Olga Lvovna
26.11.1883- ? 1975
x Alexandre Fedorovitch Kerensky
Oleg, 1905-1984 & Gleb 1907-1990
Vladimir Lvovich 20.5.1882-11.9.1931
Elena Lvovna Tarchova 2.9.1885 -?
x 2) Eugenia Vyacheslava
Michaelova
Eugenia, Xenia

x 3) Augusta Pavlova Simonova
Lev (1902), Nikolaï (?)

ARBRE GÉNÉALOGIQUE 3 octobre 2017

2 Stepan Baranovsky, paternal grandfather, 23.12.1817 - 17.10.1890

Grandfather Stepan Ivanovich Baranovsky, of Ukranian-Polish descent, was a remarkable man. He was born on 23 December 1817 in Kapustin in the province of Yaruslav, Ukraine, as the son of Ivan Baranovsky and Tekla Jaroshevsky. Stefan showed great promise when he was young. He attended a governmental gymnasium in Chernigov where he had already become a teacher. In 1833 he received a government scholarship to study languages at the University of St. Petersburg where he became senior teacher. From 1836-1842 he lectured in History and Statistics in Pskov. From 1842 to 1862 he was Assistant Professor, later full Professor of Russian and Russian literature in Helsinki University. In 1862, at the age of only 45 he resigned and moved to Saint Petersburg in order to further develop some of his technical inventions. From 1868 until 1881 he was Chief Inspector of schools in Western Siberia.



On 9th February 1845, Stepan married Sofia Johanna Ottilia Von Wittenheim), daughter of Baron Gustav von Wittenheim. Their children were: Vladimir, who became an inventor of worldwide renown, Eugenia, the wife of dr. Wladyslaw Sila-Nowicki, Moussia's uncle and a medical doctor,Vsevolod who became a Lieutenant-General et Lev, who became a Lieutenant-General as well.

Stepan was multi-talented. He spoke Russian and Finnish and was listed in the reputable Brockhaus and Efron Encyclopedias as having also mastered German, French, English, Swedish, Danish, Polish, Arabic, Turkish and Persian. He published books on the most diverse subjects in the fields of linguistics, literary history, theology, geography, statistics, medicine, hygiene, mechanics and geometry. He published atlases and articles on the need for railways in Central and Eastern Russia. He is reported to have been the first to urge the construction of the Trans-Siberia railway. He invented a small submarine and had it built together with his oldest son Vladimir. He also invented methods to use compressed air for the propulsion of motor vehicles also used for the *Baranovsky Locomotive,* a vehicle to transport trains along wider gauge rails.

In Helsinki, he was influential in the social field. He made crime statistics and founded a *Temperance Society* of which he was the chairman. He also took the initiative for a *Protection of Animals Society*

and, in 1860, a shelter for women leaving prisons and hospitals and a night shelter for the homeless.

3 Vasily Pavlovich Vassiliev, maternal grandfather 22.2.1818 – 21.4.1900

Vasily Pavlovich Vasiliev
22.2.1818 – 21.4.1900
x Sophia Ivanovna Simonov
25.7.1832 – 12.7.1868

Olga	Lydie	Marya	Vladimir	Serge“Serioja”
1858-	19.11.1860	25.9.1863	6.7.1866	8.7.1867
18.2.1877	- 18.10.1949	-	- 1931	-

…. x Lev Stepanovich Baranovsky

... x 16.5.1879 x Vsevolod Stepanovich Baranovsky

Vassily Vassiliev was born in Nizhny Novgorod, son of modest rural people .His intelligence became evident at a very young age and he was sent to the village school, the Gymnasium in town and then, at the age of 16, he entered the Oriental Department of the University of Kazan, the first school of Oriental studies in Russia. From 1840 to 1850, he took up residence at the Peking Orthodox Mission.

During a ten years' residence there (1840-50) Vasiliev was able to study a number of obscure Buddhist manuscripts. Back in Russia in 1850, he was offered the chair in Chinese philology at the university of Kazan. He was elected into the Petersburg Academy of Sciences in 1886 and was in charge of the Department of Oriental Studies at the University of Saint Petersburg between 1878 and 1893. Vasiliev's magnum opus is a three-volume history of Buddhism (1857, 1860, 1865). The first volume was quickly translated into German and French. Another important work, Islam in China, did not appear in English until 1958. Some of Vassily's most ambitious works remained unpublished and were destroyed through the negligence of his domestics.

Vassily Vassiliev

Sophia Simonov

At the age of 36, Vassily married a much younger wife, Sophia Simonov, 24 years old. They had five children plus two children who died in birth. Sophia died, at the birth of her latest son, stillborn, at the age of 32.

Vassily then engaged a lady from well-to-do circles in Saint Petersburg, Sonia, to take care of his five children, then in the ages of 1 – 10 and often disappeared to the countryside. On his return from China, he had bought a rather large domain (ownership of which much later he divided between his children), at Kainki, some 50 kms south-west of Kazan.

He often isolated himself in Kainki, but also spent several holidays there, together with his children. Initially there were still serfs in the old village. They did not feel enslaved but formed part of the family where they held their own with their masters who in fact they saw not too often.

Vassily conducted his house-hold in a very austere manner. Most of the time he was in University or in his beautiful workroom and library His daughters were placed in a chiqu school the Smolny Institute for girls of nobility, under the patronship of Her Majesty The Empress Maria Fedorovna. His sons also went to good schools.

4 Vladimir Stepanovich Baranovsky, 1.9.1846 - 7.3.1879

Vladimir Stepanovich Baranovsky, Stepan oldest son, married Olga Victorovna Baranovsky, his second cousin, daughter of Victor Ivanovich Baranovsky, a brother of his father.

Olga had a brother, Piotr Victorovich Baranovsky, 8 years older than Vladimir, who was an entrepreneur, a fabricator of artillery ammunition and guns. In 1877, he started a factory together with his brother-in-law and cousin Vladimir Stepanovich Baranovsky.

The 31 year-old Vladimir Stepanovich had already proved to be an inventor, designer, and entrepreneur. Educated at home, he attended lectures in one of the technical institutes in Paris and studied on and off at St. Petersburg University. He worked as a foreman at M. E. Carr and M. L. Makferson's Shipbuilding Plant from 1865 (it was renamed Baltiisky Shipbuilding Plant in 1895) and at A. I. Shpakovsky's Plant in St. Petersburg afterwards. An engineer at L. Nobel's Mechanical Plant in 1867-75, he upgraded the rapid-fire gun invented by American R. J. Gatling by increasing the rate of fire from 300 to 600 shots per minute. He designed the first ever 1.5, 2, and 2.5-inch field quick-firing gun for

unitary cartridges and created a unitary cartridge assembling machine. Baranovsky's 2.5-inch gun was purchased to be used in the Russian Army in 1877.

His rapid-firing guns were still in use in the 20th century, for example in the Falklands war.

He also founded a plant for the manufacture of detonating fuses, cartridge cases, and other artillery equipment in 1878. This plant belonged to the Society of Mechanical Case and Tube Plants from 1912. He also invented a dewatering machine for gold mines and firefighting water cannon, to mention a few of his inventions only.

Vladimir Stepanovich Baranovsky died on 7.3.1879 when a shell exploded prematurely during a firing test.

After his death, his brother-in-law Peter Viktorovich and father Stepan Ivanovich continued to manage the factory. But Peter died in 1896, Stepan had died already in 1890. It is not known how the factory continued to exist but it probably stopped to function in the troubled period of the First World War and the Revolution. No financial links, not even hereditary, have been found to exist between the former Baranovsky factories and the Vsevolod and Lev branches of the Baranovsky family.

Vladimir Stepanovich and Olga Viktorovna had two children, Valdemar (1868-1958) and Piotr. Piotr had a daughter called Maria, known as Mai, who married Kirill “Kika” Grigorkoff.

5 Eugenia Stepanovna Baranowsky 11.9.1851 –

This photo dates from 1877 or 1878. We see a stalwart looking Eugenia Stepanovna Baranovsky with her Polish husband Wladyslaw Sila-Nowicki, brother of Moussia's father Wiktor. Moussia sometimes said that she had married her 'cousin' Vladimir. The background for that statement must have been the marriage of this couple, Eugenia and Wladyslaw.

Wladyslaw Sila-Nowicki, a medical doctor, 1876

Eugenia and Wladyslaw again, on a photo taken in 1898. The name of the daughter is not known.

The picture in the middle came from the archives of the daughter of Moussia in the United States, the other pictures are owned by the Polish

painter André Dzierzynski, a relative of the Sila-Nowicki, who lives in England and Italy.

In a notebook of Lydie Baranovsky it is mentioned that on 10 March 1879, the family got news that Eugenia died in Moscow of tuberculosis, but the photo of 1898 shows that she survived. On the pictures, Eugenia seems to be missing her right hand.

6 Vsevolod Stepanovich, 26.11.1853 - 17.3.1921

Young Vsevolod in the gala uniform of His Majesty the Czar's Life Guard Cuirassiers Regiment graduating on 4.04.1875 from the elite Nikolaev Cavalry school in St. Petersburg, as a cornet.

During his last assignment in Finland in 1916, a last Record of Service was made, including Grades, Décorations, Studies, Emoluments, Career,

Family, Personal property in real-estate and Military Actions. A brief summary :
Final grade : Lieutenant-General
Final job : Senator and member of the general Department of the Senate of the Emperor in the Grand-Duchy of Finland
Salary : 12.000 Finnish marks
Expenses (not entering in the calculation of the pension)): 14.000 Finnish Marks. **Total** : 26.000 Finnish marks
Career and placement :
1872 : entry into military service as Junker, in the Mikhalovskoe artillery school.
1873 : transfer to the Nikolaev Cavalry School
1875 : Joining a regiment as a cornet.
He fought in the Russian-Turkish war 1877-78 in Bulgaria (being decorated several times), and he was promoted from cornet to lieutenant in 1878.
1879 leave of a month (marriage)
1880 : promoted to captain
18.09.1880 : following an entry exam, he succeeded to enter the Military Law Academy, from which he graduated in 1883.
Postings :
1883 : Kazan
1884: Petrograd
1887 : Omsk (promoted to lieutenant-colonel)
1894: appointed Examining Magistrate of the military region of Turkestan, based in Tashkent, promoted to colonel and in 1902 to Major-General
1903-1907 Kazan (temporary absence to war in Manchouria)
1907 : temporary transfer to Military Tribunal at Moscow
1909 : Military Tribunal at Odessa
1914 : promoted to become a Senator in Finland with the grade of Lieutenant-General

The family spent the longest periods together in Omsk (7 years), Kazan (4 years), Tashkent (9 years) and Odessa (5 years)

In 1877, at the age of 24 years, in Saint Petersbourg, Vsevolod first met Lydie Vassiliev, 17 years old. He accompanied to a ball his brother Lev, 25, who had also graduated as a cornet from the Nikolayv Cavalry school in 1875. Lev had an eye on Lydie's older sister Olga, 19, who had just finished her final exams at the reputable Smolny Institute with

brilliant results. The two young brothers fell in love with the two young sisters. After several rather official encounters, the very stern father Vassily Vassilyev agreed to a formal engagement for both his daughters. Lydie graduated from Smolny in the fall of 1878.

Vsevovold and Lydie in 1877

In 1879, after the Russian-Turkish war, the four had gone out one afternoon and taken their time. They came home a little late. When they entered the house, the father of the girls was in a total fury. Why had they come home so late? What had they done? Was this what he had brought them up for? His extremely violent manner upset Olga so much that, coat and hat and all, she jumped through the window and killed herself falling on the pavement.

This drama happened on the 18th of February 1879. Olga was buried in the Novodevichi monastery in Saint Petersbourg. Father Vassily left for the countryside. A few days later, on 7th March 1879, Vsevolod's brother Vladimir died in the explosion of a grenade shell, as mentioned before.

On 11th March, Vsevolod asked Lydie to marry him. She accepted. But she was unsure of the possible reaction of her father. She went to have lunch with Sonia, called S.V. by Lydie in her black notebook. Sonia was

the lady who had assisted in bringing up the children after the premature death of their mother in 1868. In 1878, after 10 years of loyal and loving service, she had been dismissed by Vassily after a terrible row.

The following letter of Vsevelod to Lydie illustrates their predicament:

2 April 1879 Nr 11

My darling Lydinka,

I am just coming home from Lina and I have left there early, Leonia and Sacha still staying there, and I have hurried home because I hoped to find a letter of you my love and indeed, the letter was already there when I came home. Leonia and Sacha will no doubt arrive soon but as long as they are not there yet I want to take advantage of their absence and write a few lines to you.

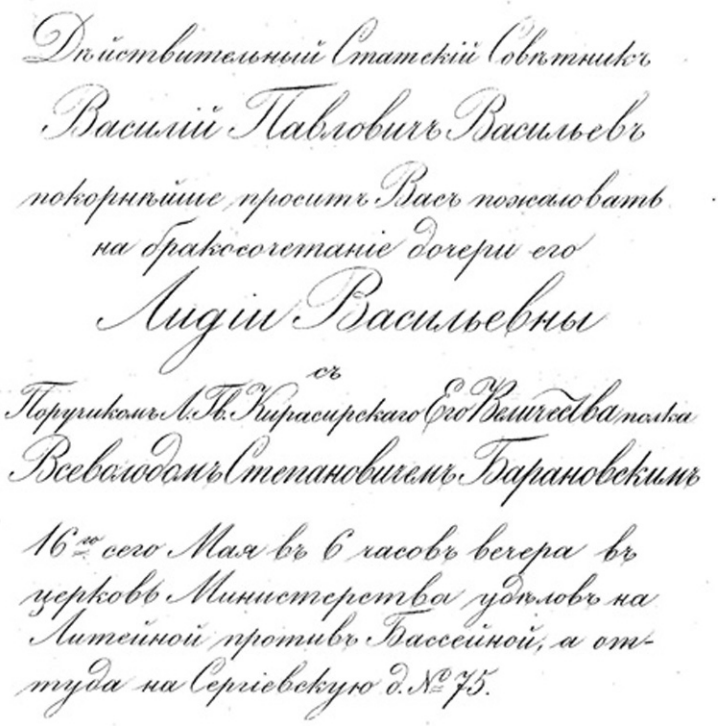
You write that if we inform Vassili Pavlovich of our wish now, he could not accept it or ask for advice from Sacha or Kolia, but likewise he could react like that later, too, because if he refuses now he could do so later as well; so if he accepts now that would be good.

This is why I want you to do the following : when Vas.Pavl. returns, look to see in what state of mind he is and what is his attitude versus you and if all seems favourable, I'll make my request immediately, in writing of course. Do not discuss my idea with Sonia at the moment, but ask her what she thinks of all that and how to proceed the best way possible.
I am sure she will say that is better to wait until the autumn, but I have the impression that I shall not have the patience and would do it the moment Vassili Pavl. comes back. You say yourself that the risk is honourable and in my view the risk now is the same as in the autumn. You say that the risk could cost us three years of happiness, but isn't that the same in the autumn ? That is why it is better to advance courageously now, without any further delay. Isn't it like that, my love, I think that you agree with me.

You write that you are distressed by small worries like for example the days to come, or because the boys are not going to visit their parents etc., let us agree that all that might have a bad influence on your mood, but why take it as seriously as you do, because these are really only trifles in life and they are not worth to be taken to heart. You write that father is going to blame you and will be angry with you because boys will not visit their parents, but why should you

be responsible for that because you can say it is they who do not want to visit and that you cannot drag them in. Leonia and Sacha can come back any moment and I do not want to write in front of Sacha. I could not post my letter I wrote earlier today before 3 o'clock but you will receive it tonight without doubt. Au revoir, see you tomorrow. Be cheerful and do not forget the one who loves you fervently with all his heart,
your Volia

Lydie's father came back from Kainki on the 28th of April. Lydie informed him of her wish to marry Vsevolod. Her father accepted. Lydie and Vsevolod were married on 16 May 1879, at 8 hours in the evening, in the Cathedral of the Transfiguration of Saint-Petersburg, with the Curassiers present.


Дѣйствительный Статскій Совѣтникъ
Василій Павловичъ Васильевъ
покорнѣйше проситъ Васъ пожаловать
на бракосочетаніе дочери его
Лидіи Васильевны
съ
Поручикомъ Л. Гв. Кирасирскаго Его Величества полка
Всеволодомъ Степановичемъ Барановскимъ
16-го сего Мая въ 6 часовъ вечера въ
церковь Министерства удѣловъ на
Литейной противъ Бассейной, а отъ-
туда на Сергіевскую д. № 75.

The State Councillor
Vassili Pavlovitch Vassiliev
invites you humbly
to the marriage of his daughter
Lydie Vassilievna
with
The lieutenant of the regiment of cuirassiers of his Majesty's Guard

Vsevolode Stepanovitch Baranovsky

on the 16th Mai at 6 o'clock in the evening in the
church of the Court Ministry on
the liteïnaia in front of the basseïnaia and from there
to Sergueievskaia n° 75

Their first years of marriage were rather difficult. Vsevolod studied at the Military Law Academy in St Petersburg. They lived in a small apartment and Lydie, soon pregnant, had to climb many stairs. She had a miscarriage and then stayed childless for 5 years. They were moved from place to place. In the summer of 1884 she became pregnant again, in Kazan. In the fall she moved to Saint Petersburg, followed by Vsevolod who had asked for a transfer. Their daughter Vera was born on 7 April, 1885.

Lydie and Vsevolod in Kazan

In 1886 they were transferred to Omsk, where their son Vladimir was born on 5th June 1889.

Extract

Register of Birth of the Cathedral Resurrection Church in the town of Omsk, the register of 18 September 1890 Nr. 349

List of born

Month, day of birth: 05 June 1889

Names: Vladimir

Day of baptism: 07 July 1889

Rank, first name, father's name and last name of the parents:

The Captain of the Military-Judicial ministry Vsevolod Stefanov Baranovsky and his lawful wife Lidia Vasilieva, both of them Orthodox Christian.

Rank, first name, father's name and last name of the god-parents:

Lieutenant-colonel Lev Stepanovych Baranovski and Mrs. Lieutenant-colonel Varvara Nikolaeva Zmetnova

The one who administered the baptism:

The priest Vladimir Pobedinski with the psalmist Pavel Bystrov

I, the undersigned, confirm the correctness of this copy, which was shown to me, Jacob Grigorievych Nikolsk, Notary Public of the town of Kazan, in my office at the address Petropvlovskistreet, 'number the son of general-major field marshall' by Vsevolodovych Baronovski, living in Kazan, Pushkinstreet, the house of Voroztsovaia.

While comparing this copy with the original, I have not noted any deleted, added, crossed-out words or undiscussed improvements or other particularities.

The twenty-eighth of June 1905 in the register Nr. 2314.

No seal has been affixed to this copy in view of it to be shown to an educational institution.

(signature)

We see that Vsevolod's brother Lev was Vladimir's godfather. He must have served in Omsk at the same time as his brother. Secondly, that young Vladimir, at the age of 16, needed the Extract in 1905 for showing it to some educational Institution in Kazan where he then lived with his parents.

The military Cathedral of the Resurrection in Omsk, a church which has disappeared after the Second World War

In Verny (Alma Ata, now Almaty, Kazakhstan) where Vsevolod was posted from 1890-1894, Lydie and Vsevolod had two daughters : Olga (31.7.1891) and Elena (12.10.1892) and a son, Sviatoslav (7.8.1894). Vera did well in primary school there:

ПОХВАЛЬНЫЙ ЛИСТЪ.

Данъ отъ Педагогическаго Совѣта Вѣрненской Женской Гимназіи ученицѣ [illegible] класса [illegible] за отличное поведеніе и [illegible] успѣхи. „[illegible]" [illegible] дня 189[illegible] года г. Вѣрный.

Предсѣдатель Педагогическаго Совѣта, Директоръ Мужской Гимназіи

Начальница Гимназіи

Преподаватели:

Секретарь Совѣта

Congratulations certificate

Given by the Pedagogic Council of the Girl's Lyceum in Verny to the pupil primary school, Vera Baranovsky for her impeccable conduct and her good progress, 11 octobre 1894 à Verny.

Président du Conseil Pédagogique,

Directeur du Lycée de garçons, (signature)
Directeur du Lycée, (signature)
Enseignants, (signatures)
Secrétaire du Conseil, (signature)

In 1894, Vsevolod was promoted to Colonel and transferred to Tashkent where he took office on 19.11.1894, appointed Examining Magistrate of the military region of Turkestan. The family stayed there for 8 years.
On the very interesting picture below, taken in Tashkent probably in 1899, we see the proud parents Lydie and Vsevolod. Their eldest son Vladimir, 10, is behind his mother with has back against the screen. Their eldest daughter Vera, 14 years old, with a chignon, in the centre, Olga (8) in front of Vsevolod, Elena (7) in front of Lydie and in front, Sviatoslav (5) with a small dog. We speculate that the boy on the far right might be a very young Alexander F. Kerensky (18, graduated from secondary school that year), whose family lived in Tashkent, and the lady on the left his mother.

Elena (left, 14) and her sister Olga Baranovsky (15), ± 1906, Kazan

7 Lev Stepanovich Baranovsky, 6.5.1852- ?

Like his brother Vsevolod, Lev was educated at the Nikolaev Cavalry school at Saint-Petersburg. He entered military service on 16.08.1873 and graduated in 1875 joining the Life Guard Cuirassiers Regiment as a cornet. Like his brother, he participated in the Russian-Turkish war 1877-1878. Served in Kazan 1882-1884. He was on secondment to the Chuguev Junker School 1884-1888. In Omsk 1889 - 1898. He became a full colonel in 1896. Commander of various infantry brigades in the period until 1916. He participated in the First World War as a commander of the 77th infantry division in 1914/1915. Retired from active service 'for health reasons' on 18.10.1917 but was re-engaged in the General Staff with the grade of Lt. General.

Following the drama with his fiancée Olga, Lev married her younger sister and the sister of Lydie : Mariya Vasilyeva. They had the following children :

Olga 26.11.1883 - 1975
Vladimir 20.5.1882 – 11.9.1931
Elena 2.9.1885 -?

Lev and Mariya's marriage came to an end in March 1896, after which Lev remarried Eugenia Vyacheslava Michailova. They had two daughters, Eugenia and Xenia. Finally, Lev married for the third time, with Augusta Pavlova Simonova. They had two children, Lev, born 7.12.1902, and Nikolaï, born 7.7.1908.

Recently, an interesting story on Lev's marital troubles with Marya Vasilieva has been published in Russia under the title of "The noble family Baranovsky at the turn of the epoch", by Valery V. Kaminski (independent researcher, Ashdod, Israel) and Valentin A. Veremenko, professor in medical history, Saint Petersburg. In summary, they write :

In 1880, Lev Stepanovich Baranovsky fell in love with the 17-year-old Maria Vasilyeva, the sister of Lydie, his brother Vsevolod's wife. According to the strict rules of that period of the Orthodox Church, they could not be married because such a marriage would be considered as incest. Deviation of this rule would have to be given by the Czar

himself. The bride's father asked Alexander II for dispensation. On 10th February, they got a reply which meant that although the sovereign could not resolve the issue, their marriage would not be annulled if it would take place. However, this petition and its outcome were not transferred to the Holy Synod of the orthodox church but remained between the papers in the Royal Chancellery. The couple got married in August 1881.

Marital problems became evident within a few years. In 1891, Lev fell in love with Yevgenia Vyachslavovna Mikhailova, the 17-year-old daughter of a State Councillor. Lev's military commander baron M. Von Taube reacted with full sympathy for Lev's wife… Divorce for adultery was possible but very involved and lengthy and adultery would have to be proven. Mariya refused the divorce and went to live with her father in Saint Petersbourg, together with her two daughters. The son Vladimir stayed with the father.

In the spring of 1896, to her great surprise, she found out suddenly that on March 28 her marriage had been declared illegal and void by the church and that she was now considered to be the 'virgin Vasilieva' with three illegitimate children. Lev – who had probably whispered his former 'illegal marriage' to the Holy Synod, wasted no time and got married with Eugenia Vyacheslava in April 1896.

Their children suddenly declared illegitimate lost all their rights. Lev had to remove his son Vladimir from the cadet corps. The mother appealed to "the monarch's mercy" to have the children's rights restored, referring to the decision by Alexander II. The Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod then had the archives searched. The paper was finally found in the Royal archives. An embarrassed Prosecutor claimed that he could not have known about its existence because it had not been copied to the Holy Synod. Many petitions by both Mariya and Lev followed, each of them separately requesting the Czar full parental authority.

The children were finally assigned to their mother.

IV

The Family in the years before the Russian Revolution

1 Vsevolod, his wife Lydie and their children Vera, Vladimir, Olga, Elena, and Sviatoslav

This marvellous picture of Vsevolod and Lydie and their five children is a good starting point. We do not know its exact date but guessing their ages suggests that it was taken around 1908, when the family had arrived in Moscow from Tashkent. Vladimir at the far right, is probably about 19 years old, so his sister Vera next to him would then have been about 23. Sviatoslav at the far left was 12 years old, Elena in front was 16 and Olga, at the back between her parents, 17 years old.

They did not stay in Moscow very long, but long enough for Vera and Olga to study drama and to start to take up roles on the stage (for the career of Vera, see chapter VI, she had in fact started her career on the stage already in 1901, when she was 16). She was a pupil of Constantin Stanislavski and worked at the Moscow Arts Theatre.

Vera in 'Three sisters' (1908) with Margarita Savitskaya

Vera

Vera Baranovskaya in 1916 in "He who gets slapped", an anti-war theatrical play, written by the famous playwright Leonid Andreyev. Having supported the March 1917 Revolution, he was disgusted by the Bolshevik Revolution in the fall of 1917 and fled to Finland. Setting: a circus in Paris.

In 1910, **Vera** married the classical musician Yuri Nikolayevich Pomerantsev (1878-1933) who, when he was still a student, gave lessons to the young Serge Prokofiev. After the Revolution, he emigrated to Bulgaria where he founded the first symphony orchestra. The couple divorced before the Revolution.

Vladimir

He was a good student as shown by this school report made in Kazan in 1904, when he was 15 years old:

> **Certificate**
> Given to this son of the Colonel , Vladimir Vsevoldovich Baranovsky, of the orthodox faith, born at Omsk, region Akmolinskaya (Akmola) on 5 Juin 1889, to certify that he, having entered the Kazan lyceum in August 1902, showing an exemplary conduct, has studied until 3 June 1904 and has completed a complete cours. After his final exam, Baranovsky has obtained the following marks :

Religious instruction - excellent (5), Russian language – satisfactory (3), German - satisfactory (3), French – satisfactory (3), arithmatic – good (4), algebra – satisfactory (3), géométrie – good (4), trigonométrie – excellent (5), physics – good (4), natural history – good (4), history – excellent (5), geography – good (4), drawing – satisfactory (3), technical drafting – excellent (5).

When Baranovsky enters civil life, he will enjoy the right foreseen in article 9 of the Corpus of Law part 3 . After his military service, he will benefit from the advantages given by the school establishments.

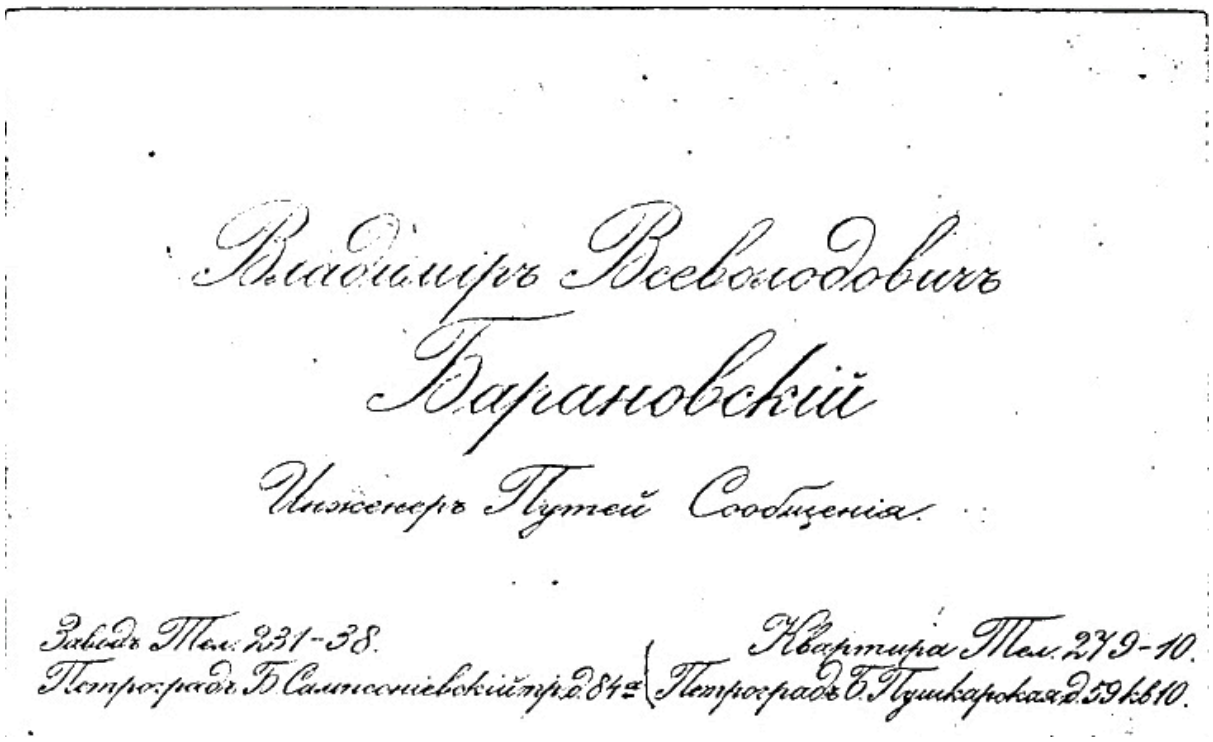
In order to testify, this certificate is given to Baranovsky with the appropriate signature and stamp of the Lyceum.
Kazan, 3 June 1904

Vladimir then studied engineering in Saint-Petersburg, re-named Petrograd between 1914-1924, completing his studies in three years instead of the required five, obtaining the title of "Ingenieur Ways of Communications", a profession existing formally in Russia already for a century, a variant of what we would call Civil Engineering.

Together with some associates, he started a small factory of railway equipment. He married the Russian-Polish Actress Maria "Moussia" Sila-Nowicki. The newly-wed couple installed themselves in an apartment at the address Bolshaya Pushkarshkaya 59/10.

Bolshaya Pushkarshkaya 59/10, as it still exists today.

Vladimir's visiting card on arrival in the USA in 1918:


Владимiръ Всеволодовичъ
Барановскiй
Инженеръ Путей Сообщенiя.
Завод. Тел. 231-38.
Петроградъ Б. Сампсоніевскій пр. 84а
Квартира Тел. 279-10.
Петроградъ Б. Пушкарская 59 кв 10.

On which it says :

Vladimir Vsevolodovich
Baranovsky
Engineer Ways of Communications

Factory : tel. 231-38
Bolshoy Sampsonievsky Prospekt 84a

Home: tel. 279-10
Bolshaya Puskarshkaya Street 59/10

Vladimir, with the formal title of 'Ingenieur Ways of Communications', had his own factory of railway equipment at the Bolshoy Sampsonievsky Prospekt in Vyborg, close to the Finnish border. His workers of were heavily involved in the revolution and demonstrated in in Sampsonievsky Prospekt throughout 1917. So Vladimir Vsevolodovich was a direct witness, first in February and again in May and in July/August.

When the labour strikes started in his own factory,Vladimir was very surprised and thought it was all a simple misunderstanding. "The workers are my children", he said according to André Birukoff's father Vsevolod. He went to speak to them on the work floor, convinced that they could be persuaded to go back to work. But he was booed and got a metal bolt thrown in his face. He then understood that the revolution was for real. He applied for an international passport which he got in August 1917.

Very briefly: the Russian Revolution of 1917 was in fact a series of revolutions which followed many years of unrest. At the start of 1917, general conditions in Russia and in the industrial area of Petrograd in particular were greatly influenced by the First World War. There had been a series of heavy setbacks for the Russian armies with massive numbers of casualties and disruption of the transport systems. Food supply to the major cities and in Petrograd in particular, had almost come to a halt and the working classes suffered a prolonged shortage of food.

The March Revolution led to the abdication of Czar Nicholas II and the installation of a Provisional Government in which Alexander Kerensky played important roles, eventually that of its leader. It was attacked continuously by the Bolsheviks under Lenin and Trotsky who overthrew the Provisional Government in November 1917. This was followed by a civil war between the 'Whites' and the 'Reds' which was finally won by the 'Reds' in 1922.

In July, 1917, in Petrograd, Vladimir Baranovsky looked out of a window together with his father, Lt.Gen. (Rtd.) Vsevolod S. Baranovsky and watched in horror as a large demonstration of workers, incited by Lenin and Trotsky, was mowed down by the army. In Petrograd and also in other cities, like Moscow, the government succeeded in suppressing the revolt. Lenin went into temporary hiding in Finland.

Decades later, Vladimir would tell his relatives in the United States how he had seen the spectacle. It may well be that he and his father discussed there and then the possibility of a family escape from Russia, because in the months that followed they wasted no time in preparing and carrying out such a plan. In this family, as in so many others in Russia at the time, opinions and positions differed but they did not give up their loyalty to one another.

General Wiktor Sila-Nowicki, the father of Moussia, had been killed in the Revolution of March 1917, reportedly by mutineers who refused to shoot at demonstrators. Moussia, as would emerge later in the press interview on arrival in San Francisco, was pro-Kerensky. The Baranovsky as well. As will be seen later, Vladimir was in favour of a moderate revolution, but against the bolsheviks.

Vladimir went into action immediately and got a passport. It is virtually certain that he could get his passport so fast in that turbulent month only by special permission of Kerensky. He knew Kerensky personally not only from Tashkent and via his sister Elena but also because Olga, who was still Kerensky's lawful wife, was the daughter of his uncle Lev. She was the older sister of Vladimir's cousin and namesake Vladimir Lvovitch Baranovsky, who was Alexander Kerensky's faithful Chef-de-Cabinet since April 1917, when Kerensky became the Minister of War and who had promoted him to the rank of General.

Vladimir Lvovitch Baranovsky

There were more reasons than one for the trip to the USA of Vladimir and his wife Moussia.
The first and foremost reason was to leave the country for their personal safety.
Secondly, he had a solid technical reason : he went to the USA to buy machines for manufacturing railroad equipment including locomotives.
Thirdly, he thought that the Bolshevik revolution would be short-lived and that the White army would beat the Reds soon. In fact, his passport was issued for a period of only 6 months. Like his father , who also thought that he was moving to Yaroslavl *temporarily* before returning to Saint Petersburg.
A fourth probable reason : he and Moussia were just married and they were looking forward to a honeymoon.

But also, as we have only found out very recently, as late as in July 2017, his factory was in a state of bankruptcy and had been disassembled and was on its way to the South of Russia to be re-assembled there under the guidance of a partner. He was on his way to start a similar factory in the USA for future cooperation with the mother firm. This extraordinary development will be discussed in chapter V-3.

Vladimir and Moussia left for Vladivostok on 27th October 2017. Their parents left for the South at about the same time. Elena was with Kerensky, awaiting their baby, in the Winter Palace at first, then in Vladimir's apartment. His two other sisters, the actresses, tried to continue their career.

Let us look at Vladimir's passport:

The holder of this document, the hereditary nobleman (potomstvenniy dvoryanin), **ingénieur of the ways of communication**, *Vladimir Vsevolodovich Baranovsky, born in 1889, of the Orthodox faith, Russian subject*

by birth, being sent to America to buy machines for a Baranovsky factory of mobile mechanical equipment, Department Mob., is permitted to go abroad for a period not exceeding six months in witness whereof, for free travelling, this passport is given, confirmed by a stamp. Issued in Petrograd on August 18, 1917.The prefect of Petrograd.

The round stamp on the right (better readable on the next pages where it is repeated) and the horizontal stamp at the top: "*Commissar caretaker government over the former prefect of Petrograd*". Signed by: *Colonel-Lieutenant Samson.*

Strangely, in the subsequent pages 4 and 5, *in the French translation*, the passport is issued not for six months but for a period of 5 years !!

Vladimir's sister **Olga**, like her sister Vera, also became an actress. She studied at the same school. When the Revolution came, she performed in the 'provinces'. She had been briefly married to an actor Alexandre Alexandrovich Sumarokov, their daughter Elena was born in 1914, whereupon Sumarokov left her.

We know very little about Olga. A summary of her life is given in chapter VII – 3.

Olga

Elena

Elena at about 14

Elena was a gifted writer as shown in a complimentary letter written to her when she was 18, by her brother Vladimir staying not too far away from Odessa in a small town called Vil'na (SW of Kiev), he was probably there for practical work in connection with his studies.
quote
3/II 1910
Dear Lilietchka (diminutive of Lilia, Elena's nickname),

One day, Mummy has written to me that you were writing short stories and in an earlier letter I have replied that that had made me very happy. And now, I receive a journal of Odessa that you have sent me. I have suspected at once that it was possible that one of your writings was in that journal and my heart started to beat faster.

Having opened the package and having read your « Seagull » I feel that I have not felt as happy as now for a long time. Even now, the smile has not yet left my face. Happy, for you.

Happy that one day you may have become an author or a talented poet, because your « Seagull » is surprisingly poetic. In fact, it is not so much a short story but rather an elegy in prose but poetic, soft, … and heart-felt.

We shall see how far your « Seagull » will take you.

How has the journal accepted it? Maybe they have even paid you for it. Tell me all in detail; how did your name reach the journal and the rest of it ? Do you have anything else? Do you have any real-life short stories like those of Tchekhov, it seems to me that you are going to write … poetic works, short stories à la Tchekhov (relatively of course). And, I do not know why, but it seems to me that your soul is like Tchekhov's. It may seem so to me but it could also be untrue, but my nature is to let me dream and imagine straight away. And now I have remained …

I embrace you firmly, be happy and in good health. I congratulate my dear poet Lilia.

3/II Volodia

This letter for you Lilia I have written yesterday and I only waited for your address. I have received it today. Today I have sent the letter to Papa care of the Tribunal, I hope that mother will get it for you. Tell Maman that I have received the bed sheets and the handkerchiefs and I am very happy with both and also with the bags. And that she should write to me how much they cost because I do not know.
I embrace you once more and wish you good health.
Volodia
To:
The honorary
Elena Vsevolodovna Baranovsky
Torgovaya ul. No 6 Apt 1
unquote

Judging by the postal stamps on the envelope it took only one day for this letter to arrive!

Elena in 1910, with a medal she won in school

In 1912, at the age of 19, while still in Odessa with the family, Elena married Colonel Nicolas Pavlovich Birukoff (born 3 June 1873), 19 years her senior. Their son Vsevolod ('Olik'), who would much later become the father of the co-author of this book, was born 27.7.1913. Witnesses during his baptism were: "The Engineer of Roads and Communications, registered consultant, Vladimir Vsevolodovich Baranovsky, the wife of a Major-General, Lydie Vassilieva Baranovskaya, State Councillor Grigori Pavlovich Birukoff, and the wife of a nobleman, Vera Vsevolodna Pomerantseva (Vera had married Pomerantsev in 1910).

Elena at the age of about 19, in Odessa

Elena with Nicolas Birukoff and their son Olik, 1914

When Nicolas Birukoff went to the war front in 1914, having been promoted to Colonel, Elena started studies at the Bestoujev University for young women in Petrograd in order to become a medical doctor.

In 1916, Vsevolod had been appointed a Senator in Helsingfors and the family moved into a large apartment.

Vsevolod in his Finnish apartment, 1915

Elena had become ill and stayed with her parents in their Helsingfors apartment. To gain strength, she then went to the Grankulla Sanatorium in Finland, where she met Alexander Kerensky who was recovering after one of his kidneys had been removed.

Elena with 3 year old Olik in Bad Grankulla

Sviatoslav

We know very little about Sviatoslav ('Tossia"). A summary of his life is given in chapter VII – 3.

2 Maria Sila-Nowicki, Vladimir Baranovsky's first wife

Maria Sila-Nowicki ("Moussia") was born 25 January 1895 in Moscow in an ancient hereditary Polish nobility who lived for centuries in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, country in Union with Poland since 1386. After the partition of Poland at the end of the eighteenth century, the whole Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Central/Eastern Poland was incorporated into the Russian Empire. The Nowicki family who had estates in the district of Lepel (province of Vitebsk, now Belarus), lost it all after Napoleon's army passed through in 1812 and devastated the region. Maria's family were like many Polish families who saw their survival in the professions or in the Russian Imperial Military service. They took university degrees in medicine, law or in technical fields. Since a decree of Catherine II 'The Great', these fields were reserved for the hereditary nobility.

In 1882, the grandfather of Moussia, Wiktor-Franciszek Sila-Nowicki (1813-1910), obtained a decree from the Imperial Heraldry to return to the full use of the name Sila-Nowicki, lost in the 100 years before. This decree was extended to his wife and all his children and descendants and required a proven genealogy going back to the late sixteenth century.

Wiktor, who had worked for the administration of the Imperial Estates, worked later in the Orel and Novgorod district government but remained a resident of Moscow. Later, he became a director of a newly built railway system. This earned him two retirement pensions later in life. In 1895 he bought a small estate, Wylagi in the parish of Kazimierz Dolny, province of Lublin, south-east of Warsaw in Poland.

In 1849, Wiktor married Julia, Baroness Witte Von Wittenheim (1823-1855) of a Baltic family. She died young, probably in child birth of her fourth son Mieczyslaw who was to die soon thereafter. A Lutheran, she was buried in the Lutheran cemetery in Moscow. Wiktor was left with four small boys who had all been baptized Roman Catholics. In 1859 he married Jozefina Dowgiallo (1841-1908), from an ancient Lithuanian family. Jozefina was 28 years younger than Wiktor and was a most loving step-mother for his small sons, whom she brought up together with the five children she would have by Wiktor.The people on the picture below, taken in Moscow in 1878, are all children of Wiktor-

Franciszek with Julia and Jozefina. All spoke fluent Polish in addition to Russian.

Moussia's father Wiktor Wiktorovich(1854-1917), then not yet married, is seated on the right, with his half-sister and godchild Stanislawa on his knee (1874 – died at Wylagi in 1952). Standing to the right is Julian who became a doctor of medicine (1861-1919). Standing in the middle is Wladyslaw (1850 – ?), a doctor of medicine. He was married to Eugenia Baranovsky, aunt of Moussia's first husband Vladimir Baranovsky.The brother who sits behind a small table is Emanuel (1852-1917) who was Governor of Moscow in the rank of general during the February 1917 Revolution. The girl on the right is Jozefa (1867- died 1941 at Wylagi) and the girl sitting on the left is Zofia (1872 – died 1943). At the far left, standing : Helena, who remained unmarried (1859 Novgorod - 1901 Wylagi). Not shown is Alexander, who was born in 1878, the year the picture was taken, who died in 1941. He became a lawyer, having graduated from the University of Moscow, as had his brother Wladyslav, but who became a doctor of medicine.

Alexander was the father of the famous Polish lawyer Wladyslaw Sila-Nowicki (1913-1994), Moussia's full cousin, the intrepid lawyer of the

Polish trade union *Solidarnosc*, who was sentenced in Poland by the communists to five death sentences and saved by a miracle (his eight companions were executed), but was jailed for 10 years , being released in 1956.

This family, like so many similar families in the same period, was torn apart by the Russian Revolution and again by the Second World War. Emanuel and Moussia's father Wiktor were killed in the turbulence of the Russian revolution. So were two of the three sons of Julian.

On 13 June 1905, in Kazimierz Dolny, Zofia and Stanislawa, in a ceremony attended by Moussia, then 10 years old, and her eight-year-old brother Julian , married Wladyslaw and Ignacy Dzierzynski, two brothers. They were brothers of the man already considered to be the renegade of the family: Felix Dzierszynski, later the first chief of the Cheka, the feared Soviet secret police. Zofia's husband Wladyslav Dzierzynski became a famous neurologist. He was killed in Lodz, Poland by the Gestapo in 1942. Zofia herself died in a gulag near Alma Ata in Kazakhstan in 1943. Stanislawa's husband Ignacy Dzierzynski (1879-1953) graduated with distinction in mathematics, physics, natural history and geography at Moscow University in 1904, became a teacher in Warsaw and later worked in independent Poland in the Ministry of Education. He died in Wylagi in 1953. Stanislawa and Ignacy had a daughter Wanda Jozefa (1906- 1914) and a son Olgierd Emanuel (1910 in Warsaw – 1995 in England).

Moussia's first cousin Olgierd married Julia Anna Misterko and fought with General Sikorski's Polish Army during the Second World War. After the war, he was stripped of his Polish nationality and inheritance by the communists and so was his only son, Andrzej Leszek Dzierzynski born 3 December 1936 in Warsaw. Andrzej is an artist painter, known as André Dzierzynski, who lives in England and Tuscany.

Little is known about Moussia's years as a child and as a teenager, except that she grew up in Moscow, where all her relatives lived. During her adolescence, her family moved to Saint Petersburg because her father, Colonel Wiktor Sila-Nowicki, was assigned to the Imperial Court. A painter and art lover, he became aide-de-camp to the cultured Grand-Duke Constantine, grandson of Czar Nicolas I of Russia, and a poet, playwright and translator of Goethe, Schiller and Shakespeare.

On this picture, we see Moussia at the age of ten years, on 13 June, 1905, at the wedding in Kazimierz Dolny of her aunts Zofia and Stanislawa Sila Nowicki with Wladyslaw and Ignacy Dzierzynski.

In front on the left: Jozefina, wife of Wiktor-Franciszek, the formidable woman who brought up four children of his previous marriage and five of their own, at the age of 64. Fondly leaning against her is Moussia's brother Julian, at the age of 8. In the centre: the *pater familias* Wiktor-Franciszek at the age of 92 (he died at the age of 97). Next to him are Wladyslaw Dzierzynski at the age of 24 and his wife Zofia, 33. At Zofia's feet sits Maria ("Moussia"). Standing in the centre is Ignacy Dzierzynski, aged 26 with his wife Stanislawa, 31 and standing next to her is the parish priest of the Fara Church in Kazimierz Dolny. The couple on the right of Ignacy Dzierzynski are the local doctor with his wife, witnesses at the wedding. The others are the local people working in the house. Please note the child at the feet of Jozefina. She loved children of others as her own.
Since Moussia and Julian lived in Moscow at that time, they had been taken to the wedding by Zofia and Wladyslaw, who worked in Moscow. Their father was absent.

Moussia, when 22 years old in 1917, had aspirations of her own

Mousyenka Sila-Nowickaya 1916 Moscow

Sergei Prokofiev mentioned in his diaries that Moussia had been in theatre school in Russia under Stanislavski's pupil Meyerhold and was familiar with the ideas of *Commedia dell'arte* and Carlo Gozzi. He was impressed by her professional knowledge and views. He took her advice during the year preceding the premiere of the opera The *Love for three Oranges* in Chicago (30 December 1921, and she sat next to him during the final rehearsals. The opera is based on the Italian play *L'amore delle tre melarance* by Gozzi. Earlier that year, in Los Angeles, he had been impressed by a talk given by her, in impeccable French, on the subject of Molière.

At the time that Moussia started her acting lessons with Vsevolod Meyerhold, Vladimir studied and worked in St. Petersburg, so it was probably in that city that she met Vladimir Baranovsky. Some circumstantial evidence suggests that she also had contact with, or maybe even had lessons at, the influential *Moscow Academic Art Theatre (MCHAT)* of Constantin Stanislavski and that she knew Vladimir's sister Vera. On several of her pictures of later years she wrote *In memory of Moscow*.

3 Alexander Kerensky and his wife Olga Kerensky-Baranovsky

The Alexander Kerensky family, with sons Oleg and Gleb

Alexander Kerensky, born on 22 april 1881, son of an Inspector of Public Schools, graduated with honours from his secondary school in 1899. At that time, the Kerensky family lived in Tashkent as did the Baranovsky who were there 1894-1903. They may well have known each other. He then entered Saint Petersburg University to study history and philology but changed his line of study to law, earning his degree in 1904. He married **Olga Lvovna Baranovsky** that same year. Their children, Oleg (1905) and Gleb (1907) were born soon thereafter.

Kerensky joined the Russian Labour Party and in 1912 was elected to the State Duma. A socialist, Kerensky developed a strong following amongst industrial workers. In February 1917, Kerensky announced that he had joined the Socialist Revolutionary Party and called for the removal of Nicholas II. When the Tsar abdicated on 13th March, a Provisional Government, headed by Prince George Lvov, was formed. Kerensky was appointed as Minister of Justice in the new government and immediately introduced a series of reforms including the abolition of capital punishment. He also announced basic civil liberties such as freedom of the press, the abolition of ethnic and religious discrimination and made plans for the introduction of universal suffrage. In July 1917, Lvov's unwillingness to withdraw Russia from the First World War made him unpopular with the people and on 8th July, 1917, he resigned and was replaced by Kerensky. In turn, Kerensky was replaced by the Bolsheviks in the October Revolution and had to flee.

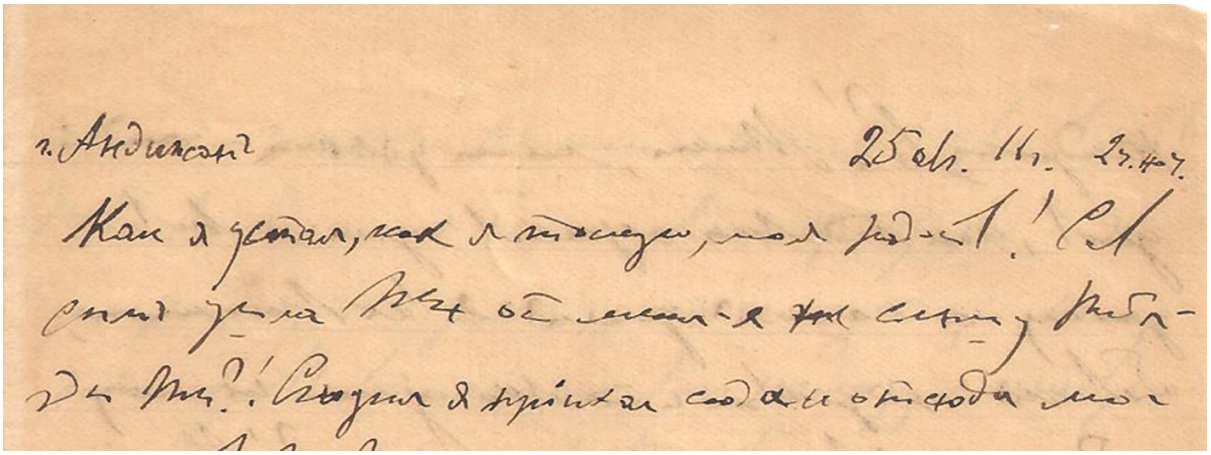
4 Elena – and a letter to her by Alexander Kerensky dated 5.8.1916

The year before, Kerensky had had persistent problems with one tubercular kidney, which was removed in Finland on 16th March 1916 by Professor Franz Krogius. He stayed, for recuperation, in the Bad Grankulla Sanatorium at intervals during a period of about 7 months. This is where he met Elena Birukoff-Baranovsky, who was recovering from an illness . She commuted between the Sanatorium and the sumptuous official apartment of her parents in Helsinki. Her husband Nicolas was at the front. Alexander and Elena fell in love.

Alexander Kerensky and Elena in Bad Grankulla, 1916, photo by Alma Söderhjelm.

Kerensky soon came to know Elena as "Lilya". She was a younger, less serious and more carefree version of Olga, and as his convalescence advanced, he found her visits more and more welcome.

We have found one love letter from Alexander to Elena between her papers. It is virtually undecipherable due to its very unclear handwriting.



An attempt has been made by Anna Mosina to decipher the letter :

Г. Андипсон 5 августа 1916 2 часа ночи Как я устал, как я тоскую, моя радость! ** спит/спать ушла уже от меня – я же сижу работаю уже (?). сегодня я приехал сюда и отсюда могу послать тебе телеграмму, т.к. здесь меня лично не знают и ты знаешь это немного успокоило меня – сознание,	Andipson, 5 Aug 1916 2 am How tired I am. How much I miss you my dear! ** sleeps, left me. But I am *already* working. Today I arrived here and can send you a telegram as no one knows me here personally. And you know, this gave me comfort a bit, this knowledge that very soon

что скоро скоро уже прочтешь эти ** мои слова и сильнее почувствуешь меня, если еще чувствуешь. А если уже нет, то ** *лишаешь* меня радости, прости меня за эти слова, но ты ведь знаешь какой я *малодушный* и мало ли что могло случиться в *России (10 дней)!* Что ж время шло незаметно, я стараюсь все время быть в ***. Из *** *** по городам приезжаю-уезжаю каждый день и дни все тянутся и до 8 сентября еще так долго, бесконечно долго! Что с тобой. Что ты *делаешь*? Как твое здоровье? Неужели совсем не поправилась, *** во *все* ***?	you will read these *** my words and will feel me a bit more, if you still can feel it. If not anymore, then *** *take this joy from* me. I am sorry for such words but you know how *weak hearted* I am and you never know what could have happened *in Russia in 10 days*! But time passes and I am trying all the time to be in ***. From *** over the towns, I am arriving and leaving every day. All these days drag on and it is still so long before 8 September, endless time! How are you? *What are you doing*? How is your health? How is it possible that your health has not improved yet? ***
Стр 2 Милая, милая ** - ** уже, как только остаюсь один, ** ухожу к нашим ** - я все вспоминаю обо всем продумаю и только одного не могу себе представить, что ты здесь ***? Неужели судьба *изменит* нам и зимой мы здесь только *** мучиться – родная моя, как мне жаль тебя, жаль с мучительство за твое молодое, так что страдаю. Ведь мне *** Ведь только радость и я жду только бы *господь* ** если ты ** для настоящего ** от меня! Ведь мы страшно ** чтобы это будет так, когда сейчас и так безумно ревную тебя даже к ***. Я сумею … себя – раз тебя! ** слов у меня радуют нас ***_____ ***. Как жду тебя вот сейчас – где-то почти в одном далеком городишке - *** ___ ** *отзовись* или *** ж свою жадною *** ____ ***? – Нет, нет ***? *** как по мне, *** мне уже Скоро! Ах как я счастлив ***. Тебя люблю, как я благословлю судьбу, что еще раз она дала мне благодать *нашу,* дала ***_____ *** люблю и **** нашего дня. ** это дал ** для меня подарок судьбы, а и правда? И я хочу для тебя ** __ ** ибо дал ** для тебя, мне *** давеча мой *** родной близкий любимый. Вы до цели и здорово, целую и ** __** и до сих пор на даче. Уже Л *** она много потрясающая, *** _____*** Здесь *** ____*** атмосфера нашей жизни – тихий ужас! Сейчас я на *** городов, потом (21-	Page 2 My dearest, my dearest *** When I stay alone *** *Think about our* *** I still remember everything and thinking about it and can't even imagine if you were here *** Is it possible that the fate would b*e cruel to us* and only in winter ***My dearest, how much I am sorry for you. I am so sorry for your troubles that I suffer myself. *** *You are* my joy and I only can hope that *God* ***If you *** ____ *** .. and even now I am very jealous even to ***. ***….*** How much I am waiting for you here in a remote little town [incomprehensible] Soon! Oh how happy I am ***. Love you. I thank the fate that it gave us *our* happiness, gave *** ____ ***. *** this is a gift from fate for me. And for you I want *** as ** gave you to me, my dearest, my lovliest. **** and still at a vacation house. L**, she is great ****. Here *** the atmosphere of our life is terrible! Now I am at *** town, then (21-29 August) I'll be back at T** and then 31-1 Sept on *the train*. *To* *** I will arrive exactly on 1 Sept to meet and then I will go to **** 30 days. Every time someone recognizes me, I leave *** I think that no one

28 августа) вернусь в Т.., а оттуда 31-1 сент *поезд*. Ка… приеду прямо 1 сентября, чтобы повидать, а затем дел пойду на *Полу. 30 – день*. Каждый раз как узнают меня, я уезжаю, что до *** ____ *** лучше. Думаю, что меня не узнают, за это лишь *** и щекочу самолюбие.	recognizes me [*there*] and only please my self-esteem.
Стр 3 Жара здесь в *** невозможная и ***__***. Вообще погода *** и *** можно *** в Финляндии дождь - ***. В *** сейчас же самая *благодать* *** __ ***, мне бы с *** лишь бы не ***! Ах я бы мог так потому *** на судьбу нас разлучающую, если б не **** Я ** признаю, что она могла бы быть к нам сурова. Ди *** мне сказал *как-то* в вагоне показалось, что телеграмму ты мне прислала нарочно, чтоб успокоить, а на самом деле все совсем по-другому - я даже похолодел вдруг, мне представилось как гуляешь ты одна, совсем одна! Но *** это *** утром я понял, что это ***, что мне *** и так и успокоился. Радость моя – скорее скорее шло время – снова с *** только видеть, слышать, смотреть в твои глаза, словно в небо, гладить твои руки – о как же я жду когда твою мне было мало! Еще друг когда б ****___ *** Твой А.	Page 3 It is incredibly warm here and ***. In general the weather is ***. ** it rains in Finland. In *** it's the best weather now. I'd love to *** Oh, if I could ** to the fate keeping up apart all the time, if only I could *** I admit that the fate was cruel to us. Di *** [*name*] ** told me once that you sent me a telegram only to comfort me but in reality for a completely different reason. My heart suddenly sank. I imagined how you are walking around completely alone! But *** in the morning I realized that this was [*just a dream*] and calmed down. My dearest, I wish the time would pass faster, *** just to see you, hear you, look into your eyes as in the skies, touch your hands. Oh how I am waiting when *** [Incomprehensible, one sentence] Yours, A.

In March 1917, Kerensky filed proceedings to get a divorce from his wife Olga. In the beginning of April 1917, Elena became pregnant. Alexander had moved his office from the Tauride Palace into the Ministry of Justice. Olga and the boys were, at first, regular visitors, as was Lilya. But after a while, Olga and the boys could only visit him by appointment.

I quote from *Alexander Kerensky, the first love of Revolution by Richard Abraham, Columbia University Press, 1987*:
"In July, Kerensky's style became perceptibly more 'Bonapartist'. He and Lilya moved into Alexander III's suite on the third floor of the Winter Palace, a move described as *meshchanstvo* (lower-middle-class-vulgarity) by Hippius". "Accustomed to salacious court gossip,

Petrograd society speculated on the identity of Olga's substitute. "Was it the actress Time ? Or was it one of the Tsar's daughters? ""

Elena was officially married to Nicolas Birukoff. Rumours circulated. In several newspaper publications, it was suggested that Kerensky had divorced his wife Olga and had remarried a certain *mademoiselle Timmet* with whom he lived in the Winter Palace…

KERENSKY WEDS RUSSIAN ACTRESS

Found Time Amid Crisis Following Riga's Fall to Re-enter Bonds of Matrimony.

Special Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

STOCKHOLM, Sept. 16. (Dispatch to The London Daily News).—Refugees from Petrograd arriving here yesterday bring the story that in the midst of the crisis—a few days after the fall of Riga to be exact—Premier Kerensky found time to remarry.

The wedding took place at the Winter Palace, the bride being Mlle. Timmet, a prominent and clever young actress of the Alexandra Theatre.

It is amusing to hear that this item of fashionable intelligence created an unfavorable impression in Petrograd.

SOLDIERS ENTER COURT.

From the New York Times, 16 september 1917

According to the Russian Wikipedia : *"In the summer of 1917 it was rumoured in Petrograd that the actress Timé and A.F. Kerensky had an affair, one even spoke of a marriage, but those rumours were totally unfounded. In 1918, Timé and her husband denied them in the press. The rumours had an echo in the private journal of the poet Alexander Blok, in the notes of the poet*

Vladislav Khodassievitch (where they were presented as gossip), and in various newspapers. Under the Soviet regime, these rumours created difficulties for E. Timé. The security services summoned her for interrogation several times, they asedg her about about her contacts with Kerensky. Her career was blocked, she was not given any roles anymore."

Yelizaveta Timé (Timmet) as Baroness Shtral / Alexandrinski Theatre, 1917

In the Winter Palace, in September 1917, Kerensky had received three communist American journalists. Louise Bryant, her husband John Reed and Albert Rhys Williams. John Reed wrote : "Finally one day we penetrated as far as the private billiard-room of the Emperor, an immense chamber panelled in rosewood inlaid with brass, where in a corner beside the Gargantuan rosewood billiard table, below the shrouded portraits of the Tsars, was the plain desk at which he worked."

"Then, just as we were about to give up, the door opened and a smiling little spic-and-span naval adjutant beckoned. We entered a great mahogany room, lined with heavy Gothic book-cases, in the center of which a stairway mounted to a balcony above. This was the Tsar's private library and reception-room. I had time to notice the works of Jack London, in English, on a shelf, when Kerensky came toward us. As he shook hands he looked into each face searchingly for a second, and then led the way swiftly across to a big table with chairs all around."

On October 23rd, the couple fled from the Winter Palace and hid alternatively in Finland and in Elena's brother's apartment in Petrograd.

On 4th January 1918, Elena's brother Vladimir and his wife Moussia, who had just arrived in the USA, were still certain that Alexander and Elena had married. But it was not true.

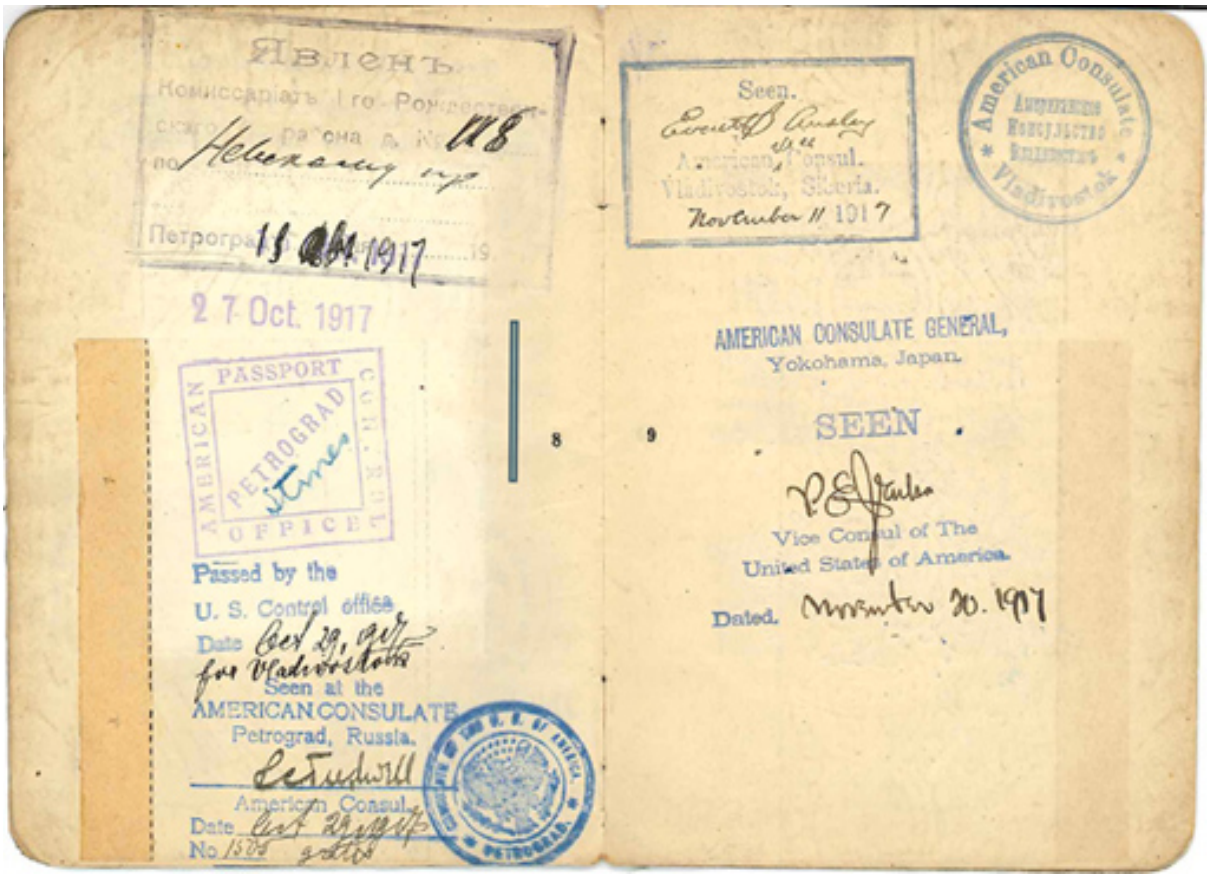
Richard Abraham :
"On 9th January 1918, Kerensky arrived alone and unrecognized in Petrograd. He found Olga and the boys at his mother-in-law's apartment. He must have been shaken by their poverty, as they were to scratching a living from a cottage industry in cigarette production - to the mockery of the Bolshevist press. He was still in touch with both his families. On one occasion he offered to take ten year-old Gleb to see his baby half-sister. He could not bring himself to announce the new arrival to Oleg until the very moment of his departure for Moscow. As he went down the stairs for the last time, he turned and stated bluntly, "You have a sister." This was a blow for 13 year-old Oleg, who had continued to hope for a reconciliation between his parents."

Olga Lvovna

V

Three escapes from Russia 1917 -1924

1 Vladimir and Moussia escape to the USA



The dates on Vladimir's passport are eloquent. It took the couple 13 days to reach Vladivostok by train (10 000 kilometres, one passes through 8 time zones). There are no details on how they travelled from Vladivostok to Yokohama. But, due to the ice, November is too late to leave Vladivostok by ship. Moreover, time was of the essence. They must have continued towards the South by train, first back to Harbin and from there to Port Arthur (now Lü-shun) and from there crossed the East China Sea by boat to Nagasaki in Southern Kyushu. The journey from Vladivostok to Yokohama must have taken them the full nine days between the 11th and 20th of November. It must have been a gruelling trip.

The picture of a tired Moussia with a French officer must have been taken in Port Arthur, or in Nagasaki after crossing the East China Sea. In those two southern places, November weather can still be lenient with temperatures in the order of 20 degrees centigrade in the sun. It is quite possible that in the ports of Port Arthur and/or Nagasaki consular officials wore military uniforms. The year noted in Moussia's photo album leaves no doubt that the picture was taken during their journey.

In Japan, there was a delay because some officials thought that Moussia was Princess Tatiana, miraculously rescued from imprisonment in Tobolsk where the Imperial family was held. This fable had caused a lot of press attention :

CZAR'S DAUGHTER ESCAPES.
A ROMANTIC STORY.

Received November 26, 11.55 p.m

NEW YORK, November 26.

It is announced that Princess Tatiana Romanoff, the second daughter of the ex-Czar, escaped from Siberia and is en route across the Pacific to New York. She is to lecture and write for the benefit of the Russian civilian relief committee. She urges the United States not to abandon Russia, but to combat the Socialistic and German influences. She does not desire the restoration of her father, but favours a strong democratic Government resembling the United States. She hopes to assist in replacing Russia with the Allies. She escaped through a mock marriage with the son of an ex-court chamberlain, this permitting her freedom.

Princess Tatiana Nikolaevna on a much publicised picture,
'taken after an illness when she had to have her hair cut short'

One really wonders if Moussia, the actress trained by Meyerhold,
had this pictures taken in Harbin with a special purpose in mind

Finally, on 14 December 1917, twenty-four days after arrival in Yokohama, Vladimir and Moussia sailed from there to San Francisco on the SS Ecuador, travelling First Class.

10 11

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL,
Yokohama, Japan.

SEEN. No. 28

Bearer is to depart for the United States of America between Dec 14 1917 and Dec 18 1917

V G Fulse
Vice Consul.

Date Dec 14 1917

No fee prescribed.

"SUNSHINE BELT TO THE ORIENT"

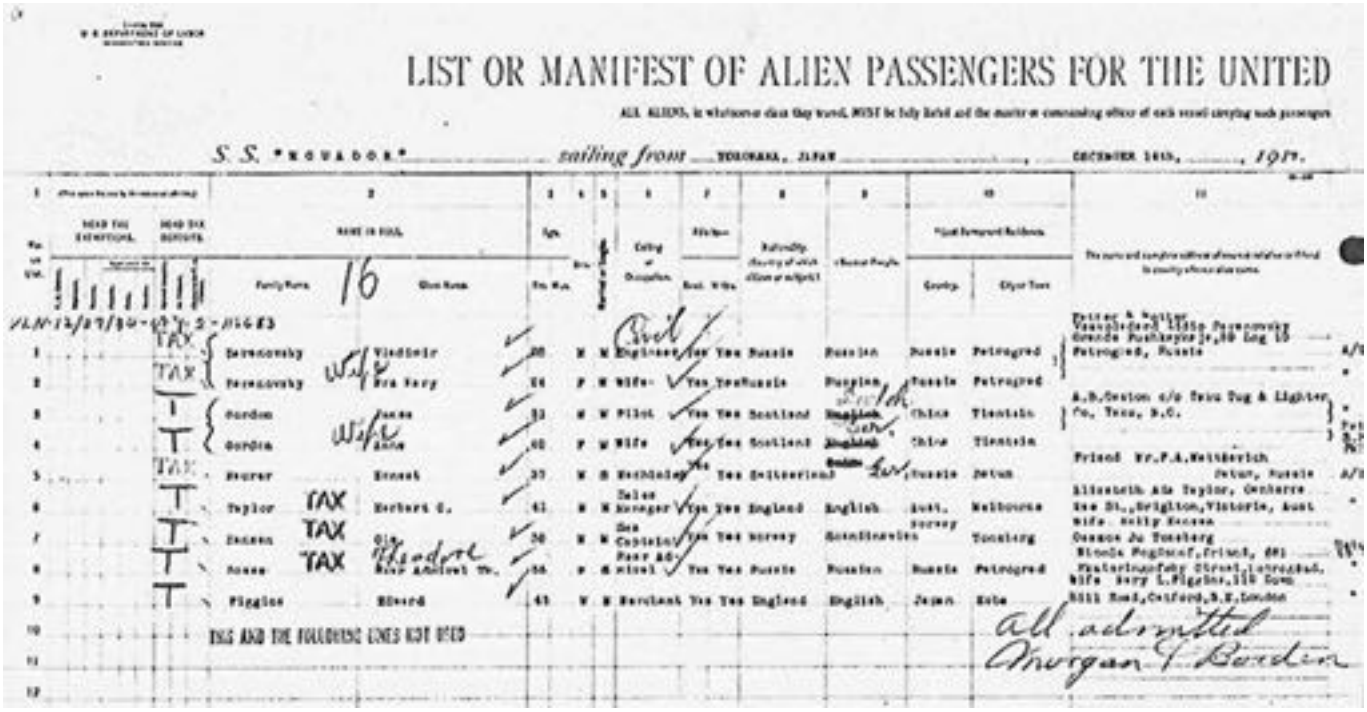
PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP COMPANY

TRANS-PACIFIC SERVICE

SCHEDULE NO. 8

SUBJECT TO CHANGE, OR INDIVIDUAL POSTPONEMENT, WITHOUT NOTICE

DIRECT ROUTE
Between
SAN FRANCISCO—HONOLULU
YOKOHAMA—KOBE—SHANGHAI—
MANILA AND HONGKONG



LIST OR MANIFEST OF ALIEN PASSENGERS FOR THE UNITED

S. S. "ECUADOR" sailing from YOKOHAMA, JAPAN DECEMBER 14th, 1917.

1	TAX	Baranovsky	Vladimir	28	M	W	Engineer	Yes	Yes	Russia	Russian
2	TAX	Baranovsky	Mrs Mary	22	F	W	Wife	Yes	Yes	Russia	Russian
3	T	Gordon	James	33	M	W	Pilot	Yes	Yes	Scotland	English
4	T	Gordon	Wife Annie	40	F	W	Wife	Yes	Yes	Scotland	English
5	TAX	Hurer	Ernest	37	M	S	Mechanic	Yes	Yes	Switzerland	Swiss
6	T	Taylor	TAX Herbert G.	41	M	W	Sales Manager	Yes	Yes	England	English
7	T	Jensen	TAX	50	M	W	Sea Captain	Yes	Yes	Norway	Scandinavian
8	T	Rosse	TAX Rear Admiral Th.	55	M	W	Rear Admiral	Yes	Yes	Russia	Russian
9	T	Figgins	Edward	43	M	W	Merchant	Yes	Yes	England	English
10											
11											
12											

Civil

Wife

Wife

Sailor

Passed Mr.P.A.Weltzevich

All admitted
Morgan T. Borden

The ship's manifest is shown above, visibly double-checked in minute detail which, we may assume, involved a look at official proof of all identities including proof of marriage. We see First Class passengers Mr.Vladimir Baranovsky, 28, and Mrs. Mary Baranovsky, 22 (she became 23 years old on 25 January 1918) and Rear-Admiral Theodore Bosse, 55. Under "Names and addresses of nearest relatives", both Vladimir and Moussia have entered: "Parents: Vsevolod and Lydie Baranovsky", living at the Petrograd address we saw on Vladimir's business card : Grand Puskarshkaya Street 59, apartment 10. In the same column, Bosse has entered the name and address of a friend, Nikolay Bogdanov, a well-known Russian portrait painter of the day.

Above : Vladimir in impeccable English tweed, Moussia and Rear-admiral T. Bosse

The Honolulu Star Bulletin of 26 December 1917, the date the ship left Honolulu for San Francisco, said :

"The Pacific Mail steamer has nearly a hundred cabin passengers in all. A number of these are prominent or wealthy Russians seeking peace in the United States. T. Bosse is a rear admiral of the Russian Navy and V. Baranovsky, a very rich Russian who, with Mrs. Baranovsky and a number of servants, is *en route* to the States for an indefinite stay. All of these Russians said they are not familiar with the English language to comment on the chaotic state of affairs in their native country."

The SS Ecuador arrived in San Francisco on 3rd January 1918, and on 4th January 1918, Vladimir and Moussia gave the press conference cited in the first chapter of this book.

During the five months thereafter, the two continued to be closely followed by the press. But first Moussia had to be admitted to a clinic because of the kidney illness she had picked up during the long journey from St. Petersburg.

On 28 April 1918, the *San Francisco Examiner* reported:

"Mme. Baranovsky, who was a patient at one of the sanatoriums for the past several weeks, has been taken to her home and is recuperating fast. Mr. Baranovsky is the brother-in-law of the former leader, Kerensky. Mme. Baranovsky is a particularly handsome young woman and from her striking resemblance to one of the daughters of the former czar of Russia, was mistaken for the Grand Duchess Tatiana. Mr. and Mrs. Baranovsky were frequently seen about town with admiral Bosse, with whom they crossed the Pacific. This officer was at the head of the Russian Navy and was the friend and advisor of the czar for years, and this fact exaggerated the rumour of the attractive young woman's identity. She, however, merely smiles at the idea and says very complimentary things about the young daughter of the czar whom she knows very well."

During the First World War, the United States Government held various draft registrations. The first, on June 5, 1917, was for all men between the ages of 21 and 31. The second was held from 5 June 1918 onwards, to register those who attained the age of 21 after 5 June 1917 and those who had entered the country since then. Supplemental registrations were held in August and September, when the age range was widened to 18-45 years. Vladimir was registered on 11 June 1918 and his draft card offers some very interesting facts:

REGISTRATION CARD No. 766

1. Vladimir Baranovsky 29
2. Stanford Court Apt Powell & Californ
3. June 5 1889
4. Alien
5. Omsk Siberia Russia
6. Russia
7. Engineer
8. Himself
   Where employed? 160 Spear St
9. Wife
10. Married White
11. ✓ ✓
12. Yes Alien

I affirm that I have verified above answers and that they are true.

2784 Vladimir Baranovsky

REGISTRAR'S REPORT 4-1-24.A

1. Tall
2. Color of eyes? Grey Color of hair? Brown Bald? No
3. No

I certify that my answers are true, that the person registered has read his own answers, that I have witnessed his signature, and that all of his answers of which I have knowledge are true, except as follows:

President 33
City or County San Francisco
State Cal
6/11/18

LOCAL EXEMPTION BOARD No. 17
Appraisers Bldg.,
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

On 11 June 1918, Vladimir and his wife lived at the posh Stanford Court Apartments in San Francisco, see below. His profession is 'Engineer' and his work address is 160, Spear Street. He gets exemption from the draft, no doubt because he is an "Alien".

2 Vsevolod, Lydie, Elena and Olga, Sviatoslav and four small grandchildren escape to Constantinople then to France

At the end of 1917, after Vladimir and Moussia had gone East, on their way to the United States of America, his parents also left Petrograd. They went South. In 1918, the group had become larger and consisted of Vsevolod ("Volia") and Lydie), his sister Olga ("Olia") and her little daughter Elena Soumarokova (4), his sister Elena ("Lilia"), now a medical doctor, and her two small children Vsevolod Birukoff ("Olik", 4) and Irina Kerensky ("Irinoushka", just born). His brother Sviatoslav ("Tossia") was fighting with the White Army and could not yet join them (his wife Klaudia Serdiuk and their small daughter Lydie had gone to Helsingfors). Vera, the elder sister of Vladimir, was a well-known actress in Moscow and stayed behind.

The story of this flight was later told by Olga to her daughter Elena, who filled three notebooks with her accounts. Later, Ariane, the daughter of Elena so Olga's grandchild, used these notebooks as a basis for her Russian novel: "Éternels Émigrés", which was translated into French by André Birukoff, the son of Vsevolod Birukoff. Thanks to all these people, the heroics of this journey have been preserved.

Since June 2017, André Birukoff has made translations of a number of documents left to him by his grandmother Elena Birukoff. They have proved to be a significant additional source of information, in particular because some of the dates are more precise than in the novel of Ariane.

I have placed excerpts of Ariane's novel translated to English, between marks of quotation.

The first to flee were Vsevolod, Lydie and their grandchild Olik. They went to Ekaterinodar by train. Ekaterinodar, today called Krasnodar, is situated near to the Black Sea. They passed New Year's Eve 1917/1918 with friends ('the Roudakov'). The Bolsheviks came and Vsevolod had to go in hiding. In June they went to nearby Novorossisk and in August to Kharkov. They lived with Vera in Kharkov for a month, waiting for Elena and her new baby to arrive, then they joined Vsevolod in Anapa on the coast of the Black Sea in November 1918.

In the meantime, in Vladimir's apartment in Petrograd, Elena had given birth to Alexander Kerensky's child on 12.1.1918.

Quoting from Emigrés Eternels :

"We flee from the bolsheviks, Olik hugs his teddy bear and yells desperately. A soldier wants to take his teddy bear. Olik shouts louder. The soldier searches our affairs. – 'Just rags, though they are bourgeois', he grumbles. He takes nothing and leaves.

Rich bourgeois, we were not! During his whole life, my grandfather had had appointments which had allowed him to live conveniently. But the apartments were rented."

"The soldier had missed a good opportunity. My grandmother had sown all our riches, rings, baptism crucifixes, medals, brooches, jewellery, in Olik's teddy bear and had told him to yell if someone tried to steal his bear."

" I remember vaguely that in between offensives and retreats, in the hope that finally the White Armies would win, we have stayed in Ekaterinodar, in a maisonnette, its proprietor was very disagreeable. His nasty dog spent his days barking at everyone. We could not change apartments, there were many refugees and the proprietors profited of that situation to the maximum. We lived of the fees of mother (Olga). She played at the theatre of Ekaterinodar (Krasnodar), run by artists from all over the country….

In 1919, Elena received moving letters from her husband Nicolas Birukoff, in Odessa. He started to send her money but this came to a halt in June 1919 when, from jail, he wrote her a letter of goodbye prior to his execution by the Bolsheviks. This correspondence is included in this book in full, in chapter V-6. When Elena received word of his execution, she left for Odessa immediately, leaving her children with her parents.

"Then, auntie Lilia left us. Her husband Nicolas Birukoff, the youngest general of the family, had been shot by the Reds. A friend had told us and my aunt, having left her small children with my grandmother, left in haste to Odessa to find the body of her husband and to have him buried decently."

"In the hotel [at Anapa] , in the middle of parcels and bags, my grandmother, for the first time in her life, shouted to my grandfather that we should NOT take a boat out before Elena had come back. But he, for the first time too, did not listen to her and took us all to the quay. Without aunt Lilia, without aunt Vera who stayed in Moscow for her acting career, without uncle Tossia who was with the White Army in retreat. What had happened to aunt Lilia in Odessa? Nobody knew. My grandfather took the decision:

- "We have to think of the children first. "

In Lydie's 'black notebook' she wrote :

1919

- We celebrated New Year at Anapa … Tossia with Klavdia and Lydie have joined us in 1919.
- We have learned that Nicolas Pavlovitch has been shot and Lilia has left for Odessa. Olik stayed with us. Irène is with Olya. We have moved to a monastery…
- 1920
  We have celebrated New Year at the monastery … at Ekaterinodar with Korolioubov who had just arrived and we have left with him to Novorossisk and from there in March on the boat « Anatoli Moltchanov » to the Crimée'. Papa fell ill ….then he recovered and we have left for Antigone, via to Constantinople…Then in a Greek monastery.

There are small but insignificant differences in detail and dates between Lydie's note book and Ariane's novel.

"I remember how we left the boat [in Constantinople]. Long rows of people descended along wooden planks . My grandfather had said that there was no more need to hurry and we walked down last, he was in front, very big, in civilian clothes, staggering under the weight of two suitcases and a rucksack. Behind him grandmother with Irinouchka in her arms. Irinouchka was exhausted, she clung to the neck of her grandmother, with her small head with the curly hair pressed to her shoulder. Behind her came Olik, walking sideways like a crab to avoid slipping, pulling a sac of toys behind him. My mother [Olga] was the last. With a suitcase in one hand and me under her other arm. I was 5 and a half years old." [so this happened in early 1920, Irina was about two years old]

"The first months have left no impression on me. Apparently, we stayed at home almost all the time, if you can call 'at home' an immense hall in an empty and deserted palace, provided to part of the refugees. Close together, separated as well as possible by blankets and sheets hung on cords, some hundreds of Russian families stayed here. It was the autumn of 1920."

"Grandmother prayed all the time. She asked God to perform a miracle and guide her to her children left in Russia. She moved her lips incessantly, her eyes fixed onto the icon resting on her pillow, crossing herself, pressing two fingers against her forehead, her breast and her shoulders. Our grandmother was big and strong. We loved to sit on her lap and smell the perfume she always put on her dress. During all those endless nights, my mother was sitting on the edge of the bed, immobile, looking straight ahead. If I got close to her, she would shiver as if she was waking up, and take me in her arms pressing her lips against my temple.
And God did perform a miracle. Uncle Tossia arrived with the last ship, in February [1921, in the meantime, he had sent his wife and daughter to Finland]. By his arrival, it was not necessary anymore to sell the wedding ring of my grandmother. Uncle Tossia found work in a Russian restaurant where he washed dishes ensuring us of a minimum income for some time to come." The family then moved to Antigone, an island off the Turkish coast.
Mother Lydie wrote in her black notebook :
1921

- We have celebrated New Year at Antigone with Papa. We slept with him in a large room overlooking the sea. We arrived in February. On 28 February 1921 he caught a cold. He was ill from the 1th to 17th March and on 17th March he died at 6H40 in the evening.
- In the month of July we have put his body in a zinc coffin and a cave was made.

- Lilia arrived on the 20 March 1921 and sometime later I became ill …Ariane's novel : "By the end of the month, grandfather caught pneumonia. … Then he was transported to the hospital but it proved to be impossible to save him. Numerous persons came to the cemetery for the burial of General Vsevolod Baranovsky. There were many military people. They came to my grandmother, saying some words of comfort, clicking their heels, leaving her for the next one to come. Grandmother, very pale, managed to say some kind words both to those she knew and

those she did not. As if it was not her who had to be comforted but the others."

Vsevolod on his death bed

Inscription on the back : '6/19 March 1921, before going to the cemetery' (old/new calendar)
This picture came from San Francisco, from *Natasha Borovsky's* archives inherited from her mother Moussia (via Stuart Dodds).

The Turkish Government did not allow a salvo of honour, so when at home, Sviatoslav fired a shot from his revolver.

"From then onwards, grandmother became the Head of the family. Always calm, even-tempered, she never raised her voice. She always wore her husband's General insignia on her collar. She accompanied us through the storms and adversities of the first years of emigration. The only worry she had was that after our departure from Turkey , she could not visit the grave of her husband, to put fresh flowers there and clean the inscription on the wooden cross. Years later, when we were in Paris, a friend went to Constantinople to look at the graves of friends. He told us that the Greek cemetery where grandfather was buried did not exist anymore. It was bulldozered. A motorway passed over the spot."

"In the sea of Marmora, there are some small islands, called the Prince islands. The third largest is called Burgazada, meaning Fortress Island, in Greek : Antigone). In the spring of 1921, the Turkish authorities decided to move Russian refugee families from Constantinople to Antigone. There was an abandoned Greek monastery on that island and that is where the refugees were moved. Two weeks after their arrival, aunt Elena joined them, she had managed to find them. It is difficult to remember all aunt Elena's stories. Anyhow, she had managed to find the burial place of her husband, given a baptism cross to a tramp who then helped her to dig up the remains of her husband Nicolas Birukoff, shot by the Reds. She organized a mass in a small church close to Odessa and gave her husband a proper burial. How did she know that we had gone to Turkey ? She had passed the border with Roumania. In Roumania she had contacted the French mission who helped her to go to Constantinople. She was cool and determined. She went to work on the mainland immediately. Elena, Tossia and Olga went to work in mainland Turkey every day, by boat, coming back late in the evening.

Olik and Irina, ± 1921

Uncle Tossia wrote to the parents of his wife in Finland [his wife had disappeared mysteriously]. All they could do was to send his 5-year-old daughter, Lydie, to us by *mail*, via Poland and Roumania. The little girl said : "Grandmother, I have arrived, please take care of me." [this happened in April, 1922]

The family have lived two years on Antigone, end 1920- end 1922, then they were forced to go back to Constantinople, where they stayed until the end of 1923. It had then become clear that the White Armies had lost and that there was no way back to Russia. They decided to go to France.

Lydie's Black Book :

1922

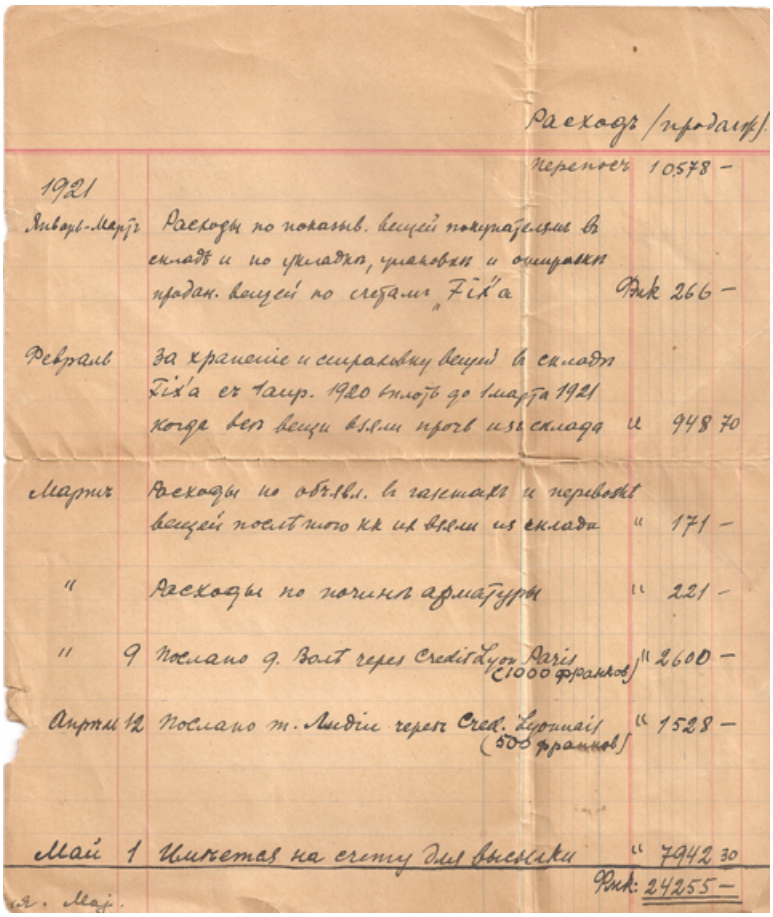
- We celebrated New Year at Antigone and we have also passed the summer there. At the end of 1922 (in the fall) we moved to a home in Constantinople

1923

- We have celebrated the New Year in …… and then moved to another home near the Bosporus. We have a large room there where we live all of us together. And in the fall, in September, me, Tossia and Lydie who had arrived from Poland some time before, have left for France where we stopped in Marseille. I worked in the shop of Mouradsaid.

It is clear that there were enormous financial problems. It is unlikely that since their departure from Petrograd and at any rate their departure to Turkey, Vsevolod was still receiving his pension. Between Elena's papers, hand written spread sheets were found in July 2017. They were made by "Mai", the daughter of Peter Baranovsky, the son of Vladimir Stepanovich, in Helsingfors, Finland, where the last apartment of Vsevolod and Lydie was located. They are shown, specified in full, in Annexes 1 and 2. They show that all furniture was put in storage in 1917 and was successively sold by Mai, the proceeds being sent to Vsevolod and to Lydie after her husband's death. The final total for articles sold amounted to 24,255 roubles.
As of 1 May 1921, 12,952 roubles had already been sent and 7,942 roubles were still awaiting despatch to Lydie. Costs of storage, insurance, advertisements et cetera amounted to 3,361 roubles.

As an example, page 4 of the spreadsheets is shown below



Расходы /продолж/

		Перенос		10578 –
1921				
Январь-Март	Расходы по показыв. вещей покупателям в складе и по укладке, упаковке и отправке продан. вещей по следам „Fix"a		Фрк	266 –
Февраль	За хранение и страховку вещей в складе Fix'a от 1 янв. 1920 вплоть до 1 марта 1921 когда все вещи взяли прочь из склада		"	948 70
Март	Расходы по объявл. в газетах и перевозке вещей после того как их взяли из склада		"	171 –
"	Расходы по починке арматуры		"	221 –
" 9	Послано г. Вольт через Credit Lyon Paris (1000 франков)		"	2600 –
Апрель 12	Послано т. Лидии через Cred. Lyonnais (500 франков)		"	1528 –
Май 1	Имеется на счету для высылки		"	7942 30
			Фрк:	24255 –

м. Maj.

3 Why did Vladimir go to the U.S.A. and why did he go underground there?

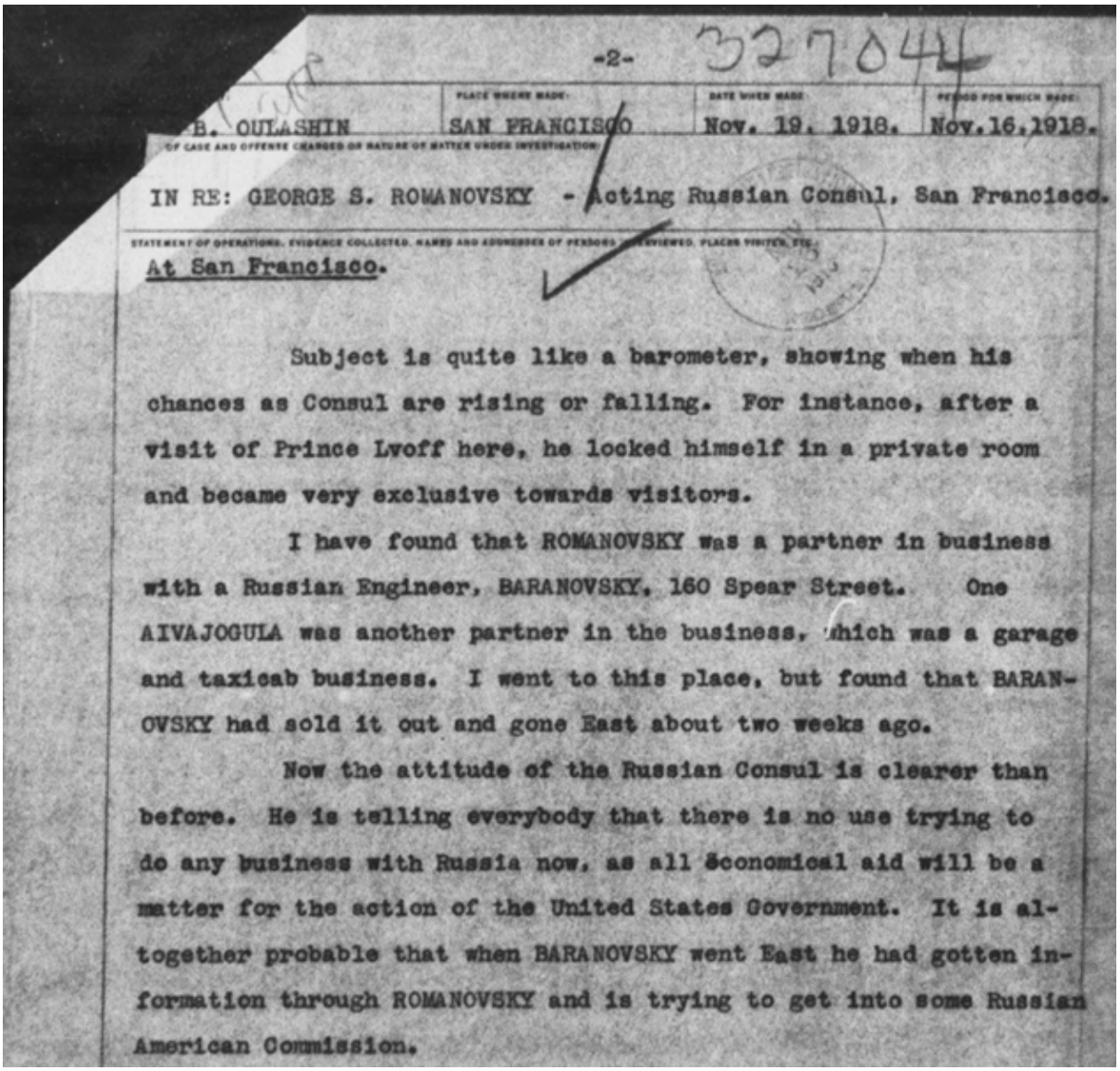
As will be discussed later, in chapter VII-1 and VII-2, Vladimir and Moussia started their life in the USA in a grandiose manner, living in expensive housing, attending grandiose parties, buying a grandiose car, in brief : by spending lots of money on a daily basis. However, this life soon came to an end, already in 1918. Moussia moved to Los Angeles and tried to become an actress. and Vladimir disappeared altogether and came to the surface in Chicago under the name of Barstow. Until July 2017, the most likely interpretation was the one given in the family of Vladimir's later wife Fern Scull :

- In 1919, Moussia and Vladimir decided to split, through a 'Mexican divorce' (it was said, but this did not happen. In fact one may ask if it happened at all, that is to say : formally…)
- In 1919/1920, Moussia had moved to Los Angeles to pursue a career in the theatre and Vladimir had gone back to Russia to 'save his millions' but he had come back without them.
- Fern talked of Vladimir's return from Russia in 1920 : "and the foreman of his factory, of one his factories in Russia had been given 100 000 dollars to run a factory and then later on Vladimir sent him ten thousand to maintain himself, so [still later] he wrote a letter to the man asking for some money and he said do you remember I sent you ten thousand, and the man said "oh that was another account"… so Vladimir became a dishwasher "
- After that , he started to work on a train to Chicago and he changed his name to Barstow.

But there was one more solid piece of evidence, never understood until July 2017. On the internet, I found in 2012 a declassified investigation report of an FBI agent on the subject of the former Russian consul in San Francisco, George Romanovsky.

In the period 27 August – 29 November 1918, the Acting Consul George Romanovsky in San Francisco, often seen in the company of Moussia and Vladimir earlier that year, was visited frequently by an FBI agent, E.B. Oulashin. I have found eight of his visiting reports, now declassified. It is clear from these reports that at that time, Romanovsky was an informant of the FBI, keeping an eye on Bolshevik infiltrators in

the San Francisco scene, including trade unions. The FBI agent does not trust him and suspects he will change allegiance very easily if and when required.



-2- 327044

	PLACE WHERE MADE:	DATE WHEN MADE:	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE:
B. OULASHIN	SAN FRANCISCO	Nov. 19, 1918.	Nov.16,1918.

OF CASE AND OFFENSE CHARGED OR NATURE OF MATTER UNDER INVESTIGATION:

IN RE: GEORGE S. ROMANOVSKY - Acting Russian Consul, San Francisco.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS, EVIDENCE COLLECTED, NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED, PLACES VISITED, ETC.:

At San Francisco.

Subject is quite like a barometer, showing when his chances as Consul are rising or falling. For instance, after a visit of Prince Lvoff here, he locked himself in a private room and became very exclusive towards visitors.

I have found that ROMANOVSKY was a partner in business with a Russian Engineer, BARANOVSKY, 160 Spear Street. One AIVAJOGULA was another partner in the business, which was a garage and taxicab business. I went to this place, but found that BARANOVSKY had sold it out and gone East about two weeks ago.

Now the attitude of the Russian Consul is clearer than before. He is telling everybody that there is no use trying to do any business with Russia now, as all economical aid will be a matter for the action of the United States Government. It is altogether probable that when BARANOVSKY went East he had gotten information through ROMANOVSKY and is trying to get into some Russian American Commission.

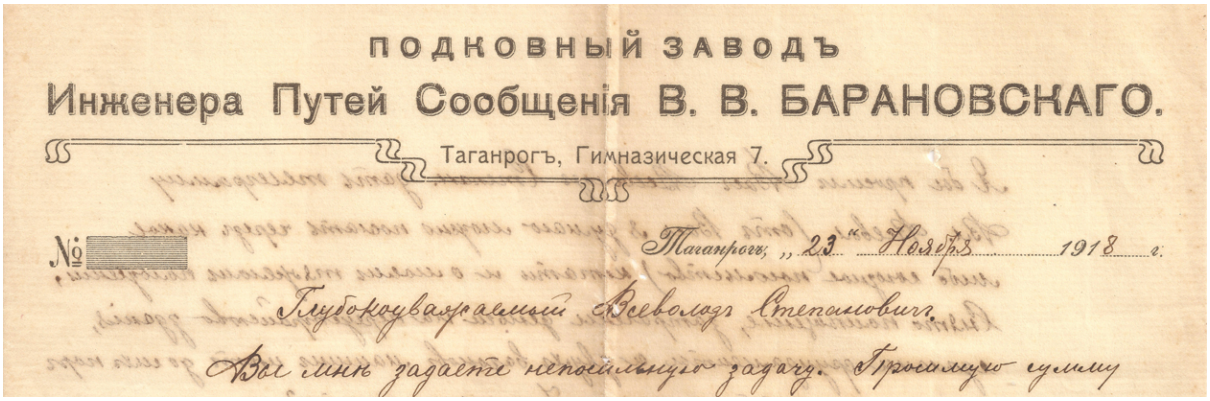
In his report on a visit to Romanovsky, made on 19 November 1918, Oulashin writes:

"I have found that Romanovsky was a partner in business with a Russian engineer, Baranovsky, 160 Spear Street. One Aivajogula [Ivan Jogula ?} was another partner in that business, which is a garage and taxicab business. I went to this place, but I found out that Baranovsky had sold it out and gone East about two weeks ago. Now the attitude of the Russian Consul is clearer than before. He is telling everybody that there is no use trying to do any business with Russia now, as all economical aid will be a matter for the action of the

United States Government. It is altogether probable that when Baranovsky went East he had got information through Romanovsky and is trying to get into some Russian American Commission"

What was this about ?? Who is Aivajogula ? Ivan is pronounced Aivan in Américan – but Jogula ?

In July, 2017, André Birukoff found the following letter, to Vladimir's father from a man V.I. Kourtov between the papers left by his grandmother :


ПОДКОВНЫЙ ЗАВОДЪ
Инженера Путей Сообщенія В. В. БАРАНОВСКАГО.
Таганрогъ, Гимназическая 7.
№
Таганрогъ, „23" Ноября 1918 г.
Глубокоуважаемый Всеволодъ Степановичъ.
Вы мнѣ задаете неразрѣшимую задачу. Прошлую сумму

HORSESHOE FACTORY
of
Engineer Ways of Communications
V.V. BARANOVSKY
Taganrog, Guimnasitcheskaya 7

Taganrog, 23 November 1918

Cher Vsevolod Stepanovich,

You raise an insoluble problem with me. Here at Taganrog, I cannot find the sum you request from me. Of all the money left behind by Vladimir for the business, I have very little left. In fact, one year has passed and the costs are enormous. I have not been able to buy the factory and I have rented it for 5 years, in a way that the question of the mortgage has become irrelevant and it is impossible to pawn the machines because nobody wants to give anything for them because two wagons full are missing so the package is not complete and it is impossible to put them to work. Believe me Vsevolod Stepanovich, I

understand perfectly well that your situation is difficult in as far as, even before receiving your request, I have sent, as soon as it was possible, P. Ia. à Ekaterinodar with 5000 roubles.

Now I only have crumbs and I have employees with me who came with me from Petrograd and whom I have not been able to dismiss. Moreover, I continue hope to receive the 2 wagons of machines but how to pay for them ?

And I do not even talk of myself because, as the cost of living has become very high, living in two houses has forced me to sell the house at Tchernigov. What is going to happen now ? I do not know. The only hope is to go to Petrograd., as soon as an opportunity arises, to try and find money there. And in that case, Vsev.Step., I would consider it to be my duty to help you. Boris Egorov. astonishes me, he had Vl. Vsev. 's money and moreover he was much closer and friendlier with Vladimir. When he left he did not give me any news and he did not leave me with anything though he must have known your predicament.

I would ask you Vsevolod Stepanovich to send a telegram to Vl. Vsevol. (I think that if it comes from you, it will be possible to send it from any allied embassy) telling him also about my very difficult situation : that I was forced to rent a space, that I have spent money to adapt it, that I have made foundations but that I have not yet received two wagons of machines and that money is running out. What should I do now ?

I do not know Vladimir's address since I have not received a word from him since he left. Write to him : « San Francisco Poste Restante ». Vsevolod Stepanovich, as soon as you have received this letter, write to me in detail on the following, please:

Who has picked up the keys of the room where the desk has stayed behind, I have left valuable documents in it and keys, also tell me the address of the person to whom you gave the drawer and, the most important of all, to whom did you give the papers and documents ? Where can I go and collect them ?

As soon as an opportunity presents itself, I'll go to Petrograd straight away and maybe I'll manage to save something from the apartment.

Somehow or other, I'll have to pass there even before Petrograd is liberated from the bolsheviks, but now, even if I would like to do it, I cannot do anything to help you.

My best greetings to your family, my best feelings.

Yours truly,

MV or IV Kourtov

Through that new piece of evidence, Vladimir's real situation in 1918 and the years thereafter become much clearer.

The following conclusions can be drawn with a fair amount of certainty:

- In October 1917, when their protector Kerensky was in great trouble, the family panicked. They were too close to Kerensky for the bolsheviks to accept and they faced certain death. Not only did Vladimir and Moussia leave in haste for Vladivostok, but Vsevolod, his wife Lydie also left, for Ekaterinodar. The partner or foreman of Vladimir's factory was asked to move the factory to Taganrog in the far south of the Ukraine, some 1900 kilometers south of Petrograd. It was disassembled and packed but two train wagons got lost.
- Vladimir took a substantial amount of money with him (the '100 000 dollars' Fern spoke of repeatedly) and left some 100 000 dollars with his partners.
- Vladimir did not give a sign of life, nor did he send his addresses to his family or partners in Russia, although it would have been easy to contact him. They tried many times to send mail via foreign embassies and, as will been shown later, even Elena's husband Nicolas Birukoff sent two letters to Vladimir in 1919, one via the British consulate and the other one via an American trading Agency. But Vladimir, who was closely connected with the Russian consul in San Francisco where any mail or telegrams could well have arrived, did not react.

- Still, he must have been contacted in some way by someone in the fall of 1918 : according to the FBI agent Oulashin he had suddenly sold out his American enterprise around November 1918, he sent his wife Moussia to Los Angeles soon thereafter, moving her with his newly bought car, for the second and last time in December 1919, and then disappeared to Russia. Upon return, he disappeared to Chicago, changing his name to Barstow.

It is now clear why he went underground. His whereabouts had to stay unknown to his Russian business partners whom he had left with a bankrupt company in their hands. It also explains why much later, when contact had been re-established with his family in Paris, he never visited them. There were too many Russians around in Paris who would have recognized and found him.

It is necessary at this stage to explain some more about what followed, because otherwise it would be difficult to tell the full story sequentially.

In 1928, more than 10 years after the flights of the family, Mother Lydie still had no news about her son Vladimir. She and the family lived in difficult circumstances in Paris.

Late in 1925, the Russian Government modified their policies a bit in the sense that they let it be known that famous musicians like Prokofiev, Stratvinsky and Borovsky and other Russian émigré artists would be welcome and that a safe return to the West would be guaranteed in advance.

The three musicians toured Russia in 1927. Moussia accompanied her husband, if only because she wanted to find her beloved younger brother Julian (this visit is told in detail in my story about Moussia . In Leningrad, she even visited her former Apartment 10 at 59, Bolshaya Puskarshkaya Street , the one she had inhabited with Vladimir and where Elena had given birth to Kerensky's daughter Irina, finding her own towels back in the drawers… She must also have seen former friends and acquaintances.

The Borovskys moved to Berlin, for the 1928/29 season, and more permanently the following year. Their move was not surprising. The 1920s were for Berlin their cultural Golden Twenties.

From Berlin, Moussia finally found the whereabouts of her brother Julian and gave an envelope with 150 roubles to Prokoviev to give to Julian during a next trip to Russia in 1928. In his Diaries, Prokofiev wrote :

""*17 November* (in his Moscow hotel): *Maria Viktorovna's brother came to see me in the morning, a handsome young man not without a certain chic. As it was nine o'clock in the morning, I was still in my pyjamas to receive him, before completing my morning toilet. 18 November: People started to arrive in the morning. … Maria Viktorovna's brother came (I gave him 150 roubles from M.V.* ***and stunned him with the news that she had a (new) husband****)."*

So, apparently, Julian was under the impression that Moussia was still married to Vladimir Baranovsky, maybe even wondering whether Vladimir was dead."

Also in 1928, Prometheus – a 'proletarian' film club in Berlin – invited Vladimir's sister Vera to play the leading role in the film "The way of a proletarian". She stayed on to make a few films.
In Mother Lydie's Black Notebook, we recently found the following remarks :
"1928 : On 30th July we have left for Berlin where we have stayed until 1st October. "
On Elena's Carte d'Identité were found many stamps connected with that journey :

So, during two months in the late summer/early autumn of 1928, there was a great reunion between on the one side Lydie, her daughter Elena with her two children, and on the other side Vera and her husband Alexeï Alexeïevich Pavlov.

They must also have met Moussia. Who knew where to find Vladimir, whom she had met in Chicago , and had just moved to New York in 1928. It is not surprising that we found the following notes in Lydie's Black Notebook :

> 1926
> Moussia [at that time still in Paris] has begun to come and see us
> [that must have been the occasion that Lydie gave Vsevolod's photo on his deathbed, and the studiophoto of Lydie, to Moussia]
> 1929
> 14/2 1 septembre, Volodia [Vladimir] has been found back.
> 1930
> We have established a correspondence with Vladimir ; he has started to send money

From then on, Vladimir sent money and presents to his family in Paris, on a regular basis, until his death, but he never came to visit his mother

who died in 1949. Ariane has heard from her mother Elena that Lydie had asked her son Vladimir in a letter what had happened and whereto had he disappeared for so long and that he had replied : “Never ask me that again. It is Fern who has saved me and I owe her my life.”

They were also visited by Olga Kerensky-Baranovsky :

From left to right : Vladimir Moukhine (godfather of Anne-Marie Birukoff. He left for Russia after the war, like Elena Sumarokova, her husband and daughter), Sviatoslav (Tossia), grandmother Lydie, Olga Kerensky. Behind Lydie : her daughter Olga and her husband Gricha Dudinkov.

4 Elena's letters to her parents 1917 -1921

These letters have been found between Elena's papers by André Birukoff, Elena's grandson, who translated them recently into French. In turn, Jan Doets has translated them from French to English.

Elena lives with Alexander Kerensky and is pregnant of his child since about a month. A.F. is Alexander Kerensky

5 May [1917]

My dear all of you ! I thought that César had left a long time ago and had taken my letter. So this one will be my second. With us all goes well. And since A.F. is Minister of War it is still better for papa. At any rate, Koten has told me that you are discouraged and that is not good. I have found you tickets for 29 June for Kislovodsk if you want to leave or earlier if that would better suit A.F.. The 10th he must see the Army so consequently it is not worth the trouble that Papa gets here before the 19-20 because it will be difficult to organize something without A.F.

(unfortunately page two of the letter is missing)

But I do not know when he will be installed. Well, I do not write anymore because I hope to see you soon. I embrace you very firmly.

Your Lilia who loves you

Vsevolod and Lydie have fled South to Ekaterinodar (current name Krasnodar). Elena is in Petrograd and almost 8 months pregnant. Lieutenant Kovanko is Kerensky's former aide. Oliouchok = Olik. Boris Egorovitch is Vladimir's former friend in business who swindles him after the latter's departure for the USA. Vladimir's business is clearly bankrupt. Elena will send a letter to Moussia of whom she well knows that she is about to arrive in Japan.

25 november 1917 № 9

Dear Papa, I wish you happy birthday and a nice name day [Vsevolod was born 26.11.1853 and his name day for Vsevolod is on 27 November] and I wish you

every possible happiness and above all good health. I hope that you will get better soon at Ekaterinodar. How are you ? How did you all settle down , I would like to know it very soon. I am very sad without you. I am very sad above all because I am going to live such a great moment but you will not be with me. But what to do – it is our fate. Today we have gone to town together with Lioussia, I have received my salary and I have taken advantage of it to buy a present for Olik for his name day [also he was called Vsevolod]. I have decided to buy him a present from you as well. I have bought modelling clay for him. I think he will enjoy it and it is a quiet pastime. I have bought blocks for him as my present and an elephant as a present from A.F. . Lioussia has bought a live bullfinch for him. I think he will be happy with his presents.

The maid has left already. Today she suddenly announced that she would not stay. She has picked up her things and pffft. I must say that I do not regret it. I didn't like her. But I'll have a problem finding someone else because the newspapers appear only every other day. In general terms the city is quiet and we are not hungry. I hope that you will not be hungry. Oliouchok eats much too much. Nic. Vl. is still with us but he prepares to leave the 29th. Yesterday I have spoken with Kovanko and he has confirmed to me that the money has been sent half for me, half for the children. However, at the moment one cannot cash it. But it is not the money that I find important but the concern A.F. will have for me. We live quietly and peacefully. Bor. Egor. often comes to see us, but the longer it lasts the more I am convinced that he will swindle Volodia as much as he can. I find him very unpleasant. Moreover, I think he should also flee, this time because of the affairs of the Great Branovsk. The settlement of Volodia's debt is not finished yet and he says every time that he has to give several thousands of roubles to one or another person. Lioussia and Nic. Vl. are flirting. They have gone out to have a walk. I have stayed behind and am chatting with you. Frankly, I am happy when they are not there. They are too cheerful and young for me. So that most of the time I am alone in my room. Mommy, above all do not ask any questions on that subject in a letter. I have excellent relations with Lioussia and she helps me a lot and takes care of me and Olik. Sure enough she is young, in good health and cheerful. But I am hardly like that any longer.

I have not yet sent Moussia's letter yesterday, I'll send it today ! Provided that they are already in Japan. Tossia has not arrived and apparently he will not come at all. The best for him would be to resign, that is easy nowadays. He will always be able to find work. I am surprised that Olya has not yet written! How does she manage over there, with Lenotchka. There you are, we are all in different corners. One day we shall all be together again. My Papa, buy a house in Ekaterinodar, with a garden, a large house, so that we can all get together.

See you soon my loved ones, I am embracing you firmly. Be in good health, write to me often.

Your Lilia

Christmas 1917, at Vladimir's appartment

24/XII 1917 № 23
My dear all of you, here we are at Christmas Eve. We have lit a small Christmas tree for Olik. We did not buy it, it is the one Moussia already had here. I truly had pain in my soul. I have given Olik a book on your behalf. I have not bought any toys, I would not know where to put them. The midwife was here yesterday and she calmed me down. She says that it is out of the question that I carry twins, that she can clearly feel a single child. Maybe because I want it that way, I have more confidence in her than in the doctor. I cannot imagine that, it would be too terrible to have twins. Moreover, my belly is not too big. How could there be room for two children ? So I am now more calm et then we'll see. The holidays are almost there. Together with Lioussia we have finished the work of tidying up and of preparation, and all I have to do now is waiting for the child (or two of them). I think it will arrive very soon. from one day to the other, but the doctor speaks of the 4th, 5th or the 8th of January. I hope it will not be later. It is very uncomfortable. Specially because I do not sleep well. In fact, I do not feel unwell, but it is terribly uncomfortable and heavy. Today, César has come for lunch; he'll come again tomorrow. Boria [Boris] has left for Moscow. I have received 100 roubles from Vera and I am ashamed because she does not have enough money. We are hoarding all the time. We have bought 5p potatoes, 5 p beetroot, 1 p turnip, 5 pots of concentrated milk. I'll buy 5 pots more. We do not touch the ham and the leg of lamb. César has given me 1 pound of semolina and biscuits for Christmas. For me that is a marvellous present because I dream of semolina all the time but I do not want to take Olik's. So, this semolina will be specially for me. N. Vl. has given me two portraits of Al. in magnificent frames. The portraits are wonderful and when I saw them I began to cry. Lioussia has gone to see him. She still goes out every evening, but is is not very far away from us. I do not stay behind alone. Either it is Rosa who stays, or Galia, the seamstress. The nanny will come after New Year, the same one who has already worked for me.

What are you doing for the holidays? We are all scattered. Oliochouk remembers that last year the holidays were much happier. Lenotchka was there and we had invited other children.

Well, my loved ones, I wish you very happy holidays and that God may bring you happiness for the New Year.
I am embracing you very strongly,
Your Lilia

A letter from Elena to her parents from the South. She had gone to Odessa in 1919 to give a decent burial to her husband, shot by the bolcheviks. But she could not go back immediately.
Volodia = Vladimir.

7/II 1921 Akkerman

My very loved ones, I can hardly believe my luck to be able to write to you after a separation of a year. My very loved ones, if you would only know how painful this separation has been for me. After my arrival in Odessa I have become ill with typhus almost immediately. I have stayed in hospital for almost 6 weeks. After I got up, it was impossible to leave and I had to stay. It is only last August that I could go and see Vera in Kharkov and it is she who told me that you have left in April from Novorossisk to Constantinople and that you are living on the Prince Islands. If you would only know how painful that was. I become almost dizzy when I think I could see my Olik and Irinouchka again. My God, how much they will have grown. Irinouchka will surely have forgotten me. But Oliochouk will not have forgotten me ! Is it possible that I 'll see back all of you , safe and sound, papa, maman, Oliouchenka and Lenotchka ? I have passed the frontier last week. It is only now that I fully realize the horrible risk I have taken. But I could not have stayed over there without knowing anything about you and the children.

At the moment I am at Akkerman where they have put me in quarantine, but in a few days I'll leave for Kichinev and from there I am going to manage to obtain a laisser-passer so that I can find you back.

I have finished the medical faculty and I am a doctor now. I have arrived here with Natasha ([family name illegible]. She is going to work in Kichinev, as a doctor.

Have you been able to correspond with Volodia? If you would have money you will maybe send it to me. I have nothing. But if you do not have any money, I'll be able to manage; I'll borrow some from someone, maybe. If you could only understand how much I want to see you. But at least you were all together, while I was alone. I have missed the children so much. You will not be able to

understand. My God, I lost the hope to see them back so often. Oliouchok must have become big and Irinouchka has no doubt changed so much that I'll not recognize her. [illegible line]. Only God knows when I'll be able to get a laisser-passer. [illegible line]. But receiving a letter from you will be an unbelievable happiness, unimaginable. I am not going to tell you my life during this year.

(the letter ends here, unfortunately some pages are missing)

5 A letter from Elena to Alexander Kerensky dated 1 and 7 January 1919

A love letter to Alexander Kerensky, probably never sent. It is dated 1st and 7th January 1919 and was written during the flight of the family, then staying temporarily in Anapa on the coast of the Black Sea. It is dated about a year after Kerensky had seen their just-born baby Irina in Petrograd, where he was hiding for the Bolsheviks.

Elena's lines about Kerensky's wife Olga match with what Olga Kerensky wrote herself, many years later (chapter V-8)

"1 January 1919 Anapa. Kouban region.
One o'clock in the morning.

My only love, I wish you happiness for the New Year. In my thoughts I am with you, all the time. Today like always. A small opportunity has come about, very uncertain still, to send you our news. We have been separated for so long. It seems that I have not seen you since an eternity. I have lived through so many nightmares end horrors, when I think about them, my heart freezes. We are alive and well, we are unharmed !

*I left Saint-Petersburg on the 23rd of October [**1918,** new calendar]. Olya [Olga, Kerensky's wife] was there with the children, they are all healthy and safe, they are well. She lives with Vladimir (her brother). She had not found work, she was short of everything, but do not worry. All your friends – her friends – help her and her children. She has suffered very much in Oust Sisolsk (Syktivar) where she was kept as a hostage together with M.B. [her mother Marya Vassilievna Baranowsky]. Thereafter, they have transferred her to Moscow, then they have let her go wherever she wanted. That is all I know about them… During 16 days we have endured the horrors of the bombardments on Yaroslav. Then Yaroslav was taken by the Bolsheviks.*

Olya [Elena's sister] was condemned to death. She fled. I stayed behind with three children [her son Vsevolod=Olik". her daughter Irina, and Elena, Olga's daughter]. Irinouchka had caught some kind of cholera. Then I could not support the horrors of house searches any longer and expected to be arrested any day (what would have happened to the children), so also I fled with the children. I have marched 28 versts with Irina in my arms. Terrible memory. In Petrograd

we were hungry. Vladimir's apartment has been searched [Vladimir, Elena's brother].
I have secretly sold some of my things and I have left. I have had to suffer horrors at the border [border between the Red and the White armies]. I have been searched, undressed, insulted.

Now, there is silence and calm. We are at Anapa. Irinouchka has grown. She walks since 2 7th December. She says a few words : «maman», «papa», «dada» (grandfather), «baba». She is an adorable and charming little girl. Everyone loves her very much. I think she resembles you. But sometimes I think she is exactly like me. She loves me. She is doing well here. But in Petrograd it was terrible and she was exhausted when she arrived at Kharkov where we lived for one month. We caught the Spanish flu , with complications in the lungs.

I can hardly talk of myself, it is very tough. In fact I do not even know where you are ? Where are you ? Do you still belong to me ? Do you love me ? Remember that even if you would come back to me years from now, you will see the same love in me as a year ago when I saw you back for the first time after the birth of Irina. This night I have thought about you all the time, as you were then – your face, your beard. I continued to write letters to you. I have kept them all. If we ever meet again, you can read them all ! At this very moment I think of you so intensely that I have the idea that I see you and that you feel it, right ? Well, good night my little one, my dearest, my love.

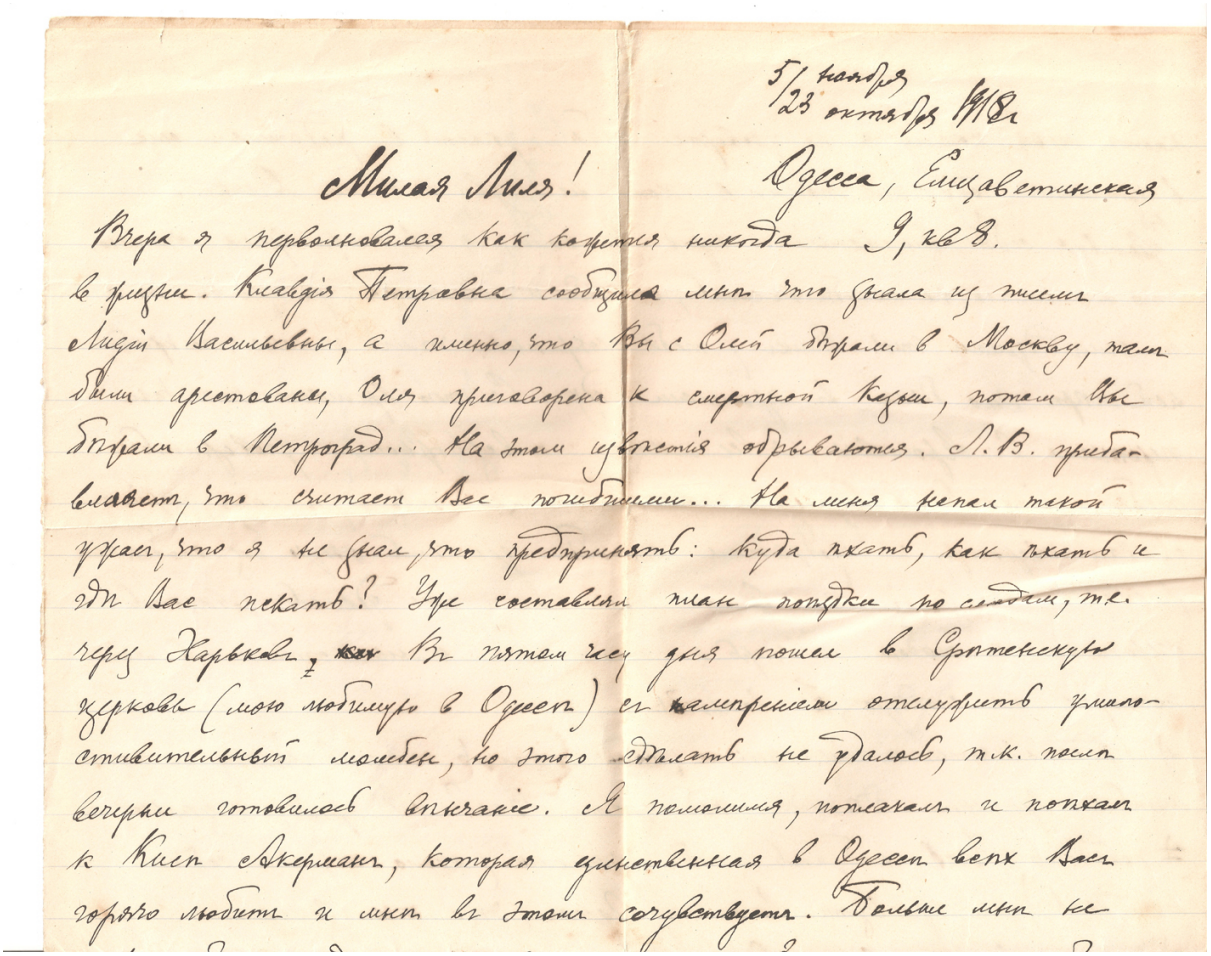
A kiss – your L.

Addition of 7th January ***(1919)***
Today two years ago we met at Saint Petersburg. Today I am going to send you this letter. I wish passionately that you will receive it. Let me know by telegram or letter where you are and what has happened to you. Then I'll have at least the hope that I'll have news from you. I'll wait for it impatiently. I will not be able to write any longer. Moreover, what could I write to you ? From now on my life will be monotonous, boring. Au revoir, my only happiness, that God may be with you.
Wholly yours, L. "

6 The letters from Nicolas Birukoff to his wife Elena Vsevolodna Birukoff-Baranovsky, of 5 November 1918, 27th February 1919, 17 March 1919 (two versions), 20 and 23 March 1919 and 28 June 1919 (the last one written just prior to his execution), plus a letter to his son Olik, a newspaper announcement of his burial with a curriculum vitae, and a statement of the White Army.

The letters from Nicolas Birukoff are those of a very dignified man who has never stopped to deeply love his wife. It may well be that these letters have profoundly influenced Elena for the rest of her life.

This is Nicolas' first letter to his wife Elena since the Revolution. After an initial confusion about her whereabouts, he has finally found her at Anapa, with her parents. He wants to come to Anapa and join her or live close to her.



5 November 1918
(23 October old style)
Odessa, Elizavetinskaia 9 appt 8

My dear Lilia,

Yesterday, I worried about you like never before. Clavdia Petrovna [the wife of Sviatoslav = Tossia] told me that she had learned from letters written by Lydie Vassilievna that you and Olga had fled to Moscow where you had been arrested, that Olya was condemned to death and that then the two of you had fled to Petrograd… no news thereafter. L.V. thinks that you are dead… that shocked me so much that I did not know any longer what to do…where to go, how to go there and where to look for you ? I started to work out a plan to follow your traces going via Kharkov. At 5 o'clock I have gone to the Sretenskaia church (the one I like the most at Odessa) with the idea of asking for a mass to be said, to implore God for his help, but without success because a marriage was planned to take place after the vespers. I have prayed for a moment, I have cried and I have gone to Kissia Akerman, the only one in Odessa who knows you, loves you and feels sorry for you. I had no one else with whom to share my

anguish. I found her; she was concerned, just as much as I was, because this news did not correspond at all with what we had heard from Vera Vsevelodna via E.M. Belikov, namely that you, you and Olya, are in Yaroslav (this having been said in October). From Kissia I tried to go to mass, but as the schedule had changed I have gone home. I found a postcard which Tossia had brought in my absence. On this card, L.V. wrote that she had received a postcard from Gomel, saying that you were alive and well and on the way to Kharkov. I felt better straight away. But at the same time, many assumptions and questions remained unresolved. How much had you suffered ? How could the children stand all this? How did you manage, with two small children and Irinouschka who is still just an infant ? What is going to happen now ? How are you going to live at Anapa ? Etc. All these questions worry me and I do not manage to relax. Clavdia reproaches me that I was unable to convince you to join your parents already last year, and that I have not taken Olik with me, at least. But, even if I feel guilty towards Olik, I also think that I could not have done anything for him even if I had tried and moreover I think he is safer with you than with me. Since you have left for Yaroslav I have continued to dream of the possibility to convince you to come to Odessa and without waiting for your decision I have rented an apartment and imagined methods to go ahead and do it while avoiding excessive expenses. But all that time I did not manage to be in written contact with you. So, now I am asking you to send me your answers to the following questions as soon as possible :

1. *Is it possible for me to come to Anapa and to live somewhere near to you ? Then I could come and see you and give you money (at this moment I could give you 1000 roubles and bring stuff which you may need.)*
2. *How are you and Olik ?*
3. *If you would feel that my visit would be useless, tell me at least what has happened to you and how all of you managed to overcome these worries*

I shall probably come to Anapa by sea and I could stay two weeks at the most if I am not to lose my job.
A great big hug to Olik and you. My friendship to L.V., V.S. and Olya.
Your N.B.
6 november. The post office refused my letter. I am sending it by an intermediary who travels to Ekaterinodar and will post it there.
N.B.

Nicolas was on his way to Elena when he got stuck in Yalta and had to return. He has sent money.

28 December 1918
10 January 1919 (new style)
Yalta

Dearest Lilia,

On the way to see you and having been stuck at Yalta awaiting a boat for 5 days, I have decided to return to Odessa because I fear that a real mess could occur if I would be definitely blocked somewhere along the route, or at Anapa, and that after having brought 2000 roubles to you, I would lose my job because they are not going to wait for me forever and will fire me.

That is why I have decided to send you 1500 roubles from here, hoping that they will accept it and will give me a receipt. Although, as you have not given me any news, you have prevented me to send you anything, I have adressed the money transfer to Vsevolod Stepanovich so that he can give it to you. ***I do not send it to you directly because I do not know under which name you live and that it is entirely possible that you have managed to leave Russia with another passport****.*[1] *It is not possible to send packages to Anapa and that is why I must take to Odessa all products (tea, sugar,candles, etc) which I have accumulated since the month of August. I am going to ask Tossia to take days off and take more money to you, and products and things. In fact I have not been able to take days off and I have had to slip away on the quiet, reckoning that I could stay with you 3 to 5 days depending on the boats, but I remained stuck here 5 days so I could not stay any longer. I have taken along your latest letter in which you promise to give the news about you and Olik, to remind you of your promise. Reply at least, for the love of God, to this letter ! If you do not which to address your letter to D.P., address it to Klavdia Petrovna.*

I have left Odessa just like that, and it was only the evening before my departure that I heard from the Baranowsky that you had already arrived in Anapa. Before my departure, I have looked for Natalia Parfimskaya to ask her to look for an apartment in Odessa in case you would wish to come here. Judging by the geography, the dryness in Anapa is terrible, a climate which you nor the children can feel fit.
I brought you letters, postcards and regards, amongst others from the Dorogoï. Ninotchka continues to call you Lilia-the-beauty. If they refuse to send a receipt to Odessa, the sender of the money transfer will not be me but N.I. Pykhteev,

[1] It is obvious that even Nicolas Birukoff thought that Elena could have married Kerensky.

who is related to the wife of Paul Pavlovich. Vsevolod Stepanovich should recognize him because he has played cards with him in Kazan. He lives at Yalta at the moment. I brought you money, in small notes and in « nicolas » which are the most useful at the moment and some coupons valid at your end. I do not know what they will give you. If Tossia will go, I'll give him things to take. Write to me what you miss most. I brought you leather for a pair of shoes, a pair of ankle boots, satin for a shirt or a blouse, some fine tissue, tissue for a coat or a jacket, soldier's tissue for a sheet, tea, sugar, candles, cacao, coffee and other small things. Should I send any crockery ? A samovar for example or a kettle, a coffee pot ? Books ? You live in a hole, there is nothing there ! Still, I could not come before next spring (in April, for example). Do you need medical drugs ? I embrace you firmly. Write to me please, something at least. N.B.

Nicolas has received three letters from Elena. He would like to come to Anapa at Easter. He will send more money. He describes his temporary jobs. He has sent two letters from Elena to Vladimir in the United States of America, and written a letter himself to Vladimir, too. He tries to convince Elena to come and live in Odessa, so that she can finish her studies there. A very loving letter.

27 February 1919
Odessa

Darling Lilia.
This week I have received three letters from you, they came one after the other : one of 1st December with another letter from Kharkov, of 7 January and of 20 January with a letter for Natacha Porjivskaia. I am replying to all of them at the same time.

I hope to come and see you at Easter. But I am not sure yet, because I might be asked to join the Volonteer Army at any moment. I think myself that I should join and if I have not done so yet until now, it is because I am so worried about the insecurity of my family in case I should die. That is why I have looked for work in order to gain a sum of money, however small, before joining the Army. I am still far from reaching my target, but even so it is not bad. Even if life is very expensive, I have been able to amass more than 3000 roubles and if I would not have been robbed once more after my return from Yalta (my bag with my belongings and my shares), I would now have had 4000 roubles. Yesterday, I have sent you 1000 roubles and I'll send the same amount in a month from now. If the situation of your parents would not have been so serious I would only have sent you 500 roubles and I would have continued to save. Until now you have not yet answered one question I have asked you in all my letters : <u>have</u>

you received my three cheques on the Voljsko-Kamskaia bank? One of them was a blank cheque so that you could withdraw the total sum of money in case of need. Did you make the withdrawal or not ?

At the moment, I work as a controller in the Expedition of Storing State Papers [Russia's official money printer]. That work allows me to eat. For my family and for saving money I have second jobs :
1) English courses and translations
2) odd jobs like photo shoots, typing, security guard of food transports.

When I am not on call at Expedition, which only happens rarely nowadays – two or three times a week – I manage to go to 60 versts from Odessa to get products. They pay me 100 roubles a day for that. But sometimes I also have to do hard labour – carry sacs with flour, take care of the horses, sleep out in the open with my product transport, etc.

I have not managed to see Natacha Porjenskaya : she has left for Bender where your letter will be sent. I see Kissa Ackerman only once in a while. She has told me that she has received two letters from Olia. I have sent your letters for Vladimir to America and I think he'll receive them soon, in particular the first one, the one I have sent with someone of the Russo-American chamber of commerce ; from England, it will cross the ocean in 4 days. As far as a telegram is concerned, one can only send it from England, but you have to know someone there. I have written a letter to the Russian consul in London but today I learned from the English consul here that he was not on their lists any longer, so my letter may not have reached its destination. Moreover, a telegram, even from England the America, today costs 900 roubles for 15 words. I think that under these conditions I'd better send the money to you, which will let you live until Volodia receives my letter for which I have paid only 53 roubles postage. One of my pupils of English will leave for England in about a month time. I shall give him instructions to send a short telegram to Volodia with your address and for sending Volodia from England a registered express letter. In my letters to Volodia I have asked him to send money not to Anapa as you had asked, but in my name to Odessa because there is a Crédit Lyonnais bank here with offices in London and America. I'll send you the money from here.

I believe you have finished your courses at the Institut in Petrograd. If not you will have to finish them here at Odessa. I think that the professors will remember you. Moving to Odessa with your parents will be fraught with trouble. Odessa is full of people and finding an apartment is very expensive. An empty apartment costs 5000 to 10000 roubles and a furnished one 50000

roubles to infinite. If you would not have fled from here in 1915 but on the contrary, hired an apartment of 4 rooms, you would now be a rich woman because renting out a room now allows one to pay the rent of the whole apartment including heating. But as I wish that you come to live in Odessa, even if it is on condition that we would have to live separately, I'll make great efforts to find an apartment. You will probably wish to live together with your parents, so you would need a 4-5 room apartment. I can continue to live with D.P.. I think it would be better for you. I think it will never be possible that we understand each other as husband and wife. Because we do not understand each other, but we could have excellent relations as friends and we could work together to raise our son.

I'll send you the books you asked for at first opportunity. The latest letter which you sent with a lady has arrived by the post. The following of our acquaintances live here : the Boulkine, the Khanykov, the Batog, and Koreïvo. Batog has been arrested during the Deniken affair, his wife has become almost blind and Choura works as a policeman. I have met the Dorogoï and have visited them twice. Ninotchka is a very sweet little girl. She remembers you very well and calls you always Lilia-the-beauty.

Tossia does not have a pram. They have sold the pram and the stroller to the Andreev, who just had a son. As they will not need the stroller for a year yet, I think I'll be able to recover it and take it for you at Easter.

There you are, I think I have written everything. Au revoir, health and courage. I understand that you are very disappointed in life and I pity you enormously but I say : wait and be patient. Your happiness will come.
I am embracing you, you and Olik. Friendship to everyone.,
Your NB

A letter from Nicolas Birukoff to his son, aged 5.

27th February, 1919
Odessa

My dear son Olik !

I have received your letter yesterday and I am delighted to have a typewriter so that you can read my reply yourself because, according to Mummy, you can read printed letters.

When you come to Odessa, I'll show you this writing machine and I'll teach you how to write with it : it is much easier than writing by hand.

I thank you for remembering me. I miss you a lot, how I am awaiting Easter with impatience, to be able to come to you. I'll bring sweets and presents for you. At the moment I do not have much money to buy a beautiful present for you, but in its place I'll bring three albums which are surely going to please you. In one of the albums are my drawings and photos, in another only photos, and the third one is empty so that you can glue pictures in it or make drawings, whatever you want. I'll take a camera and take photos of you. I often think of us playing in Petrograd and having gone out to look for milk with you and that you explained which streetlights one just calls streetlights, and which ones one calls reflectors. Do you remember my phonograph ? I often listen to the roll you liked best: «All the girls love him». I have rolls on which you can hear Mama. Mama recorded them a long time ago in 1912. I regret that I did not keep your voice, I had recorded it in Petrograd but the sound is too soft. When you come to Odessa, I'll record you again. I strongly wish that you come to Odessa, quickly, so that I will not be separated from you. Mama's large gramophone must have been lost at Petrograd if she has not sold it. That is why I would like to bring you one because probably you do not have music, but it will be difficult to carry anything more. Recently I have heard with friends the song « Everything goes by». I had asked someone to sing it because I remembered that you sang it in Petrograd, playing the piano. Answer this letter and tell me at what time you get up in the morning, how do you pass your day ?

I embrace you very firmly and wish you a good health. Hug mama for me and all the others as well.

Your Daddy N. Birukoff (hand written)

Nicolas has received 6 letters from Elena. He has sent money and will send books. He worries about Olik.

17 March (new style) 1919
Odessa
Elizav 9, apt 8

Dearest Lilia,

I am replying to the letter I have received today through Cornet Kroupinsky. Thank you for continuing to give me news. If I am not mistaken, it is the 6th

letter I have been receiving from Anapa. I have replied to them all and entrusted them to someone and also by registered mail while sending you money (1000 roubles). I had promised to send you 1000 roubles more in a month' time, but it is difficult… I am sending you only 500. I am also sending books with Cornet Kroupinsky, if he agrees to take them. I have not been able to find books about theosophy. I have found an English manual that you will find very useful. Do not tear it, open the folded pages carefully. I have inserted very interesting postcards. Tell me straight away how many postcards you have found in the book.
It hurts me that you suffer so much of the cold. May God let you know better days. I worry about you intensely. It seems that typhus and other illnesses are rampant where you are. I would so much like to come and see you, but many reasons prevent me from doing so. Firstly, the uncertainty of the boats, I might get stranded somewhere and lose my job. Also, if you would wish to settle in Odessa, the expenses of my trip would be a waste. It would be better to use that money to rent an apartment here and get settled. Moreover, the situation at Odessa is not at all clear yet and it is worse here than in Anapa. I would really be disappointed if we could not see each other very soon but my objective is to improve your situation and I do not wish to spend the money for the simple pleasure of seeing you. I worry a lot about Olik, I miss him very much. It makes me cry … Why is he ill all the time ? I would love to take you not to Odessa but further to the South, to Batoum ! Find someone who will go to Odessa and who would agree to take a small bag to you which I have been unable to give to you. I, or rather you, will pay him 200 roubles when he has delivered the bag to you. I shall pay the cost of transportation. When I have found a book about theosophy, I'll send it to you by mail. Have the English manual restored, to avoid losing the pages. It costs a lot of money.
I hug you, you and all the others.
Ton N.B.

Nicolas Birukoff sent a second version of this letter, this time with some significant extra detail. A very caring letter.

17 March (new style) 1919
Dearest Lilia,

I am sending this letter at the same time as the other one sent through Cornet Kroupinsky, but this time I put it in the letter box of the boat on which Kroupinsky will travel. Tell me which of the two has arrived first. I would like to send you two books via Kroupinsky, but I do not know yet if he will agree to take them. If he takes them you will find. between the pages of the English

manual, 500 roubles («kerenkis» and «nicolas»). In the letter I am sending to you with Kroupinski, I call them postcards. I would really have liked to send you more, up to 1000 roubles, but I am not in luck with money so I am afraid to send them, if the money gets lost it will only be a part. Please let me know its arrival, the moment you have received it, by mail and additionally via someone else, so that I can be sure you have received the books and the money. In which case I shall try to send you as much as I can. Tell me also, by mail of course, if you have received the 1000 roubles which I sent you from Odessa with my mail of 28 February (new style), by registered letter. A money transfer with acknowledgement of receipt. I'll try to send you more money than I had promised, because I know that I should reserve part of the money for your parents. I take this into account and I redouble my efforts to earn more. If those efforts are not crowned with success because I have really no luck and because what I earn is not in proportion with the work I devote to it, then, after having sent you another 1000 roubles, I would have no more to make the trip to Anapa. It would be more reasonable to keep my future earnings for preparing an apartment for you. I am sending you two books : a French dictionary and an English manual. I have not yet been able to find any books on theosophy, in the shops they are very scarce, I will have to search for them with the second hand booksellers. Moreover, in this field of interest I do not know anything, so I would have to search a long time with these booksellers to find a useful book. Excuse me for not having found one yet. I have even thought that it might be an advantage because Kroupinsky may accept to take two books but could refuse to take three or four. The manual and the dictionary are no doubt more important than the theosophy. That is why I spent a full day to find an English manual so I had no more time to look for the theosophy. As far as not being able to come for Easter, for many reasons, financial in particular, try to find a reliable and fit person who would be prepared to take the small suitcase to you which I could not take to you at Christmas. I promise that I shall pay him, above the cost of transport, two hundred roubles which you shall send him when he has given you the suitcase and an envelope with its key. I feel very sorry for you because you suffer so much of the cold. I terribly miss Olik, but what can I do, I'll have to be patient waiting for you to come here. I worry because the typhus is raging where you are and because life is so difficult for you… Please do everything to avoid that the children would be hungry. You have milk ? I would give up the pleasure of seeing you if in its place I could send you more money. Alright, see you soon, may God be with you. Do not lose the hope of a better life. Many kisses.

Your NB

Nicolas has received a new letter from Elena. He makes suggestions about how to comme to Odessa, talks about letters to Vladimir, he has seen Elena's brother Tossia.

Odessa, Elizavetskaia 9, apt 8.

20 mars (nouveau style) 1919

Dearest Lilia ;
I have seen Cornet Kroupensky who has given me your letter. He has made a very good impression on me, so I hope that he will deliver my letter to you without mishap, plus the books and the money I have inserted (500 roubles). I do not feel like redoing the letter and the package in order to add still more money and I do not know yet but I think that I'll follow Kroupensky's advice to deposit 1000 roubles in the bank and send you a cheque with Kroupensky ; with that cheque you will be able to withdraw money at Novorossisk when you need it. Please note that these are my last 1000 roubles. If I come at Easter, I shall probably not have any money with me.

I am happy to hear from Kroupensky that life with you is pretty much cheaper than here at Odessa, that both milk and meat are available. I hope that Olik drinks milk and that he does not reject it. May his health improve. I am looking for an apartment all the time and if I find one it is unlikely that I will come and see you, because one has to pay to get an apartment. I'll keep you posted. I think that you can make the trip by sea without me. Prepare provisions for 6 days because eating on the boat is very expensive and you will probably not be able to manage. There are as many people in 1st as in 2nd class, so it is better to travel 2nd class. In Novorossisk, rent a cabin. You will need a water kettle and glasses. There is boiling water on the boat. You have asked me to bring tea. I give you a recipe for a cheap and delightful herb tea which I am drinking from now on. Cut some figs in two and roast them on the stove until they become red. Boil water with three half-figs and that gives an excellent herb tea for 4 persons, up to three glasses a person. By adding tea you obtain a wonderful drink. In view of the price of figs in Odessa, 12 roubles a pound, you save a lot of money. All the other artificial herb teas (based on fruits or other plants) are no good.

I shall try to find an apartment close to the sea or close to the courses. I think that the first solution is the better one because you will not be going to the courses every day and the children need to have fresh air. Tell me what you would prefer and also what your parents would like; I think that they will be living with you.
(some lines written by hand added)

23 mars ns

Tossia came by and he has told me that he had received a letter from L.V.. According to that letter I can see that you have not received the letters I sent with someone. Apparently, sending them by mail is safer. I am sending you this letter by putting in the post box of the boat. I have not had the time to put the money in the bank. So I only send you the 500 roubles with Kroupensky (in the English book), I have sent 1000 roubles by postal transfer on 26 February (new style) and I'll put 1000 roubles in the bank tomorrow and send you a cheque for withdrawal in Novorossisk. I have written several times that I sent Volodia two letters by different routes, one via the English consulate and another one via the American Chamber of Commerce. It is impossible to send telegrammes, they do not accept them and even if they accepted them it would cost 1200 roubles for 15 words. It would be more clever to send such an amount of money to you. I'll send a telegram as soon as one my acquaintances goes there.
One can drink the herb tea with milk and lemon. But surely there is no lemon where you are. I could send you many things but they do not accept packages. You prepare to move to Odessa although Tossia wants to send his family to you. Apparently he has no confidence in the situation here. I learned this from Kissia. Nowadays Odessa lives in fear of an invasion by the Bolsheviks. They have beaten the allied forces twice already.

Tell me how much money you need to live comfortably in Anapa. Over here, the bread costs 12 roubles a pound, meat 13, butter 30, et cetera. Even if prices at your end are twice as low you will need at least 3500 per month. Tossia gets, in addition to his salary (more than 1000 roubles), 50 roubles a day, they get helped by the Andreev without charge, they have an apartment and … they have debts with the Andreev.

There you are, life is very expensive here, a hug, write to me please,
Your NB

This letter is about the finances of Elena's parents, and about a visit, buying a house in Odessa, and their personal relations.

23 March (new style), evening.

Dearest Lilia !
Nr 1
I conclude from Lydie Vassilevna's letter which Tossia read to me that your parents' finances are very bad. I understood perfectly, already before, but I thought that Tossia, earning more than I do, should have undertaken

something, by borrowing from Andreev, even temporarily. But recently, Tossia has told me that not only was he broke but that he had had to borrow more from Andreev. That is why I have decided to give you additional help. Over and above the 500 toubles I have sent via Kroupensky (stuck in the book), I am soon going to put 2000 roubles more in the bank (the Asovsko Donskaia bank no doubt) and I'll send you the cheque by registered mail. You have to go to Novorossisk to get the money [inserted by hand]. 1000 roubles are mine, the other 1000 have been borrowed. That means that I shall not be able to visit you. I understand from Lydie Vassilievna's letter that you have not yet received my letters in which I came up with the possibility for you to come to Odessa, and the question of our personal relations. Only a meeting could fully enlighten this question, but given the fact that such a meeting cannot take place before you come to Odessa, I'll explain my position briefly, repeating in part what I have already written to you. I am congratulating myself that you wish to move to Odessa, specially because I want so much to have Olik close to me. I also wish very much that you come back to me, I'll give you all the freedom to live as you want, under the same roof or separately, with or without your parents. Until you can realize the change you have foreseen in your personal life, I'll acknowledge Irinouchka as my daughter with pleasure, so that her situation can be legalized. It could later be modified anew, without a problem. Lydie Vassilieva writes that you are ill. I do not yet wish to think that it is a serious illness: it derives no doubt from a painful state of mind, your worries about the future and all the annoyances you have suffered and continue to endure; your health will improve as soon as those reasons have disappeared. Above all, do not become discouraged and do not lose hope that things will go better. Manage your children. I think that you will feel better in Odessa, even in spite of my presence. You can finish your course, deal with the house or work. I promise not to interfere in your affairs.

A practical solution to the problem of a house move to Odessa depends on the chance to find an apartment. Also on the possibility that one can pay 5000 to 10000 roubles for an empty apartment and 50000 to 100000 for a furnished apartment. As far as furniture is concerned, I still have four tables, a desk, a book case, a small divan, a linen cupboard and a cupboard for clothes. I do not have a bed because I gave them to Tossia and they have been left behind with the bolsheviks, in Voznessensk. I only have two camping beds. If you have the possibility to buy beds at Anapa, take them, they are too expensive over here. Tossia had asked me to sell him the two beds, but I have refused knowing that I would not be able to buy new ones; I told him that I would give them to him if he would need them. But unfortunately, they have disappeared.

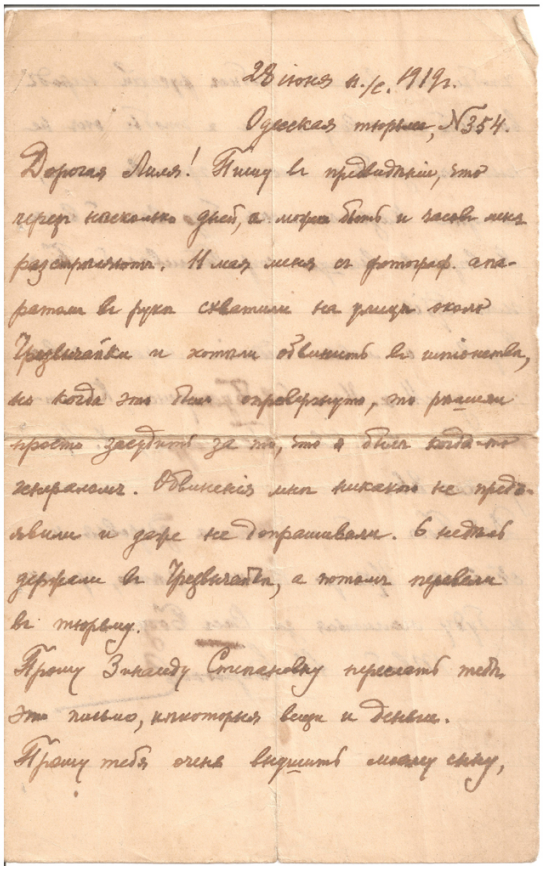
In view of the fact that we shall not be seeing each other very soon, I begin to number the letters and I ask you to tell me which numbers you have received.

I embrace you warmly, you and Olik. Why is he always ill ? Try to find a competent paediatrician. He will be able to give you advice. Have you tried to give him cod-liver oil ? Molten fat with hot milk is very nourishing. I embrace you once more. My friendship to everyone.

Korevoi, the Dorogoi, the Kouchlianski are greeting you

Your NB

Then, on 28 June 1919, he sent the following letter from prison. He is awaiting his execution ... He has been arrested in the street and has been condemned to death without having had a trial, even without an interrogation.

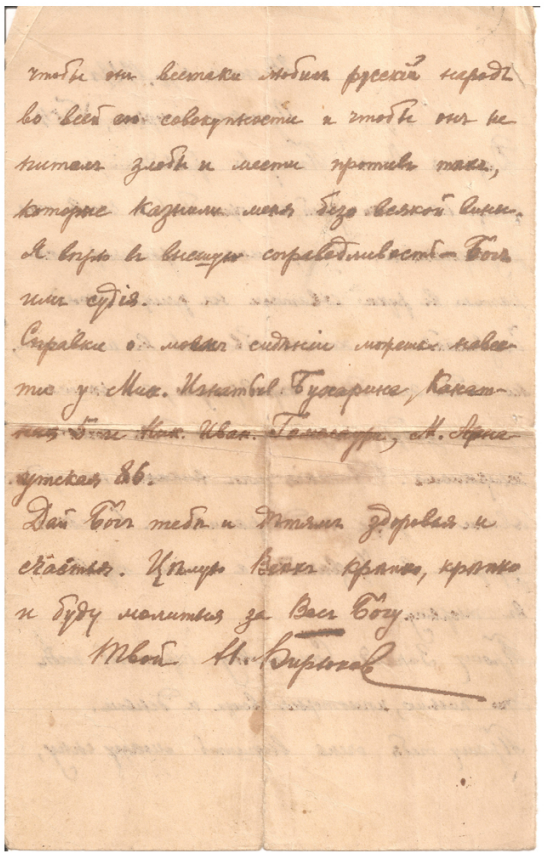


28 июня с./с. 1919 г.
Одесская тюрьма, №354.

Дорогая Лиля! Пишу Ѣ предполагаю, что через несколько дней, а может быть и часов мне разстрелянному. Я шлю тебе со фотограф. аппаратом в руке стоящим на улице около Чрезвычайки и хотел объяснить в чем дело, но когда это тебе сообщу, это решение просто звериное за то, что я ничего не совершал. Объяснять мне никому не представилось и даже не допрашивали. Я четыре недели в Чрезвычайке, а потом перевели в тюрьму.

Прошу Зинаиду Степановну прислать тебе это письмо, которое везде и всюду.

Прошу тебя очень вернуться нашему сыну,



чтобы он всегда любил русский народ во всей его совокупности и чтобы он не питал злобы и мести против тех, которые казнили меня безо всякой вины. Я верю в высшую справедливость Бога или судьи.

Справки о моей судьбе можно навести у Мих. Ивановича Бухарина, Канатная 6 кв. Ник. Ивановича Гавенцера, Ф. Арнаутская 86.

Дай Бог тебе и Ольге здоровья и счастья. Целую всех крепко, крепко и буду молиться за Вас Богу.

Твой Н. Бирюков

28 June (new style) 191 9
Odessa prison Nr. 354

Dear Lilia !

I am writing to you anticipating that in a few days time or maybe even within a few hours, I will be shot. They have arrested me on 11 May with a photographic camera in my hands in a street close to the Cheka and they have wished to accuse me of espionage but when that was refuted they decided to condemn me to death anyhow, because I had been a general. I have not been notified of any accusation and they have not even interrogated me. They held me at the Cheka for a week and then transferred me to this prison.

I am asking Zinaida Stepanovna to forward this letter to you, together with some personal items and money.

I ask you specially to instil in my son, in spite of everything, the love for the whole of the Russian people and that he will not harbour any hate or feelings of vengeance towards those who have executed me without any reason. I believe in a justice supreme. God is their judge.

You can obtain certificates about my arrest with Mikhail Ignatievitch Boukharine, Canatnaia house n°5, et Nikolaï Ivanovitch Gomolaouri , Ariaoutskaia, house n° 86.

May God give you and the children health and happiness.
I embrace everyone very tightly. I am going to pray for you.

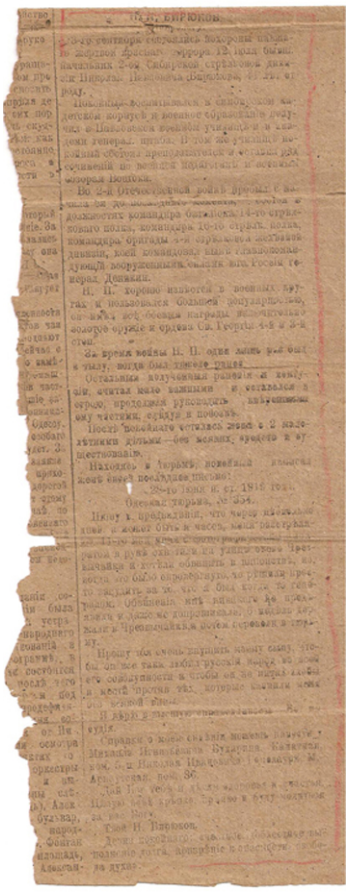
Your N. Birukoff

It is not known precisely when Elena received this letter, but she must have heard about the wanton shooting of her husband soon. According to Ariane Vassiliev's novel, the news came when they were still in Anapa .

"Then, auntie Lilia left us. Her husband Nicolas Birukoff, the youngest general of the family, had been shot by the Reds. A friend had told us and my aunt, having left her small children with my grandmother, left in haste to Odessa to find the body of her husband and to have him buried decently."

She came back in the spring of 1921, after a long trip of almost two years, finding her relatives not in Anapa but in Turkey:

"Anyhow, she had managed to find the burial place of her husband, given a baptism cross to a tramp who then helped her to dig up the remains of her husband Nicolas Birukoff, shot by the Reds. She organized a mass in a small church close to Odessa and gave her husband a proper burial. How did she know that we had gone to Turkey? She had passed the border with Roumania. In Roumania she had contacted the French mission who helped her to go to Constantinople. She was cool and determined. She went to work on the mainland immediately"



Elena published Nicolas' pre-execution letter to her in full in a newspaper, preceded by a necrology she had clearly written herself. It is likely to refer to the date of the official re-burial. It speaks of '3 september'. Probably in the year 1919, soon after the execution.

The necrology in the newspaper says :

N.P. BIRUKOFF

On 3 september the burial has taken place of Nicolaï Pavlovitch Birukoff, 41 ans, victim of the red terror, former commander of the 2nd division of the Siberian Rifles. The deceased had been educated in the Simbirsk Cadet Corps and received military instruction at the Military Institute Pavlovsk (at Saint Petersburg) and at the Staff Academy. He had been teaching in the same Institute and published a series of studies on military education and military studies on the East.

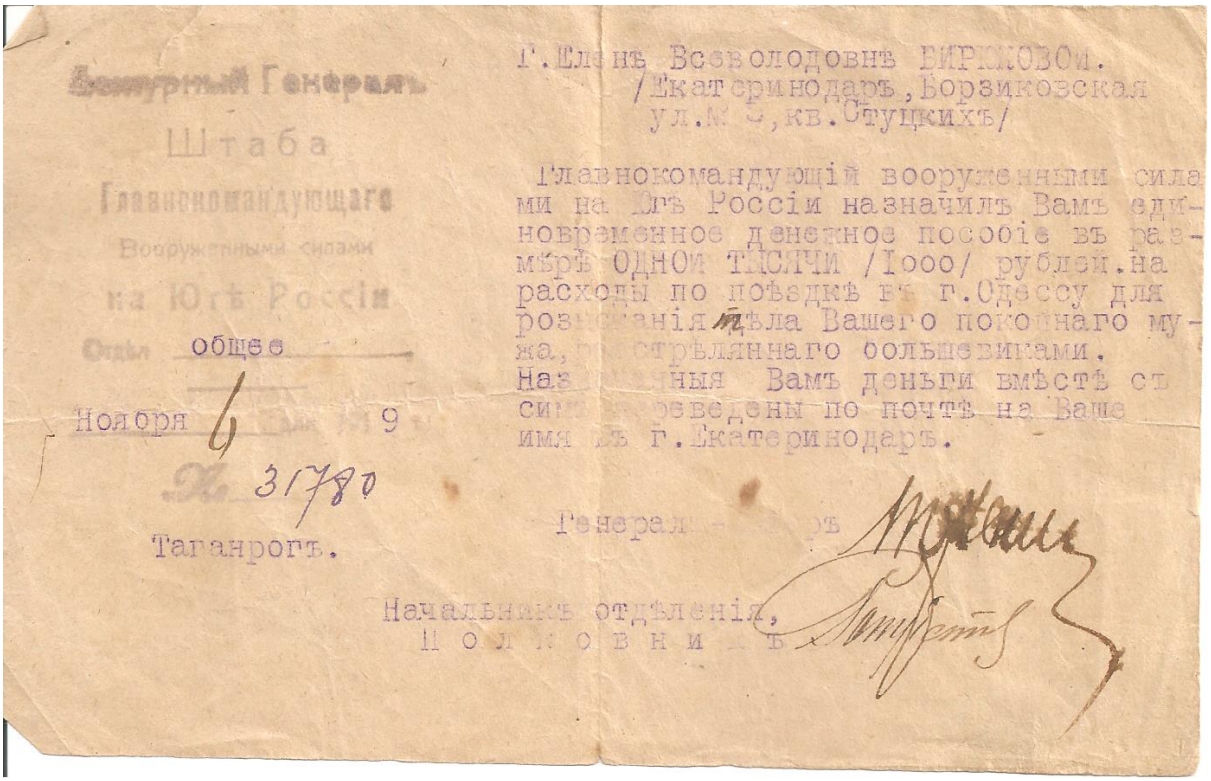
During the second patriotic war [1st World War] he had been Commander of the 14th Rifles regiment, Commander of the 16th Rifles regiment, Commander of the 4th Rifles division, called "The Iron Division", which is commanded today by the Chief Commander of the armed forces in the South of Russia, General Deniken.

N.P. is well known in military circles, where he is very popular. He had military decorations gained in combat including the Order of Saint Georges of the 4th and 3rd classes.

During the war, N.P. has been behind the troops only once, when he was gravely wounded. He considered all other injuries to be without importance and he stayed in the forefront, continuing to lead the units which had been entrusted to him, moving about in a wagon.

The deceased leaves behind a wife and two infant children without any means of subsistence. In prison, the deceased has written a last letter to his wife :

[follow the contents of Nicolas letter of 28 June]


Дежурный Генералъ
Штаба
Главнокомандующаго
Вооруженными силами
на Югѣ Россіи
Отдѣл. общее
Ноября 6 1919
№ 31780
Таганрогъ.

Г. Еленѣ Всеволодовнѣ БИРЮКОВОЙ.
/Екатеринодаръ, Борзиковская
ул. № 5, кв. Стуцкихъ/

Главнокомандующій вооруженными силами на Югѣ Россіи назначилъ Вамъ единовременное денежное пособіе въ размѣрѣ ОДНОЙ ТЫСЯЧИ /1000/ рублей на расходы по поѣздкѣ въ г. Одессу для розысканія тѣла Вашего покойнаго мужа, растрѣлянаго большевиками. Назначенныя Вамъ деньги вмѣстѣ съ сим препровождены по почтѣ на Ваше имя въ г. Екатеринодаръ.

Генералъ-маіоръ
Начальникъ отдѣленія,
Полковникъ

Translation :

For Mrs Elena Vsevolodovna BIRIOUKOVA .

/Ekaterinodar. Borzikovskya Street

N° 5, apt. Des Stouski/

Staff Chief of Service

From Chief of Staff
Armed Forces
South of Russia

The Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces of the South of Russia has attributed to you a fixed allowance of ONE THOUSAND roubles of the to cover your cost of your trip to Odessa in order to find the body of your late husband, shot by the Bolsheviks. The afore-mentioned money and this document are sent by mail in your name.

Service : General Affairs

Ekaterinodar.

Novembre 6 1919

N 31780

Taganrog

The General-major (signature illisible)

The Chief of Service

Colonel (signature illisible)

7 Olga Kerensky-Baranovsky and her two sons escape to England, in the fall of 1920. Her own story, published in an English newspaper in 1967.

Olga and her sons Oleg and Gleb, about 1918

and

OlgA and her sons Gleb and Oleg, two years later in 1920, after many deprivations as can be seen on their faces

Eesti Vabariigi Välisministeerium.

Ministère des Affaires Étrangères d'Esthonie.

Isikutunnistus.

Antud Välisministeeriumi poolt passi asemel kodanikule

Nimi Peterson

Eesnimi Olga

Sündinud 1886

Elukutse —

Läheb Jaapani

Märkused: Se tunnistus on makse vaba kuni märtsini 1921. Lõidab üheskoos Jaapanisse 15 aastane poeg ja 12 aastane.

O. Peterson

(Tunnistuse omaniku allkiri.)

TALLINNAS.

22. septembr 1920 a.

№ 4035.

Passiosakonna Juhataja: [illegible]

Sekretär:

Certificat d'identité.

Delivré par le Ministère des Affaires Étrangères au lieu de passeport au citoyen

Nom Peterson

Prénom Olga

né le 1886

Profession —

Allant au Japon.

Remarques: Ce certificat est valable jusqu'au 22 mars 1921. Voyageant avec ses fils l'un de 15 ans, et l'autre de 12 ans.

O. Peterson

(Signature du titulaire.)

TALLINN.

Le 22 septembre 1920.

№ 4035.

Chef de la Section des passeports: [illegible]

Secrétaire:

Olga Kerensky's memoirs

EVENING STANDARD, October 1967

In the autumn of her life, a woman sits in an English garden with memories of 50 years ago

She is now 85 – an old lady living in Southport, in an English garden.
Fifty years ago, she was living in the Russian capital, then called Petrograd. We know it now as Leningrad.
It was there, in the epochal year 1917, that the Russian revolution began.
It began really, on March 12th , when after nearly four years of war and increasing food shortage the Petrograd garrison mutinied; the arsenal was raided; the dreaded Petropavlovsky (Peter and Paul) fortress yielded its prisoners: a mob besieged the Tauride Palace, where the Duma, the Russian parliament, had barricaded itself.
A Temporary Committee of the Duma, with army backing, called for the Tsar's abdication. On March 15 the Romanov dynasty ended after 300 years.
A Provisional Government under Prince George Lvov and Alexander Kerensky, a brilliant young lawyer and MP, was formed. Kerensky also headed the Council (or Soviet) of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which shared authority with the new regime.
In April 1917. Lenin, the Bolshevik leader, returned from exile. Immediately, the situation began to change, from an almost bloodless 'bourgeois' revolution to a Communist insurrection. The Army disintegrated; Kerensky's power melted. The Bolsheviks struck against the Provisional Government on the night of November 6-7 (Gregorian time).
The Winter Palace was stormed, and on the morning of November 7, The Red Flag flew over the home of the Tsars.

The upheaval

What I should like to describe is the upheaval which finished the old Russia and was the end of nearly everything for myself. But I cannot describe everything. I can only write about odds and ends of events which I remember clearly and which left such an impression on my mind and heart that even now, so many years after, they still torture me and I spend sleepless nights crying, remembering them.
So – early in the morning of February 27, 1917, by the old-style calendar (March 12 by the new) our telephone rang. It was V.V. Somoff calling, a friend of my husband. They had been schoolboys together in Tashkent,

and later both practiced law in Petrograd. They belonged to the same partie – the Socialist Revolutionaries.
Somoff asked me to wake up my husband at once and tell him that the Volensky Regiment had mutinied. They had killed their commanding officer and were marching through the streets of Petrograd.
I had hardly replaced the receiver when the telephone rang again. This time it was from the Duma (the Russian Parliament) to say that the Tsar was dissolving parliament and an extraordinary meeting of all MPs was being called.
My husband left the house immediately. He never came back there to live with us again.
The telephone rang incessantly. I could not bear it anymore, listening to questions to which I did not know the answers. I decided to go and see for myself.
It was a frosty day, but the sun was shining and there was a brightness from the crisp white snow. When I reached the street then called Tverskaya, I came abreast with a detachment of soldiers. Their faces were beaming with some inner joy and they were marching in formation, singing. I asked one of them where they were going. I called him "my little brother." It may sound silly to call a hefty soldier this, but this was our way then.
"To the Duma", he said.
I cannot describe how these three simple words were spoken. One had to hear them. Enthusiasm, exaltation, confidence in the people's representatives – they were all there.
The Duma occupied a huge, beautiful, majestic building which had once been Prince Potemkin's palace. Potemkin had been a favourite of Catherine the Great, and the Empress ordered it to be built for him.

Crowded

That day the whole building was crowded with workers and soldiers, people of all sorts. Vans and carts were rolling up with provisions, guns and ammunition. The Parliament building began to resemble a cross between a military camp and a vast warehouse.
There in the crowd I saw Herman Lopatin, an outstanding member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, who had been condemned for more than 20 years to solitary confinement in the Peter and Paul Fortress as a political prisoner.
Even that did not break his spirits. At this time he was living somewhere in the suburbs of Petrograd. The trams had stopped, but when he heard

that something momentous was taking place in the centre, which seemed like the beginning of a revolution, he set out to walk.
"Mrs. Kerensky," he said, "today I can say : *Nunc dimittis (lettest now thy servant depart…).* This` is the day I have been waiting for all my life. I wish I could die today."
I am very sorry that he did not die that night. It would have been a happy and joyous death for him. But he died several months after, from cancer, at a time when the Bolsheviks had seized full power from my husband's Provisional Government.
But that night I was afraid of nothing. Bonfires were burning in all the streets as I walked home, where I had left the children with a servant. The joy, the hopes of that day did not last for long.
Already on that first day, a Soviet of Workers and Soldiers had been formed. Their Order nr. 1 sanctioned a complete disrespect for officers and undermined discipline. This Soviet met at first in one of the Duma's halls, but very soon they appropriated the Smolny Institute, a boarding school for the daughters of noblemen, where my mother and her two sisters had been educated. It was from the Smolny Institute that the Bolsheviks issued all their decrees and distributed their violent attacks on the Provisional Government. Soon, the future leaders of Russia with Lenin at their head would journey through Germany in a sealed railway wagon, although the war between Russia and Germany was at its height. For this service rendered, Germany ordered the Bolsheviks to demand an immediate cessation of the war.
Before their arrival, the workers were told that Lenin was coming, the saviour and liberator of the working classes. When at last Lenin and his comrades arrived they were met by organized crowds electrified by lavish promises. For hours and hours Lenin used to deliver speeches from the balcony of a commandeered palace. His disciples, comrades and agents, paid and unpaid, were also untiringly doing the same propaganda work among soldiers and workers, at every street.
The Provisional Government which had proclaimed among other freedoms the freedom of speech, never even tried to put a stop to this propaganda. Political meetings took place all the time. There seemed to be no end to them.

All power to the Soviets

On October 25 (old style), the Bolsheviks decided to declare open war on the Provisional Government. They distributed proclamations all over the city announcing that the Provisional Government had been overthrown

and that henceforth all power belonged to the Soviets, i.e. the Bolsheviks.
Early that morning, a sailor brought me a message from my husband. It was to let me know that Kerensky had already left Petrograd by car to drive to the front lines and appeal to the army for some regiments to suppress the revolt. There were no regiments in Petrograd on which the Provisional Government could rely.
The minutes and hours went slowly that fateful day. There was no more news from my husband. By the evening I decided to go and see for myself what was happening in the streets. Mr. Somoff went with me. Before leaving the flat, he put a revolver in his hip pocket.
I was in a very belligerent mood and started to tear the Bolsheviks' placards off walls and lampposts. Somoff begged me to stop behaving in such a silly and even dangerous way. I took no notice. I went on methodically tearing down the placards. We covered quite a long distance and reached the short Mikhailovsky Street leading directly to the NevskyProspekt just opposite the Town hall – the centre of Petrograd. Crowds of people were milling about. A man came up suddenly. "What are you doing here?" he asked using not the polite Russian form *you* but *thou*.
"Tearing down Bolshevik placards. They do not like the Provisional Government and I like neither Bolsheviks nor their placards."
A crowd gathered. They were angry and threatening. I went on arguing. Someone said I should be arrested and taken to the Commandant's office in the same street. Someone else shouted that we should be searched. With horror I remembered Somoff's revolver. If they found that, it would be the end of both of us. I announced haughtily that I had no wish to talk to them anymore and kept silent until we came to the Commandant's house.
You should have seen the consternation and fear on the Commandant's face when I told him I was Kerensky's wife. I could see that the situation was beyond him. It was true that the Bolsheviks had seized power in Petrograd and that the city was in the hands of a belligerent mob. Still, Kerensky might return with some troops. He told us that he would keep us for a short while to give time for the crowd to disperse and then he would let us out.
We waited for some time and the commandant ordered a soldier to take us out into the street. But as soon as the soldier half-opened the heavy gate we heard angry shouts. Some of the crowd were still there.

"Here they are !", they shouted : "He set them free. Why wait ? Comrades, let's take her and him as well to the Pavlovsky barracks. There she'll learn not to tear our placards down."
It was a terrible threat. We had already heard during the day that several middle-class women had been dragged to different barracks and raped by soldiers taking turns.

Kerensky arrested
The soldier quickly banged the gate, locked and chained it, and took us back to the Commandant. He was quite upset and displeased. He did not wish to burden himself with my fate and besides I am sure that he had no sympathy with me. He was an officer of the Tsarist regime. Kerensky himself and anyone connected with him and bearing his name did not excite any warm feelings or sympathy in him.
He spoke tu us with hardly suppressed anger : "I do not know what to do with you but I do know that I cannot keep you here. This is a place for arrested military men only."
Someone suggested that he should phone the Town hall. He was very relieved when he was told a car would be sent for us.
Under armed escort we were driven to the Town Hall. Everybody there was so busy discussing the day's events that nobody paid any attention to us. We stayed there for two or three hours. Then we left quietly and headed for home.
My poor mother was waiting for us, frightened by my long absence. But the children slept.
After that experience I was persuaded to leave our flat, which everybody knew was Kerensky's. At first we stayed with the Somoffs. Ther, the telephone rang late in the evening. It was my husband speaking from Gatchina. He was on his way ! Our joy was short-lived. Kerensky did not bring troops to Petrograd. He was arrested in Gatchina and was saved only by a miracle.

The visit
We moved to another flat, under a false name. But, of course, the new Government knew quite well where to find us.
One night about 3 a.m. (the methods of political searches were exactly the same as during Tsarism) there was a ring at the front door. On the landing stood several soldiers, behind them a man in civilian dress and in front a small officer holding a revolver.
"At the least provocation or resistance I am going to shoot you. " And to prove his words he nearly touched my chest with his revolver.

In the face of real danger I could be very brave. I answered him. “Shoot if you like. I am not afraid.”
“It has come to our knowledge that Kerensky is here. We have come to search the flat.”
The hall and the passage to the kitchen filled with soldiers. There was (as was normal in Russian flats) a back entrance for servants, and our servant had opened the back door to a second lot.
I knew perfectly well that my husband was not in Petrograd. He was hiding on a farm near Gatchina. With a secret malice I suggested the soldiers searched the flat thoroughly and be sure to look under the beds.
Later, a sheet of paper was produced setting out “the results of the search” and I was asked to sign it. Still full of my old ideas of what was right and what was not, I refused emphatically and even dared to say that as I did not accept the powers that sent them to search my flat, I would not sign any papers composed by them.
As it was evident that their chief aim was to find and arrest Kerensky, and my opinions and words did not interest them in the least, they paid no attention to my insolence.
I understood that it was useless to live in hiding. I became ill with pleurisy and went to live with my mother.

Arrest and ‘trial’ – and the offer of a typist’s job with the secret police !
After the Revolution, I was left without means. For a short time, living very sparingly, I managed on the small sum I had in hand, but the money did not last long. I had to find work.
Many people in Petrograd were sorry for me and would gladly have given me work in their offices, but they were already terrorized and realized that to give Mrs. Kerensky a job might bring upon them their complete destruction.
Mother and I were at our wits’ end. It occurred to us to start making cigarettes. Neither of us smoked and knew nothing of cigarettes. We bought different tobaccos and made some fantastic mixtures. There were plenty of orders. Many of them may have come to us because people wanted to help us, but at the same time things had already begun to get short and though you could buy loose tobacco and accessories, the ready-made cigarette had disappeared from the shops. Some time later it seemed that the whole population of Russia was selling homemade products : we were pioneers of a sort.
We were desperate and determined. We used to start work early in the morning and carry on into the night, only leaving our working table for a hasty meal. After a few months of hard work we had saved enough

money, by the summer of 1918, to think of taking the children into the country, away from Petrograd. But where ?
One of my friends, a widow with three children, heard from one of her friends, the wife of an artist, that the Zyriansky region in the north of Russia was as yet untouched by the Revolution. There was plenty of food and it was cheap.
So we set out for the village mentioned in the letter from the artist's wife. We went third class by rail from Petrograd to the town of Cotlas, then by a small steamer to a smaller town called Oost-Sissolsk. From there we went about five more miles to a village where we found a room in a peasant's house.
Nicholas was a simple peasant half-literate but he had a natural intelligence and a keen mind.
When the Revolution began he was a soldier at the front. Then the Bolsheviks started their propaganda and he heard their promises, threw away his rifle and hurried home. When I asked him how he could have done such a thing, he explained that if he hadn't made for home the land would have been divided among the other peasants and there would be nothing for him.
Quite good-naturedly, talking to us about those early days of the revolution, he told how he threw a woman out of the window of a train bringing him home from the front. The train was crammed with soldiery. There was no room in either the third or the second-class carriages but he saw a lady on her own in the first-class compartment, so he took a seat in it, never doubting his right to do so.

Grumbling
He told us that he tried to do his best to help the lady. Several times he got hot water for her when they stopped at a station so that she could have tea. He helped her with her cases and boxes. But she kept on grumbling. She complained that his sweat made the compartment stink and that he had no right to be there. He tried to reason with her, saying : "Lady, you sit quiet and everything will be all right. There is plenty of room in the carriage for us two and as to the air, I will open the window."
I do not doubt that what he told us did happen, for he was a kind and peaceful man. The lady went on grumbling until his patience came to an end. He waited until the train was slowly pulling out of a station, then he took the lady into both his strong arms (she was as light as a feather, he said) and lowered her very carefully from the window. After that, he threw out all her cases and parcels.

I am writing all these details about Nicholas, because to my mind his behaviour and his explanations throw some light on the psychology of the Russian soldiers – peasants at heart – who left the front in a hurry. I can well imagine how the lady in the train felt, but there was no malice or bad feeling on Nicholas's part. Whatever was to happen in the future, at the beginning of the revolution soldiers like Nicholas were not brutal or murderous.
I tried to tell Nicholas that the Bolsheviks would take from him, just as they had from the land owners, his corn, his cattle and in the end his land. Blood would flush into his face and eyes, he would clench his fists and repeat over and over again : "I my die but never, never will I give up my land."
I am afraid that this kind and simple-hearted ma who was in such a hurry to get home to the promised land did die in the end. Millions of so-called kulaks (landed peasants) were exiled and died under the Bolsheviks.
Staying in Nicholas's house, my mother, my sons and I always had enough bread, butter and eggs to eat. If we wanted meat, we had to walk the five miles to Oost-Sissolsk. One day, on the way back from the market, I was stopped by two men in a horse-drawn vehicle. They asked me if I was "Citizen Kerensky". I told them that I was *Mrs.* Kerensky. They ordered me to get into the cart with them, and I was taken back to the town, to the offices of the local Cheka, the secret police, inside the district jail, and there shown a telegram which read : "Find out where Citizen Kerensky is living, make a search, arrest her and send her to Cotlas."
While I was at the market, they had searched my room in Nicholas's house and had told my family what was going to happen. So that very soon after I had been put in a cell my mother, my children and even my widow friend and her three children came to see me. We all cried, we all asked each other why it had happened – why Cotlas ? If it were an order from the capital we could understand it, but from Cotlas …?
At last my visitors were ordered from my cell but they were given permission to call every day and bring food.

Glaring

I was a week in that cell awaiting my trial. I must say that I did not suffer any oppression or rudeness. I did not see much of my jailers and only the bars on the window and a hard wooden bench instead of a bed left no doubt that I was a prisoner.

Once, early on, the door of my cell was brusquely opened and there appeared a man with glaring eyes, simply covered with weapons. He wore civilian clothes with a military belt. He had a sabre hanging on a strap from one of his shoulders: knives or daggers hung from his belt, and through the belt was thrust a revolver. I could see cartridges in his breast pocket. He did not come into the cell, but only asked me whether I had any complaints to make. I nervously murmured that I had none and he immediately left, making a sharp military turn.
When I next saw him, he presided at my secret trial.
It turned out that he was a doctor who was considered not quite right in the head. Before the Revolution, it was said, he had been more conservative. After the Revolution he not only joined the Communist Party but became its local chief – all in order to prevent excesses. Goodness knows if that was true, but I came to believe it was.
When my trial opened, before the President and three other members of the Cheka, they produced all the papers they had seized from my room in Nicholas's house. I looked at the heap of letters from my friends, all innocent documents, then I suddenly saw that the heap included letters from my brother to my mother. My brother had been employed with a high rank in the War Ministry and his letters criticized and accused the Communists. (Later he worked with Trotsky in organizing the Red Army, but was arrested and died in prison). I had to protect him.
"I do not read other people's letters," I said.
"Why ? Is it your principle?" asked the President.
"Yes, if you want to call it that."
"Why did you come to Oost-Sissolsk ?"
"Because I was told that the cost of living was very cheap here and my children needed better food than they could get at Petrograd. And my mother and I needed a rest after working hard."
"At what?"
"Making cigarettes."
"Why?"
"Because I could not find any other work and the children needed food. I can type but I could not find anyone to give me office work. I am Kerensky's wife and everybody was afraid.`'
The President jumped up from his chair, struck the table with his fist and shouted :
"Afraid ? Did they tell you that ? Why didn't you spit in their eyes ?
I did not know what to answer, so I just shrugged.
"You say that you can type. Excellent. You can work in our office. We need a typist."

I was completely bewildered.
"But how can you offer me a job with the Cheka ? I am here as a prisoner. You are my judges. And in any case it would be out of the question for me to work for the Cheka."
"Why not ? Is it another of your principles?"
The whole procedure had become a farce. The President jumped up again and addressed the other three judges.
"Do you understand why this woman was arrested ? I don't. She is not guilty of anything."

In a Moscow prison with my two sons

When an official of the Cheka, the secret police, told me that he was sending me and my family – my mother and my two sons – to be dealt with in Moscow I was relieved.
Cotlas, the provincial town to which I had been sent under arrest, was a terrifying place. The battles near Archangel with the White Russians had driven the Bolsheviks forces back. Cotlas was crammed with soldiers and sailors. That summer in 1918 it was under martial law.
Compared with that, I felt that in the more familiar surroundings of Moscow everything would be all right.
That evening we were taken by armed soldiers from the steamer in which we had travelled to Cotlas. Obviously, strict precautions had been ordered as we were led from the steamer to a single railway coach standing in a side line. An engine was coupled to the coach and for a long time we circled and crossed different railway lines before we reached the station and were coupled to a train leaving for Moscow. As part of the secrecy, we were ordered not to look out of the windows. Our coach filled up with Communists and our soldier escort was replaced by two Tartars.
During the first period of the Revolution the most faithful and reliable servants of the Bolsheviks were either Latvians or Tartars. At that time, it was not easy for the Bolsheviks to find Russians willing to be executioners or jailers. 'Our' Tartars were true representatives of their people : they were harsh and brutal. They shouted at my children, who looked terrified and forlorn. At last I could not stand it any more. I also began to shout and told the Tartars that they had no right to treat us in te way they were, and that when we got to Moscow I would lodge a complaint about them. Evidently, these two Tartars were not yet quite aware of their power, for their behaviour softened.

The Cheka

All we had to eat on the journey was some rusks and bread. I had been told we would receive rations from our guards. It is possible that they preferred to keep the food for themselves. It is also possible that they never received any orders about our food. The Cheka did not care whether we ate or not.

When at last we reached Moscow after several days, we were met by an armed guard and taken to the Cheka prison, the Lublianka. There we were put into a large cell where there were already about 50 women. As soon as we entered, a girl rushed to greet us. She belonged to the right-wing of Kerensky's Socialist Revolutionary Party and I used to see her at meetings or lectures. She told us that the news of our arrest had reached Moscow and our friends were alarmed for us, not knowing what was happening in the remote North of Russia.

We were soon surrounded by other prisoners. Everybody made a fuss of the children. Strangely, my mother and I sighed with relief. We were back in the centre of Russia, among people like ourselves.

Among our fellow prisoners was a young music-hall actress. She was very pretty, extravagantly dressed, with a huge nat. That first evening she never once removed her nat. It was as if she was just making a brief social visit. She told us that she was already dressed to go and give a gala performance at her theatre when she was arrested. She said the only reason why they had jailed her was because she had once lived with a member of the Social Revolutionary Party. She had lost touch with him but she had been pestered with questions about him.

That evening she was asked to sing one of her songs. The words and the tune of Tango, which she sang really very well, are still in my memory, when I hear it again, that song about the burning heat of the Argentine, about blue skies, love and dancing, I see once more our dark prison, and I remember those who were doomed to die…

Sitting next to the singer was a film actress. She was also young and quite beautiful, smartly dressed.

These two spent their time in prison with small mirrors from their handbags before their faces, changing their hairstyle, pencilling their eyebrows, powering and rougeing their cheeks, polishing their nails as if they were preparing themselves for an entrance.

The film actress was soon released, but the music-hall singer was taken away to solitary confinement. It meant that the Bolsheviks had decided that there was more information to come from her. I do not know what happened to her.

Also in the cell was a young very common-looking woman. She was the daughter of a black marketeer, and the newly married wife of another one. She told us proudly what a merry and expensive wedding it had been, with food in abundance and vodka and wine being drunk as water. She and her husband and her "dear daddy" were arrested the night after the wedding. While telling us all this, she suddenly started beating her chest, weeping and shouting that her little brother, whom she adored, had been left alone in their empty flat. He would be frightened to death, and his lovely round face and little hands would become dirty because she wouldn't be there to wash them. She would never see him again – and she rocked herself from side to side as the peasant women do. Then she would curse 'damned spies and informers' and wish them in everlasting hell.

The actress

There was a third actress in the cell – a student from the Moscow Art Theatre. She was so young, she seemed like a child in her red knitted cardigan. Her eyes were big and frightened and she never said a word. All day long she lay in a corner on the floor with eyes wide open. Sometimes she sobbed desperately. None of us in the cell even tried to console her. We were all awed by her tragic fate.

We were told she was under sentence of death, because she had been betrothed to a man already executed for plotting against the Soviet Government. They said she had been his accomplice.

Afterwards I heard that death spared her. This naif child was condemned "only" to life imprisonment. Life imprisonment for a girl of 16 or 17 ! I still remember her eyes full of tears, her life finished before she had started to live.

A mother and daughter had been arrested in connection with the same plot. Like the girl's fiancé, the mother's son (an officer) had been shot. The mother and daughter also never spoke to anyone. They lay on the floor clasping each other as if they were afraid to be separated even for a moment. Some of the girl prisoners looked like university students.

The women

I do not know why they had been arrested, but they were all quite brave and cheerful and they were very good to my sons. They played games with them and told them stories, and the boys told me they were sorry to leave when our time came to go.

At night the prisoners – so many different women; streetwalkers, thieves, innocent victims – settled down in their places to sleep. Some slept on wide benches along the walls, some on the table at which food was eaten during the day. As newcomers, mother, the children and I were given space on the floor, using dirty coarse sacks as mattresses, blankets and pillows.

Like the girl in the red cardigan, like the mother and daughter whispering to each other and praying, I could not sleep. There was a noise in my head, my heart beat fast. Everything was as unreal as a nightmare.

From time to time the door of our cell opened and a jailer called out a name. The poor woman thus called got up and went, but where?

Already that day I had heard so many tales about this prison. I heard that there was a specially made chair for torturing prisoners; that in a remote corner of the yard prisoners were shot without trial. So many tales … I do not know how many of them were true, but during that first night in Moscow I believed them all.

But emotions become blunted. On following nights in the cell it ws not fear of the future that prevented us from sleeping, but the fleas from the sacking that was our bed clothing.

The food was very bad. In the mornings, hot water was brought, in huge tin kettles and those who owned tea and bread had a sort of breakfast. Those who had nothing just gulped the hot water.

About noon a big pail filled with soup was brought in, along with a few tin bowls and some spoons of tin or wood. The soup was a foul-smelling and evil-looking liquid containing already tainted salted herring heads. I do not remember seeing any vegetables in it.

Nevertheless, although both the appearance and taste of this soup ws extremely repulsive, our hunger was such that we devoured it to the last drop.

In the evening we had another ration of boiled water and a piece of rye bread.

Later on, outside, when we were freezing and starving, I often looked back with longing to this prison food. It began to seem to me not really bad at all.

One day, the door of our cell was opened and a warder began reading out a list of names. We knew that some of the prisoners were being taken to solitary confinement or being transferred to another prison, but some were being set free.

I heard my name. I stood up, afraid to move a step. Was it another prison, even worse than this one ? Was I to be separated from my family? I did not dare to hope it might be freedom.
But freedom it was, for all of us.

A nightmare winter

Why my children and I were not liquidated or left in prison I could never understand.
Sometimes I think we still had some well-wishers even among the Bolsheviks.
Ionov, for example, who was Zinoviev's brother-in-law (and Zinoviev was then one of Lenin's closest associates) – he had been defended in court in the old days by my husband Kerensky. And Kamenev, then another of Lenin's principal adherents, had been a member of the Duma (the Russian parliament under the Tsar) at the same time as Kerensky, and when he and other Bolsheviks were exiled to Siberia by the Tsar, Kerensky never ceased to demand their release.
There may have been even more sentimental reasons. When Trotsky and Kamenev returned to Petrograd after the Revolution, their children went at first to the same school as my sons, and I heard that they worried their fathers by asking them to set free Oleg and Gleb Kerensky. It may not be true, but I like to believe it was.
Back in Petrograd, we moved into my brother's flat and my sons went off to a newly formed Soviet boarding school.
This replaced a private school which they had once attended, and the new school was run by a master from the old one. It soon became a show school. When foreign delegations came to Petrograd they were taken to this school to be shown the "new" creation of the Soviet Government. An English labour party delegation visited the school while my sons were still there. Before their arrival the school was thoroughly spring-cleaned by the pupils, who were issued with new – that is, rather less worn-out – uniforms (they were taken back the next day).

Enthusiasm

The delegation was accompanied to the school by Mme Kollontay, then a Commissar for Public Education. She belonged to the bourgeois class, was well-to-do and used to be one of the most elegant women in Petrograd.
The children were standing in rows. Mme Kollontay seized a fat red-cheeked boy and held him up to the delegates with enthusiasm and triumph.

No one had the courage to enlighten the delegation as to the real reason why this boy looked so well : his father was a black marketer. That was why the son ate so well. No one dared to point out the half-starved children in the class – like my younger son, or his friend Karassev, who was soon to die of TB brought on by malnutrition.
Nevertheless there was one moment of perturbation during the visit. One of the delegates asked a boy near him what was his greatest desire. Without a moment's hesitation the boy exclaimed :"Meat!"

My sons had been at the school then known as Shidlovsky's since it was a private school. I thought that at least if they boarded there in a Bolshevik show place, they would be assured fixed rations.
I'd already begun to feel that some terrifying forces were threatening our existence and I could not cope on my own …
I would not be able to provide my sons with food through the week and if I found work they would have to stay by themselves in an empty flat, hungry and cold, waiting for me to come home. It would mean I would only see them on Sundays and that would mean for them an eight-mile walk, but it could not be helped.

Dread
My mother, too, was on her own. We decided that she should stay in her own flat to save her furniture. We knew that once she left it would be immediately requisitioned and her things confiscated. There was room in my brother's flat for her belongings, but there was nobody to help her move, and neither of us was strong enough to tackle it by ourselves.
I dreaded being so alone and sublet half my flat to a young couple who said they were students. They brought two small attaché cases with them but they hardly ever stayed in. It wasn't until later, after they had gone, that I realized that they were 'responsible' Communist watchers who were supposed to watch me and use the key to have access to the flat by day or night. I suppose when my lodgers were quite certain that there were no counter-revolutionary activities going on in my flat, they were ordered to leave me alone.
At last I got a job, late in the summer of 1919. It was with the Petrograd branch of Centrosoyus, the Central Cooperative Union. At that time this old co-operative organization, though already brought under Bolshevik control, still retained a certain amount of independence. One of the executive members, whom I did not know, came to Petrograd, heard that we were nearly starving, and offered me a post as an organizer in charge of the printing department.

I did not understand what he meant by giving me such a high-faluting title, and I told him frankly that I had no talent for organization. He told me I would soon learn.
In fact, there was nothing for me to do. I was head of a fictitious department. But instead of doing nothing I offered to help with the typing. I still received my organizer's salary.
An official came from Moscow to reorganize the Co-operative and heads of non-existing departments were dismissed. I was kept on as a typist – at typists' pay. I was very happy to stay.
I was still there when the winter of 1919-1920 came. There were now no trams and I had to leave my flat very early in the morning to reach the office in time. By the time I got back home it was already quite dark. There was no electricity or other lighting on the staircase and the flat was in complete darkness as well.
Candles either did not exist or were out of my reach. It was the same with paraffin for an ordinary lamp. But, as we say in Russia, "poverty is the best teacher" and although I am an unskilled person I managed to make a tiny lamp out of an ointment jar. I pierced the cork and put through it rows of twisted threads to serve as a wick. Such a lamp did not use much paraffin and though it did not give much light, still, I wasn't in complete darkness going from the kitchen to my room.
I was by now living in one room and using the back stairs. The front doors and front staircases of all apartment buildings were nailed up. Everybody used the back way from the yard.
Every dau one heard of robberies and murders. I had always been an extremely nervous child, always afraid of the dark. In this unlighted flat I was terrified.

Horror

Except on the rare occasions when my communist lodgers were in, I used to spend my evenings and nights listening to the slightest sound. Sometimes I did not even have the courage to leave the kitchen for my room. I just sat on a chair the whole night. That winter was a horrible nightmare.
One night when I got home I found the lock broken and the door ajar. I fled down the dark stairs to the Head of the House Committee (each apartment building had a committee, called Combet for short).he and several other men came back with me. They had a lantern and the Chief even had a revolver. There was no one in the flat, but it had been thoroughly ransacked.

There was nothing to steal except for a gold watch which had belonged to my father-in-law and which Kerensky had left in my safe-keeping, and a length of cloth which co-op employees were allowed to buy at cost and which I had hoped to exchange for food. The thieves had taken both. I went to my mother's flat that night and the next day she moved back with me. We knew at last that everything was ashes and ruin. We knew it was no use any more even to try and save our possessions. All that was left to us was to keep alive because our end would be the end of our sons.
Living together we felt safer from robbers, but there still remained the cold and the starvation.
Our food consisted mostly of dirty half-rotten potatoes, washed in ice-cold water and boiled on a tiny stove. We had no firewood or oil, but we had a small round stove made of tin plate, fed by tiny chips of wood, or more often with old newspapers and torn-up books. One could heat water or boil food on it, but it gave out no heat. Our hands were stiff with cold, our bodies weak from hunger. Our only thoughts were of food, light, fire. We were living in darkness not only physical but spiritual.
At night we used to curl up on a sofa and try to get warm. During this time I never undressed. I had to wait until I got to the office to wash. Our water pipes were frozen solid. The only tap working was in the basement washhouse.

Shivers
Early in the morning, shivering with cold, I ran out with my pail to the tap. The steps leading to the basement had no handrails (they had been broken) and were covered in ice from splashed water. Going down them was a dangerous venture, but coming up with a pail of water was like going up an ice flow. And when I got back to the cold flat in the evening, the water in the pail would be a block of ice, which had to be broken. And melted on the little stove.
Of course, the lavatories did not work either. Other pails were used and the contents emptied in the yard, where they formed a vast frozen heap. At the end of the winter the occupants of the flats had to break up the heaps and the men would tow the lumps on sledges to the open country. There was always communal work ordered by the Combet. I cleaned the yard, swept snow, and when the thaw came helped to pump water from flooded basements.
Darkness, cold, dirt, hunger – that is what I remember of those winter months. My belly became swollen with hunger . My mother once said to

me that if she had not known how I lived she would have thought I was pregnant.
Sometimes we would get a ration of soggy bread, 2 oz. Usually, on lucky days a quarter pound. When there was no bread we were issued with oats. But on some days there would be no rations at all, just those slimy, half-black potatoes and occasionally a few putrid herrings.
The people of Petrograd walked about like sad, doomed shadows. There was` no traffic on the streets – no trams, no horses (they had been slaughtered for food), and like a bitter mockery we saw as we shuffled through the snow huge placards proclaiming the glory of the Soviets, I clearly remember one of them, painted in huge red letters. It said :
"We will make the whole world like a blossoming garden."

The Agonizing decision : should we escape from Russia
The best thing that happened to us in Petrograd, that winter of 1919-1920, was that we got a proper stove – a real solid cast-iron stove. My elder son got it for me by giving up some of his boarding-school rations as instalments to a woman at the school.
This woman was grandiosely called a "comrade-assistant" – that is to say, she was a servant at the school. But the Bolsheviks had declared there were no more servants in Russia, so that the wives of leading Bolsheviks and black marketeers employed comrade-assistants instead.
The woman was friendly to my elder son, and mentioned to him that she had a cast-iron stove in her basement laundry which she did not need any longer because there was very little washing to do and no soap to do it with.

Anaemia
When the last payment was made, Oleg borrowed a big sledge from the school and with his younger brother Gleb started to drag the stove to my home. Gleb was ill at this time, and weak, so for most of the journey, he sat on the stove and was pulled along, too.
They arrived exhausted but happy and exalted to have got a stove for me.
From then on we were never cold again. I got a permit to buy firewood and this time I pulled the sledge, one made from an old oak ironing board I still had. I went with this sledge to the firewood store on the banks of the Neva and, by good luck, received several big logs. I was panting like an exhausted horse when at last I brought the logs into our yard. We still had to chop the logs up, but it did not matter. We knew that we were going, at long last, to be warm again.

By the end of that winter little Gleb became dangerously weak. He often felt giddy, and at school he fell down the stairs and broke his arm. The school called a doctor who set the arm but said that the boy was suffering from anaemia and needed to be well-nourished. What a mockery ! Where could I find extra food for him ?
When he was at home he would lie listlessly on the divan. Once, he said to my mother : "Grannie, don't tell mother – she will cry even more _ but I believe that I shall never be well again and will die soon."
Mother kept those words secret for me, but I did not need to be told. I understand everything.
Only a miracle could save Gleb – and the miracle came to pass.

One day, by a roundabout way which became so usual in Russia, I had a message that a man called Sokoloff, whom I had never met, was ready to take a letter from me to my husband, Alexander Kerensky. Kerensky, after escaping arrest at Gatchina (he was overthrown as the head of the Provisional Government) had been escorted to Finland at great risk by his faithful supporters. But he could not stand the anti-Russian atmosphere in Finland and returned to Petrograd by train.
He did not come to me but stayed in the flat of a lady doctor, Mrs. Ivanov, until he went on to Moscow before arranging to go abroad.

The experiences of old revolutionaries proved to hold good even under the Bolsheviks, the safest places to hide are the big cities.
Now, I could write to Kerensky. When I met Sokoloff to hand the family letters over to him, I told him shortly the kind of life we were leading. Sokoloff listened to me in silence and then said : "But why don't you escape abroad, too ?"
I explained that I had no hope of that. First of all, I could not afford to arrange a secret flight; and even if I could afford it I could not take the risk with my two children, one of them seriously ill.

Appointment
When I met him later, he took out of his inside breast pocket a piece of paper. It was part of a list, showing the names of people living in a certain apartment house in Pushkinskaya. One of the names was Olga Peterson, the widow of an Estonian subject, who had two sons. I never knew how he obtained that piece of paper and inserted our names. But he had been in politics before, and knew how to set about such things. He told me that a party of Estonians was leaving the next week, and I should be ready to join it.

But we arranged to meet again before that. I could not keep that appointment. On the day that I should have gone to the rendezvous my little niece, Galia, died. She was the only child of my only sister. [Elena Tarchova] She had been sent from school to hospital with dysentery. Even now I can see her yellowish face, her deep-sunk eyes, the smile on her bloodless lips, and can hear her voice growing weaker. Even now I can see the big hospital ward, the rows of white beds, and the small figures lying on them, their yellow faces already stamped with the seal of death. Not one child survived that time. Thea nurses and doctors fought heroically but the children were too worn out with privation to survive the disease.
On the day Gallia died I could not leave my sister, who was numb with grief. She could not bear the thought that Gallia would be buried into a communal grave, and we were obliged to go to several places before we could get a permit to buy a small coffin.

Persistence
By the time we had done that it was too late for my appointment. But Sokoloff, with good-hearted persistence, came to my flat the next day and arranged another appointment. Then Gleb developed jaundice. I called a doctor and asked him whether the boy could make a journey in his condition. I pretended that we were going to Moscow to see my brother. The doctor was emphatic. Gleb must not be moved.
I went to Sokoloff and told him our plan was off – and again, there was a miracle. He told me that the departure of the first batch of Estonians had been postponed for a week. We decided not to risk meeting again. If Gleb had recovered enough on the day for departure, we would go to the railway station.
It was not an easy decision for me to make. Except for my sons, I was leaving behind in Russia everyone and everything that was dear to me. I was going without money, going I knew not where.
We believed Kerensky had by now reached England, but I could not go to him. I knew our life together was finished; destroyed. He had other family ties now.

Disappeared
From under the ruins of my life I was left alone to crawl out as well as I could.
My elder son Oleg did not want to go. He was now 15. And the three years of living in Soviet Russia had made a grown-up man of him. His days at school had given him firm friendships. He and his friends

shared the same life. He did not want to leave them, half-starving though they were. He thought he was deserting them.
At the same time, he knew that only escape could save his younger brother.
It was not easy for him to accept my decision to go, but he did accept it. He had always been my moral support during the dark years. It was he who got for me a wig of fair hair to make me look more like an Estonian woman when the time came for us to leave.
The Revolution not only destroyed my personal life, but all my former friends and acquaintances disappeared one after the other. My relations, my brother, my sister, my sister-in-law – could not help me. My brother, in Moscow, had a family and his life was always in danger. My husband's sister was fighting for her own existence. Endangered by her relationship to Kerensky. My own sister had always had an unhappy life – it was I who had to help her, not the other way round. Only my mother never left me during the dreadful years. Yet during those years it always seemed to be complete strangers who came to my help. I recall a cashier from the Savings Bank who used to order the most expensive cigarettes when mother and I were depending on their sale to live. I recall a Communist doctor who helped me when Oleg was suddenly taken ill. I recall Nicholas, the giant peasant who housed us. And now it was a stranger, this Sokoloff, a go-between, who was going to help us escape for good.
Even now I cannot understand how the Cheka, the secret police, overlooked a non-existent family on the list of Estonian subjects sent to them for checking and final approval. But there again I was unexpectedly helped.
I went to an office with my "passport" and was recognized ! A lady whom I knew only by sight came up to me : "Mrs. Kerensky, what are you doing here ?"
I thought everything was lost. I felt it was quite useless for me to prevaricate. She knew the truth: she could read it in my face. So I told her about the false documents and my son's illness and how the documents had to be approved before we could escape.
She said : "Go away, quickly. Leave these papers with me. I will push them amongst other people's documents and they will pass unnoticed."
So this unknown woman became a true friend.
Gleb's jaundice improved when the day of departure came, and I decided that we must risk all and go. My mother and sister and one friend came to the station to see us off. Between us we carried our three cases, and Gleb as well, to the Baltic station.

Whispering

I remember sitting on the platform waiting for the train, feeling utterly miserable and wretched, whispering to my mother and sister that the separation would not be for long, that very soon we should be together again. I tried to give them hope, but there was no hope in my heart.
The train came in. I hugged them for the last time. Though some years later mother came to see me in England – just a few months before she was to die in Russia – I never saw my sister again. She died under anaesthetic during a minor operation.
The train began to move. I could not see anything – because tears were blinding me.
I did not know where I was going, but I knew that my past life was left behind for ever. It was a farewell to Russia, a farewell to everything.

VI

Vera Vsevolodna Baranovsky – her career in Russia, Germany, Czechoslovakia and France

Vera was born 7.4.1885. She was the first child of Vsevolod and Lydie. She became interested in the theatre at a very early age and wanted to pursue a career as an actress. She went to Moscow when her parents were still in Omsk and followed an education at the Moscow Art Theatre. She made her debut in 1901 at the age of 16, and performed on the stage frequenty before the Revolution :

"Three Sisters" (1901) - Irina,
"Julius Caesar" (1903),
"Uninvited" (1904),
"Ivanov" (1904),
"The Tsar Feodor Ioannovich" (1905),
"The Life of Man" (1907),
"Doctor Shtokman" (1908),
"The Blue Bird" (1908),
The Three Sisters (1908),
"The Walls" (1907),
"Boris Godunov" (1907),
"At the Royal Gates" (1909),
The Miserere (1910),
The Living Corpse (1911),
Hamlet Ophelia (1911),
"Per Gynt" (1912),
"Imaginary patient" (1913),
"Nikolay Stavrogin" (1913),
"Thought" (1914),
"Stone Guest" (1914)

In 1912, **Vera** married the classical musician Yuri Nikolayevich Pomerantsev (1878-1933) who, when he was still a student, gave lessons to the young Serge Prokofiev. After the Revolution, he emigrated to Bulgaria where he founded the first symphony orchestra. They divorced before the Revolution.
In 1918, Vera refused to join her family and leave Russia because of her promising career in hear home country.

Between 1915 and 1922 she worked in the theatres of Kharkov, Kiev, Odessa, Tiflis, Kazan, Voronesh and in other cities. In the year 1922, she founded an artistic-theatrical workshop (Art and Theater Studio of VV Baranovskaya "Mastbar") in Moscow.

She then became a movie star. Her films include *The Thief* (1916), *The Burden of Fate* (1917), *The Wolves* (1925).

A favorite of Constantin Stanislavski, Vera Baranovskaya was a leading lady of the Moscow Art Theater when she was chosen to play the lead in Vsevolod Pudovkin's classic movie *The Mother* in 1926. One of the great montage sequences of the film includes a mourning Baranovskaya holding vigil over her husband's corpse as water drips slowly into the bucket that rests beside her. That performance, which one critic maintains imbues the film with emotional lyricism. Also her role in Pudovkin's *The End of St. Petersburg* in 1927 , led to international recognition.

In 1928, Prometheus – a 'proletarian' film club in Berlin – invited her to play the leading role in the film "The way of a proletarian". She also participated in the German films "Poison Gas" (1929, producer Michael Dubson) and "Revolt in the Reformatory" (1930, producer George Azagarov).

She then left for Czechoslovakia where she played in the first Chech sound film : "Tonka of the Gallows "(1930, producer Karl Anton) , "This is life" (1929, Karl Junghans), the historical saga "Saint Waclaw" (1930), "Misled Youth" (1929) and "Reckless Youth" (1931)

In 1930, she was invited to play in French movies and she joined her family. She played on stage in the local Russian Theater Theater (dir. Grigorovich), pieces of D.N.Kirova and in 1931 in a benefit representation for her , in the role of Kruchinina, "Guilty without Guilt" (A.N. Ostrovsky). She also played with the Russian "Foreign Chamber" theatre in 1932.
She played minor roles in the following French movies :

Une nuit à l'hotel (1932, Leo Mitler)
Monsieur Albert (1932, Karl Anton)
Les Aventures du Roi Pausole (1933, Alexis Granowski)

Au bout du monde (1934, Henri Chomette et Gustav Ucicky))
L'équipage (1935, Anatole Litvak)
Posthumously : Valse éternelle (1936, Max Neufeld)

When Vera left the USSR, she was accompanied by her husband Alexeï Alexeïevich Pavlov. In 1931, they went to Hollywood but they came back after about a year. In 1935, Vera was taken to hospital for a minor operation. She caught an infection, in a time that antibiotics did not yet exist. She died on December the 5th , 1935.

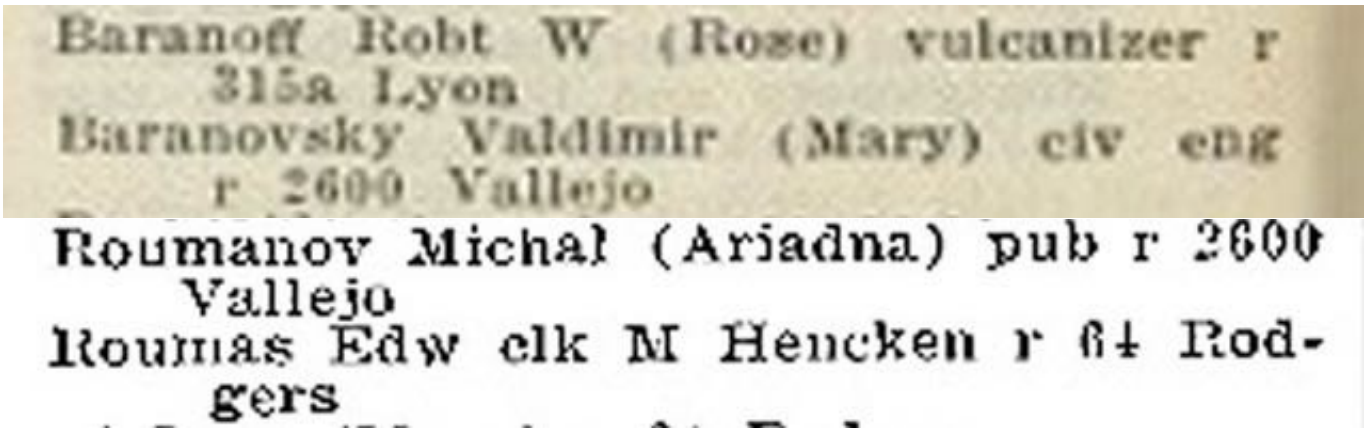
Alexeï Pavlov is seen on the photo on the left, meditating at Vera's grave in the New Cemetery, Billancourt.

VII

Life in new surroundings

1 Vladimir and Moussia in San Francisco and Los Angeles

2600 Vallejo Street, Russian Hill, San Francisco



From the 1918/19 Crocker-Langley Address Directory of San Francisco

In the turbulent Russian summer of 1918 , when their parents and sisters were in great trouble and out of money, Moussia and Vladimir moved into a lavish apartment at 2600 Vallejo Street, together with another Russian couple: Michal Rumanov (29, journalist, listing as nearest relative his father Arkadius Rumanov in Petrograd) and Ariadna Nikolskaya (21, pianist and composer, nearest relative Mrs.

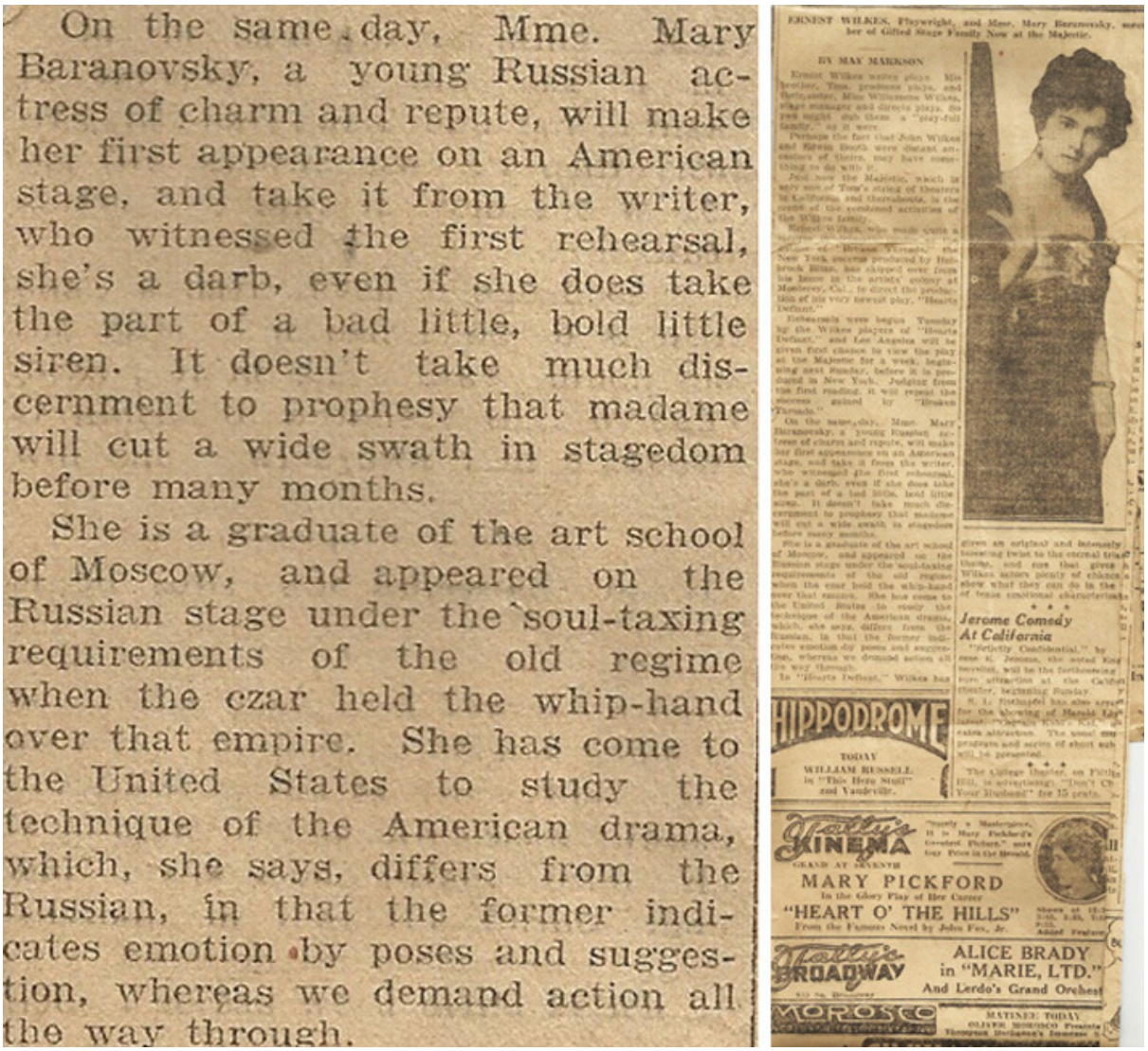
Marie Nikolsky, Kiev) who had both arrived in Seattle by the Japanese ship ss Suwa Maru on June 12th.

They still thought that Kerensky would make a political comeback. In the Civil War, the White army under General Kolchak and the Czechoslovak Legion had made large gains in Siberia. General Kolchak, who considered himself in charge of a government which had succeeded the Kerensky Government, had installed himself in Omsk. The White armies had also advanced in the South, under General Deniken. Estonia and Latvia were clearing their territories of the Red Army.

However, in 1918 and in the course of 1919, the Red Army regained the upper hand. The Baranovsky family failed to make contact with Vladimir and Moussia, but must have become clear to them that they could not continue their rather lavish lifestyle and that they must reckon with the possibility that they would have to support themselves without any more cheques coming from Baranovsky bank accounts. Their first decision was to move Moussia to Los Angeles, to live in a cheap apartment et to be close to Hollywood. This house move was completed in December, 1919.

In 1919, Moussia, together with the couple Michal Rumanov and the concert pianist Ariadna Rumanoff moved to into a bungalow at 1655 West Adams Street in Los Angeles. The 1920 United States Census was taken on 5 January, 1920. The Rumanov couple is listed as living at the new address, with Mary Baranovsky as their "roomer". Vladimir stayed in San Francisco but he also moved house. In the January 1920 census he is listed as 'lodger, civil engineer' at 120, Ellis Street, San Francisco, but if he was there at all, he was there only very briefly..

In the course of 1919, Moussia had succeeded in making contact with theatre circles in Los Angeles and made her debut there in Novembe, in the **Majestic** theatre. This theatre had just been taken over by the Wilkes brothers: Ernest (the playwright) and Tom (the producer). Moussia got a small part, that of a "bad little, bold little siren", which attracted much attention.



On the same day, Mme. Mary Baranovsky, a young Russian actress of charm and repute, will make her first appearance on an American stage, and take it from the writer, who witnessed the first rehearsal, she's a darb, even if she does take the part of a bad little, bold little siren. It doesn't take much discernment to prophesy that madame will cut a wide swath in stagedom before many months.

She is a graduate of the art school of Moscow, and appeared on the Russian stage under the soul-taxing requirements of the old regime when the czar held the whip-hand over that empire. She has come to the United States to study the technique of the American drama, which, she says, differs from the Russian, in that the former indicates emotion by poses and suggestion, whereas we demand action all the way through.

ERNEST WILKES, Playwright, and Mme. Mary Baranovsky, ... her of Gifted Stage Family Now at the Majestic.

BY MAY MARKSON

Jerome Comedy At California

HIPPODROME

TODAY
WILLIAM RUSSELL
in "This Hero Stuff"
and Vaudeville.

Hally's KINEMA
GRAND AT SEVENTH
MARY PICKFORD
In the Glory Play of Her Career
"HEART O' THE HILLS"
From the Famous Novel by John Fox, Jr.

Hally's BROADWAY
ALICE BRADY
in "MARIE, LTD."
And Lerdo's Grand Orchest

MOROSCO

MATINEE TODAY

It was in the house in West Adams Street, Los Angeles, that Prokofiev met Moussia and Ariadna for the first time. Prokofiev and Moussia would remain close friends for many years, until his departure for Russia from France, in 1936.

Вторая поѣздка въ Л.Ангелесъ. 31-ое Декабря 1919 г.

Typed caption on the back: “The second journey to L. Angeles 31 December 1919”. On the left : Vladimir Baranovsky, with his Willys Knight convertible touring sedan of 1918: In the car : Moussia. On the right: probably Michel Rumanov

The last house moving trip from San Francisco to Los Angeles was made on 31 December, 1919. Then, Vladimir disappeared without leaving a trace. He went back to Russia.

Very little is known about this trip. It is thanks to the pianist Fern Baranovsky- Scull, Vladimir’s later wife, that we know something at all. On Sunday 18 May, 1990, at the age of 91, she gave a taped interview to her niece Beverly Wagoner-Meal (who had known Vladimir very well when she was a young woman). She started off by describing how she had met Vladimir originally, she then spoke about their life in the USA, and finally, about his return trip to Russia in 1920.

She said that Vladimir was very thankful to have been received so well in the USA et whenever there was something official going on, he would dress up in his best clothes. Like for voting or even for going to the post office.

(Beverly Wagoner's questions are in italics) :

12:40 "He was accustomed to court procedure and the courtesy that was extended to noblemen, because he was a true Russian, a true Russian is of the North. The others are provinces and the Russians owned the villages. Vladimir owned only two villages ... unfortunately when he went back he didn't reach in time so he could take nothing away from the place and later-on when his wife [Moussia] toured Petrograd with her then present husband who was a pianist [Alexander Borovsky], she went to their house where they'd been living and she found in the dresser the linens that she had bought but she was not permitted to even take one towel with her. "

"14:50 Vladimir's father at one time was appointed [Military Judge and investigator] of Uzbek and Vladimir's nurse, when he was four or five years old, was an Uzbekistan and when he was five, his nurse brought a bare-backed horse, she put Vladimir on top of the horse and of course Vladimir immediately fell off and he had a scar on his eyebrow ever since and of course the nurse was fired and I think the father got a woman to take care of Vladimir after that.

In Russian Turkestan they lived in this one town called Tashkent. And he tells me a story that in the desert there was an arch with three golden balls, one fell, I think it was an earthquake. The second fell, and something awful happened, I think a big hole opened up in the desert, and he said: when the third ball falls, Russia will fall." And I just wonder if the ball is still there or if it was one of the stories that Vladimir made up, because you can't couldn't tell whether he was telling the truth or lying.

"Vladimir came to the United States first with his father, on a holiday?"

"Ohh when he was fifteen and they stayed, believe it or not, in the Grand Hotel, Plaza, what do they call her now [*she mumbles disapproval of Mr. Trump, in 1990*] and he looked, pointed out the window of the hotel where and his father were staying and he told his father: 'Father, I want to live here, I want to stay, and his father said: 'But it's such a small country."

18:15 "Vladimir had gone to college, not really to learn a trade…

because he would not need to work -- Engineering. Polytechnic ... he finished the five-year course in three years and outside there is a plaque and it is still there by the way, with Vladimir's name and that of a Jewish student... he had to learn German and that's when he met Lona's mother, she taught him German, because in St Petersburg, or Petrograd, they spoke only French, only the elite spoke French, and they spoke Russian to their dogs and their servants.

"The first minor revolution in 1917 he was there and he was at the window watching how the sailors mowed down the revolutionaries that were coming in a solid phalanx of men and they had the machine guns there and the court, or the Czar gave the order and they just mowed them down as you are like you were mowing grass. Then he and his wife decided to take a vacation, to come to the United States, Vladimir wanted to look at some machinery, some new machinery that had been invented"

20:42, and they rented a house in San Francisco on the Pacific side, they even had a pipe organ in it, it was such a huge house, Vladimir wasn't happy about it, he was never happy with his wife, he loved her very much but he couldn't stand her."

23:29 *Beverly: "Now he and Musa ?"*

"Her name was Maria, but the name diminutive was Moussia – "

"Then they were living in San Francisco at
the time of the big revolution, right? Or, they did not go back ?"

"No , the consul came to dinner and said, "You'd better get back to Russia before the Bolsheviks get your estate."

So Vladimir went back to Russia and Moussia didn't know quite where he was at any time, anyway, she remained in California and Vladimir left her 100,000 dollars which she got rid of very quickly , but then just to make sure that everything was alright she got a Mexican divorce and immediately married a pianist by the name of Borovsky. Much later, Borovsky and I kept up a relationship all the time, every time he made records, he had me sit by and I'd shake my head and I 'd say 'No, it's no good, start over', I'm very sorry, cut! and things like that, but anyway,

when Vladimir came back, of course Moussia was off some place but…)

"how did he find things in Russia, excuse me".

"He never reached his home, or his estate and he got the last train out from Russia that was occupied by the White Army but they permitted him to go along but he became ill so they put him off the train, it was in a peasant village and being an aristocrat they immediately acquiesced to whatever he asked and the woman said she would give him a room but she wouldn't enter the room so she'd open the door a crack and give him a bowl of soup and he thinks he had typhoid fever at the time, because he said 'that's when I lost all my hair' and when he finally returned to San Francisco, no wife, no house, no news, the consul had disappeared I don't know what happened to the consul, and the foreman of his factory, of one his factories in Russia, had been given 100000 dollars to run a factory and then later on Vladimir sent him ten thousand to maintain himself so he wrote a letter to the man asking for some money and he said do you remember I sent you ten thousand, and the man said "oh that was another account.. and so Vladimir became a dishwasher on the ah, what was that, Southern Pacific, or the Twentieth Century."

"Twentieth Century."

"Now I remember something about the history of these two--what is the word, the Russian word, for the little wodka cup."

"Oh, yes, when he went back or tried to get back to his estate and home in Petrograd, he left Russia with two suitcases, they were alligator, pure alligator, suitcases, heavy as lead; I couldn't begin to lift even when it was empty. But I think his valet packed the cases and for some reason or other put the two little cups in with one of the cases. Vladimir opened the cases; one contained white tie and tails, including a smashed down silk hat; the other included the tuxedo. Now what good did that do him on a beach in San Francisco?

One of the two wodka cups, dated with Vladimir's fifth anniversary.

After his return to the USA, Vladimir decided not to look for his wife. His large car, a Willys Knight convertible touring sedan of 1918, had been repossessed by the municipality for unpaid parking. He became a dish washer on a train to Chicago. On his way, he passed the small town of Barstow and decided to change his name in Barstow. In Chicago, he joined a group of émigré Russians.

Vladimir started a career as a singer. He got in touch with Fern who was a professional piano player, to accompany him. She said that "he sang in church on Sundays and in the synagogue on Saturdays". They got married in 1924 and stayed happily together until his death in 1975 at the age of 86 years. They moved to New York and he took up his former profession, designing many steel bridges, some of which still carry the name of his engineering firm.

As regards Vladimir's return trip to Russia, I speculate that he may have reached his flat in Petrograd because how would he otherwise have been able to fetch his two suitcases with some properties in them?

2 Vladimir and Fern Scull in Chicago and New York

When Vladimir arrived in Chicago in early 1921, working as a dishwasher on a train from California, he found a lively Russian émigré community there, and he decided to stay. In order to remain unnoticed – for reasons mentioned in chapter V-3, he had formally adopted the surname Barstow, a word he had seen when his train passed through the station of Barstow, California. He decided to try and get work as a singer. He had a lovely voice, *basso cantante* and he was very musical – which is not surprising because his father was an excellent pianist and was composing melodies once in a while. He loved to sing, he had a strong interest in opera music, he was very good at singing the German 'Lied'. He started to take singing lessons and earned some money by singing in choirs. This is how, in October 1921, he met the pianist Fern Scull, at that time 22 years old, who was coaching a choir in which he sang. They liked each other immediately and he often accompanied her to the Chicago radio station WGN, where she worked.

Fern and Vladimir in 1924, by Theatrical Studio, 359 Clark Street, Chicago

Fern Scull was a very good pianist. She had studied at the Chicago Conservatory of Music against the wishes of her father, a Methodist minister in Indiana, who found it sinful to play together with others. Fern did well, she was playing the piano and the organ on the radio – and became the staff accompanist at radio station WGN in Chicago. She was an excellent sight reader ("I read music as well as reading the newspaper").

A good example of the sort of music she played in those days, is shown in an issue of the Chicago Sunday Tribune's radio program. She accompanied on piano: Mark Love, basso, Walter Pontius, tenor, Thomas Coates, baritone, Lawrence Salerno ('singer of lilting Neapolitan lyrics') and other soloists, singing a 'gay group of numbers'.

Vladimir sang as often as he could. According to Fern he sang in the Catholic Mass and the Methodist church and even in the synagogue on Shabbath. All every single week!

He also had acting ambitions, and he had a wonderful time "hanging out" with the Russian Colony, who soon gather in Fern's apartment. More than once, she helped out some of these Russians with money. According to Fern it was in that company that Moussia found Vladimir back. She had come to Chicago to sit at Prokofiev's side in December 1921 for the final rehearsals and grand première of his opera "The Love

for three Oranges. She gave him her comments and theatre advice. Moussia then left for Europe and in Paris ran into the famous pianist Alexander Borovsky, whom she married in December, 1922.

Fern liked these Russians but did not wish to continue supporting them. She urged Vladimir to forget theatrical glory and seek a regular income, which he did. Being a qualified civil engineer he took on freelance design work for steel bridges, swing bridges in particular. But he did not forget his singing and acting ambitions so easily and preferred to follow his heart.

When Fern's father, a Methodist Minister in the village of Moscow, Indiana, received word that his daughter might be 'living in sin with a Russian', he announced his arrival in Chicago. There was no time to waste. The impending arrival of her parents brought about an immediate decision. 'What about next Saturday?", said Vladimir and they went to look for a minister who would help them tie the knot. After several refusals, they found someone. A minister of the Second Presbyterian Church in Chicago 'united them in marriage' on Saturday, February 16, 1924, but only after a stern interrogation of Vladimir. The Reverend said that he was surprised that Vladimir, a big man towering over the petite Fern, should have chosen such a little girl. Fern, reminiscing 66 years later, said Vladimir's reply was the absolute highlight of the occasion: "Yes, but she plays the piano so well!".

In 1928, Fern and Vladimir moved to New York, where Vladimir still hoped to begin an acting career. This idea was very short-lived. During his first performance, he forgot his lines. Then he was put in touch with his family in Paris, through the good offices of Moussia.

He resumed his former career as a civil engineer, designing steel bridges. He started working for a design firm, later started his own office with a partner (Fern: "Vladimir *knew* steel. He was best in moving bridges, uplift and swing").

Throughout the period 1930-1960, Vladimir and Fern supported financially Vladimir's mother Lydie and the family in Paris as much as they could.

In June 1940, Fern and Vladimir met the intrepid Moussia, now remarried to Giacomo Antonini, in New York, during the first few

months of the war in Europe. She was there to take her daughter Natasha Borovsky (almost 16 years old, half Jewish) to the United States via Genoa, returning to France in March 1941. During the 1940s and 1950s, Vladimir and Fern welcomed Natasha to their home often. This was very kind of them both. Life can be more improbable than fiction!

Fern and Natasha's father Alexander Borovsky had a common interest, the piano. During her 1990 taped interview, Fern said: "Moussia married a pianist by the name of Borovsky. Borovsky and I kept up a relationship all the time, every time he made records, he had me sit by and I'd shake my head and I 'd say "No, it's no good, start over , I'm very sorry, cut ! and things like that". She must have meant the Borovsky recordings made by Vox in the 1950s, the complete set of which she had in her collection (these records are now with a descendant of her twin sister Faye).

In New York, Vladimir went into the bridge designing business with a partner, in : "Barstow and Mulligan, Consulting Engineers", later called Barstow, Mulligan and Vollmer. They designed, for example, "Spaghetti Junction", the Kennedy Interchange at Louisville, Kentucky.

In New York, the couple lived from 1928 until 1951 in 39 West 70th Street, a basement in a brownstone building. One room with a tiny kitchen and a tiny bathroom. But the room had had a working fire place and ample space for twin beds used as couches during the day and of course, a big Chickering grand piano.

In April 1951, they moved into 56 W 65th Street where Fern stayed after the death of Vladimir in 1976, at the age of 87.

Fern and Vladimir were very happily married.

Fern Baranovsky-Scull

3 Lydie, Olga with Elena, Elena with Olik and Irina, Sviatoslav with Lydie, in Paris

In Turkey, during the latter part of their first SIX years of their flight from Petrograd, the Baranovsky family, like so many other emigrated Russians in those years, still believed that one day they would return to their home country. But from 1922/23 onwards, they started to realize that they might have to press on and find another country to stay for good.

In 1923, decisions were taken. Until that time, Elena had dreamt of going to the USA, to join her brother Vladimir or, maybe, to find back Kerensky. The others dreamt of settling in France. The adults spoke French. Elena now started to dream of becoming a doctor in France. Olga dreamt of becoming a cinema star there. They had heard that the 'émigré' Russians in France had organized themselves well, in particular with helping new arrivals. The small children could go to a good school.

Lydie, Olga and her daughter Elena and Sviatoslav with his daughter Lydie were the first to go to France, by boat, in the autumn of 1923. They went in the blind, without any preparation like obtaining a letter of introduction.

They arrived in Marseille. They went to a somewhat too expensive hotel, having sold one of grandmother's jewels. Lydie worked wit Mourad (?) for a while.

Olga (Olya) and her daughter Elena went on to Paris. They settled in an hotel in the Rue Mouffetard, in December 1923. Olga found work in an assembly plant of Renault. In a heavy manual job, because she had no qualifications. Small Elena stayed at home all day, in bed, because she was ill. A doctor diagnosed tuberculosis of the bones and she was taken to hospital. After a few months he was proven wrong and she could return home.

Elena and her two children went to France a little later, in 1924 :

Chef de la 4me Section à la Police

Constple

République Turque

AU NOM DU GOUVERNEMENT
DE LA GRANDE ASSEMBLÉE
NATIONALE DE TURQUIE

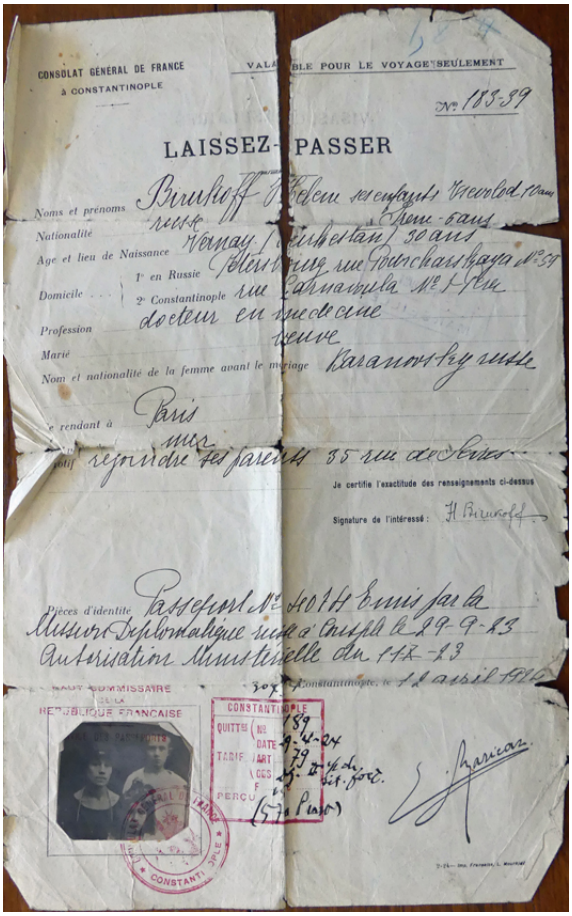
Présent Passeport est valable pour bénéficier de la protection Turque

Mme Hélène
Birukoff fille de
Serolod

REFUGIE POLITIQUE
RUSSE

Le 14/5/1924

COMMISSARIAT SPECIAL
VU AU DÉBARQUEMENT
22 MAI 1924
MARSEILLE


CONSULAT GÉNÉRAL DE FRANCE
À CONSTANTINOPLE
VALABLE POUR LE VOYAGE SEULEMENT
N° 183-39
LAISSEZ-PASSER
Noms et prénoms
Nationalité
Age et lieu de Naissance
Domicile
1° en Russie
2° Constantinople
Profession
Marié
Nom et nationalité de la femme avant le mariage
se rendant à
Je certifie l'exactitude des renseignements ci-dessus
Signature de l'intéressé :
Pièces d'identité
Autorisation Ministérielle du
HAUT COMMISSAIRE
DE LA
RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
CONSTANTINOPLE
QUITTE
DATE
TARIF
PERÇU

Sviatoslav ('Tossia') arrived with her in Paris, in the spring of 1924. He found work as a porter, in a railway station. He had to work at night, he mostly slept during the day.

After a while, Elena (Lilya) made contact with a Catholic organisation who proposed that the three children could be admitted to a school run by a monastery. Small Elena was 10 years old, Vsevolod Birukoff 11 years et Irina 7 years old. In their second year in the monastery, the nuns (whom the children called 'penguins') decided to convert the children to Catholicism. That was too much for their parents and they were taken out of this school.

Their living conditions in the Rue Mouffetard were atrocious. The small apartment they had rented was far too small. Olya, her husband Sacha and Elena slept in a small room. All the others in the only other room. Grandmother Lydie and her grandchild Lydie slept in the only bed. Tossia on a couch. In the evening, two mattresses were installed on the floor, for Elena (Lilya) and her two children. Olga Kerensky-Baranovsky came to visit and she was horrified.

After about a month, grand-mother called an emergency family meeting. She came straight to the point: "It is impossible to live here".

It was at that time that Elena met Gueorgui Alexandrovitch Stern who had emigrated to France already before the Revolution. He was married and did not seem to have any money problems. Thanks to him, the family could change apartment and install themselves in the rue du Faubourg St Honoré. It is also thanks to him that Elena found a job as a nurse.

In fact, a romance had tied Elena and Monsieur Stern and Lydie did not fail to warn her daughter against this «flirt» with a married man. But Monsieur Stern, a round man with few hairs, had a pleasant demeanour and the grand-mother quickly forgot her warnings. The other members of the family adopted him as well and he became "Georgik" (little George) for everyone.

"Messieurs Dames", he said, "this is a madman's house. Messieurs Dames"

In 1925, he came up with a proposal, rather a miracle, a fairy tale. Everyone listened in silence. They could rent a small furnished house he had found in the neighbourhood of Paris, for three years. The owner had to leave immediately and he accepted that we would pay a lump sum but in in instalments. A house with on the ground level: three bedrooms, a kitchen, and a dining room and three more rooms on the first floor. A garden all around, with three apple trees, a pergola and bushes of lilacs and jasmine. It was situated in a quiet street, the Villa Sommeiller nr 5. They moved there on 8th April 1925. They had a happy time there. That is where Moussia came to visit them.

Villa Sommelier. In the middle, grand-mother Lydie in black. On either side, leaning on her, Lydie (the daughter of Tossia) to the left and Irina on the right. In the door

opening, Olya, Gricha and Elena the daughter of Olya. Behind grandmother: Elena, with « Georgik » Stern at her side. To the left of Elena : her son Vsevolod "Olik". The boy on the far left is a friend of Olik's. The photo was taken in 1926.

Elena put her son Olik in the Lycée Janson de Sailly and her daughter Irina in the Lycée Molière.

Olik 1926

Irina 1926

Grandmother Lydie was again at the centre of everyone. She kept a tight budget and assured a Russian way of life. She raised her grandchildren in a Christian way, notwithstanding the atheist belief of her daughter Elena. They stayed in the house at Villa Sommeiller until 1929.

Lydie (born 1860) in 1926, with her husband's general's insignia. As shown by the dry imprints at the right bottom corner, this photo and the two previous ones of Elena's children were taken on the same day in the studio of R. Rouers, 9, Place Saint André des Arts, maybe in connection with Moussia's visit (the above picture of Lydie was also found in Moussia's archive with Natasha Borovsky, in San Francisco).

In 1929, the house at the Villa Sommeiller had been taken back by its owner. Elena had rented a large apartment of five rooms for herself, Georgik and her two children, at 41 rue Claude Terrasse.

The whole family went to Berlin in August and September, to visit Vera and Moussia, as discussed in chapter V-3.

At the end of 1929, the year when Vladimir was finally found back, the family moved to 2 boulevard de la République at Boulogne Billancourt.

In 1930, commenced a correspondence with Vladimir in New York and he started to send money and parcels. Thirteen years after they had lost contact …

With time, this separation meant the end of the very close bond in the family. They felt a bit like guests when they were invited to each other's houses.

Georgik then went back to live with his wife. This was the start of a new emigration. Everyone went living in Billancourt, in the Avenue Jean Jaurès, not far from the métro station Marcel Sembat, in two apartments.

Olga

Olga (« Olya »), was an actress, like her sister Vera. They had studied at the same school in Moscow. Olga left to play in the provinces, no doubt to avoid rivalry with her sister who was becoming famous very rapidly. She married the actor Alexander Alexandrovich Soumarokov with whom she had a daughter, Elena, born in 1914.

She divorced Soumarokov and remarried Constantin « Kostia » Kloboutski but not for very long because he disappeared during the Revolution. During her flight from Russia, in Constantinople in 1921, she remarried Gricha Dudinkov (Dudinchev ?) with whom she stayed until her death in 1940.

She and her parents had found a temporary refuge in Ekaterinodar during their flight. There, she played with a group of actors having arrived from various parts of Russia. The family could survive in that city largely on her fees.

In Paris in 1928, Olga created a theatre company called the « Théatre du drame et de la comédie », playing pieces in Russian. When Vera came to

Paris, she witnessed various performances but never wished to play, probably because she considered the level of play below her own standard. But she accepted that her husband Alexeï Pavlov did some of the directions. The theatre went bust and was closed, shortly before the death of Vera in 1935.

Olga always had a melancholic and sad nature. After her theatre closed, she fell slowly into a depression and became an alcoholic. She died on 5 September 1940.

Sviatoslav

Sviatoslav (« Tossia ») Baranovsky, the youngest of Vsevolod's children,, was born on 7 August 1894. He probably started studies in a military academy. He was 23 years old at the start of the Revolution. During the civil war he joined the White armies in the South, commanded by general Piotr Nikolaievich Wrangel.

He was the last of the family to arrive at Constantinople, just before the death of his father Vsevolod in March 1921. One of the memories etched in the minds of some family members is that of Vsevolod going repeatedly to the port of Constantinople to await the arrival of his son.

When Sviatoslav found his family in Constantinople, his wife Clavdia Serdiuk was not with him.Had she left him ? Had they been separated in the turmoil of the Revolution and the civil war ? We do not know. But their daughter, Lydie, came to Constantinople all alone at the age of 5, in 1922, sent by her grandparents under the care of someone.

In Constantinople, Tossia worked as a dishwasher in a restaurant. In Paris, he lived with the family when they resided at Villa Sommelier, from 1925 – 1929.

After that communal life, he became separated from the family. At first, he left together with his mother and his daughter, the two Lydies. He then remarried Olga Sergueievna Zavalichina with whom he had a daughter Nathalie.

Olga Sergueievna and Tossia's mother Lydie did not get on very well together. Lydie asked her daughter Elena if she could stay with her. Elena accepted immediately. The two women lived together until

Lydie's death in 1949. They had no contact with Tossia anymore, although he came to her funeral.

Tossia died in Boulogne on 14 April 1961. He was buried at Sainte-Geneviève–des-Bois, near Paris

4 The family in Paris during and after the Second World War

After the German invasion of Poland in 1939, France and England declared war on Germany. **Vsevolod** Birukoff, at the age of 26, joined a special unit charged with laying ambushes in front of the Maginot line. That was the idea but military operations were still very rare. It was a period of waiting and watching during what was called « the phoney war ». Vsevolod only participated in some commando actions.

A few months before the German offensive, he fell in a hole and broke his ankle, which proved to be 'good luck' as he understood only somewhat later. He was moved behind the front in order to care for his 'war wound'. When he returned, he was unable to find his unit. It had vanished, it had been entirely wiped out during the lightning attack of the German Army in May 1940. The French army was in full retreat.

Vsevolod convalescing of his broken ankle, 1940

Vsevolod mounted a bicycle and fled to Paris. A few kilometres from the capital, in a village, he sees a freshly dug grave. A Russian name is on

the cross. “What happened?”, Vsevolod asks a villager. “The Germans have shot him, says the man. Without hesitation, Vsevolod swaps his uniform for civilian clothes which the man offers him. He mounts the bicycle again and continues until he arrives at Boulogne Billancourt. The first person he meets in the street on arriving with his mother, boulevard Jean Jaurès, is no other than his cousin Elena [Sumarakova]. Some time before, Elena and her husband André had seen, from the windows of their apartment, a colourful crowd of Frenchmen on the move, most of them on foot, pushing carts filled with improbable bric-à brac. So the family asked themselves: join or stay ? Since they had nowhere to go, they stayed.

Vsevolod found his wife Yvonne Gaudry and his little daughter Anne-Marie, born in 1937. In 1943, he had a false identity card made, in the name of Gabriel-Jean Gaudrey, which he never used.

Vsevolod’s false identity card

His mother **Elena**, and her sister and brother **Olga** and **Tossia (Sviatoslav)**, stayed at home.

Olga, who of all the family had more trouble to endure the exile, had become alcoholic. Her health deteriorated. Doses of morphine became ever more indispensable and frequent. She died on 5 September 1940, a month after her 49th birthday. She was buried next to her sister Vera in Boulogne Billancourt cemetery.

Irina Birukoff

Just before the war, **Irina** had met the man who would later become her second husband, a charming officer, Michel Dhé, a St Cyr graduate. He was made a prisoner of war by the Germans and was sent to a transit camp to the East of Paris. This camp, a large wild area surrounded by

barbed wire was next to a little forest the surveillance of which was a bit neglected by the Germans. Irina had managed to visit Michel. They had talked and made an escape plan. A plan childishly simple. On the agreed day and hour, Irina came with a bicycle and civilian clothes. In line with Michel's instructions, she came from the side of the forest. Michel managed to find her without too much trouble. He disappeared on the bike in the direction of the nearest station and waited for the first train. It was a perfect escape, which Irina remembered all her life with a bit of emotion.

Michel Dhé managed to reach the Free Zone, went on to Africa and continued the war. Irene got divorced from her first husband, Igor de Poligny, and married Michel after the liberation. She followed him to the French occupation zone in Baden-Baden, then to Indochina and Algeria. Michel, who had a daughter called Michèle of his first marriage, finished his military career as a colonel. Before retiring, he took a job in the Ministry of Agriculture while Irina found a job at the Embassy of Iran. Michel died in 1968 and Irina on 8 March 2015.

After the war, there had been another change in the family: Vsevolod separated from Yvonne Gaudry to marry Fernande Renaud, named "Camille", who divorced herself from Guy O'Neill with whom she had had, in 1940, a daughter Catherine.

Vsevolod and Camille married in 1951, the year their son André was born. Originating from Berry, Camille, a milliner, had opened a shop in the rue des Acacias, not far from Place Étoile. Out of love for Vsevolod she sold it in order to help Vsevolod start his own firm. He had the idea, together with an associate, to lift shipwrecks sunk at the French coast during the war and which obstructed access to a number of French ports. And to sell the old iron afterwards. The initiative was good maybe, but was not crowned with success. After working off La Havre during some months, Vsevold went bankrupt and was forced to look for a job which had become traditional in Russian émigré circles in France: taxi driver. He continued that job until his retirement in 1976. He died of cancer in 1982.

Following the German nazi capitulation, the URSS mounted a propaganda campaign to convince Russian émigrés who had fled from the Bolsheviks, to return to the motherland, under the mottos of reconciliation and patriotism.

In June 1946, the Mother Land offered them a pardon and made the promise to receive them in their lap. Those who accepted to make the return trip would receive Soviet citizenship immediately, on condition to break all links with France. Most Russian émigrés smelled a rat but certain « patriots » who had difficulties with adapting to the French way of life, were fooled and wanted to believe the sincerity of the Soviet authorities.

André Vassiliev [the husband of Elena Sumarakova] was one of them. Life in France had not been kind to him. He had had odd jobs without much interest and had never managed to speak French correctly. France had not seduced him. He had always felt to be a stranger there.

Before the war, André had probably been influenced by the "Mladorossi" or "Young Russians", an organization of Russian émigrés of the 1920s. Under the rather paradoxical slogan «The Czar and the Soviets », the Mladzorossi had proposed to make a synthesis between tradition and revolution so that all could be integrated : from the monarchy to Bolshevism via religion, nationalism and patriotism. After the war, some Mladzorossi amongst whom their chef, Alexander Kazem-bek, were campaigning in favour of a return to the URSS.

Convinced that his life could only be better in the URSS, André managed to convince his wife, Elena. Together with their daughter Ariane and notwithstanding attempts of their family, their aunt Elena in particular, to dissuade them, they left for Russia on 24 September 1947. Would they have known that this voyage was one without return?

Ariane has described what followed in her book « Eternels Emigrés », written from 1988 until 2006. A film, «Est-Ouest » with Catherine Deneuve, Sandrine Bonnaire and Oleg Menchikov, relates the terrible adventure of these repatriates for whom France has never intervened. Nicolas Jallot has devoted a book to them, « Piégés par Stalin », followed by a documentary.

Out of some 10 000 repatriates, hardly a thousand have managed to survive.

At their arrival in the USRS, the Vassiliev and their travelling companions were parked in the former ghetto of Grodno (a Polish

village, become Russian after German-Soviet pact of 1939).They stayed there for a month and a half. They were then sent to Briansk (500 km South of Moscow). Then started a life of wandering throughout the Russian province in search of a definitive settling point. After Briansk they went to the Crimea from where they were expelled in 1948. They then went to Berdiansk (Ukraine), then to Tashkent at the beginning of the 1960s. The big cities were always no-go for them and they never had permission to visit Moscow or Saint Petersburg (Leningrad after the Revolution), where their family had lived.

Ariane, who had finished a study of literature at Tashkent University in 1967, started off being a teacher. She then had a go at journalism before dedicating herself to literature. She has written various novels, short stories and pieces for the theatre. She now works on the third part of « Eternels Emigrés » which she considers to be her life's work and which she writes based on the memories of her mother Elena who died in Tashkent 0n 8 April 2012, 22 years after the death of her husband André.

5 Irina's memories

Introduction by A. Birukoff

In 1980, at the age of 69, Irina feels the need to leave behind a written trace of her immediate family's history. It is remarkable that she was the only one to have that idea, apart from her grandmother Lydie who left behind some notes, year by year, in an invaluable tiny black notebook.

But neither her mother Elena, nor her brother Olik had felt the wish to do so, or failed the courage, or the patience, although they had as least as much information or more than she had about their family. Moreover, Irina was not necessarily in the best position to achieve that work. In fact, her birth has always been a «family secret».

She is the daughter, born out of wedlock, of Alexander Kerensky, prime minister of an ephemeral Provisonal Government, swept away by the 1917 October Revolution. So, she is the half-sister of Olik, son of the

legitimate husband, Nicolas Birukoff, shot by the bolsheviks in 1919 and whose name Irina, born in 1918, carried.

In the family, everyone knew it but no one wanted to talk about it. I have heard it myself only by chance, after the death of my grandmother, who had never talked to me about it, of course. In her book «Eternels Emigrés», my cousin Ariane gives only a very slight hint by noting that in France my grandmother never shared the criticisms of Kerensky from other 'émigrés'. In the short history to follow, Irina avoids the subject rather conspicuously : « *I could have been born, almost, in the Winter Palace* » after having briefly mentioned the meeting of her mother with « *a young lawyer, vaguely related to the family " A. Kerensky.* »

Irina, who had detested her father when she was a teenager, tearing up even the smallest newspaper article about him in small fragments, later apparently became reconciled with the idea that he had been her real father by mentioning it once, someone has told me, during a reception at the Russian Embassy after the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991.

I have never understood why this story, after all pretty commonplace, has always remained surrounded by the greatest mystery, consequently with many unanswered questions remaining.

Only my grandmother Elena could have broken the secret, but she has refused to do so and it seems that Irina has wished to respect that decision. Irina has preferred to tell the story of a united family. With good reason, isn't it, because in adversity this family has always been united.

Irina Birukoff's memories

12 January 1980

I am 62 years old now and I am writing at once, because I am afraid that I will not be able to do it later as strongly as I feel now.

I am 62 years old, therefore I am almost the last witness and more so by stories interposed from another world, further away from us, I think, or rather just as far away, almost, as the prehistory of the Middle Ages. I listen to reports about Moscow and Russia and I have the impression that people do not know what they are talking about.

My grandmother on mother's side whom I have known well, she has left us in 1950 when I was already 32 years old, is born in Petersburg in 1860, the last year of serfdom in Russia.

She was a woman for whom life was her family. Her husband – He or Him with capital letters – the 5 children, the five fingers of the hand, she said, and the grandchildren to whom she devoted so much time, teaching them to read – thanks to her I could read at the age of 3 – reading books to them, fairy tales, poems, telling us also about her own life so different from our lives of uprooted children and the souvenirs of her parents and her own childhood.

My great-grandfather Vassili Vassiliev was a son of small farmers in Kazan province. I know little of his childhood, but I do know that already at a very young age he was noted for his intelligence and notwithstanding his more than modest rural background, he was sent from the village school to the gymnasium and then to University. He left for China to perfect his Chinese studies. He stayed there at least 20 years and when he came back, being already at a riper age, he thought of marrying and founding a family. He was already a Professor at the University and reputed to be one of the best specialists of the Chinese language. His books on Chinese grammar are still known world-wide. He engaged and then married very quickly a very young girl of high Petersburg society with whom he made without delay 5 children, Olga, Lydie,Vladimir, Serge and Marie.

Unfortunately I know very little about this great-grandmother, just a portrait of an already tired young woman when she was only 30 years old and who had to die in labour of her 6th child who did not survive anyhow.

Contrary to what is said today, I think that social life in Russia in that period was well suited to the benefit of a large number of people. We have seen that my great-grandfather, although from modest origins, could not only follow his primary and secondary studies but University as well.

There were no waterproof walls. My grandmother L.V. remembered vividly many old serfs, both from the city and the countryside, who did not feel shackled at all, but on the contrary formed part of the family

where they went there own way. People of the countryside who were feeling at ease with them their masters who, moreover, they rarely saw.

So my great-grandfather, when coming back from China, had been able to buy a large domain, which he later divided between his children and each of them had a pretty large piece. I really believe that ownership questions were not as important as for the French and in my family I have never heard about dirty dramas around an inheritance. The holdings were chosen in line with every-one's wishes and until her last days in 1950, my grandmother kept a wonderful souvenir of time spent in the countryside during her childhood, her teenage years and married life, by herself or with her brothers and sisters.

Her last wish was to be able to go to Kainka before she died, take the tarantass [a carriage], to make a grand tour of the territory with her brother cracking the whip ! She could not fulfill that dream, needless to say.

A widower, with his young children, V.V. does not seem to have tried to remake his life or even have passed time with young persons. It is true that he was alread far from being very young. He took into his house a society lady who was considered to be of a venerable age but could not have been older than forty, Sophie. Sophie was supposed to run the household and, as much as she could, replace the mother of 5 children, three daughters, Olga, Lydie and Marie and the two boys Vladimir and little Serge.

Life with my great-grandfather in Petersburg was comfortable materially but very austere. In fact, after having lost his young wife, Vassili Pavlovich withdrew from the world entirely. He shared his time between his Chinese courses at the University and his personal work in his very beautiful working room, a library moved into his home. The children were placed in a boarding school when they were still very young. The boys in the Cadet Corps and the two older sisters in the Smolny institute, an institute for noble girls, under the patronship of her Imperial Majesty Maria Fedorovna.That institution, the most select of St Petersburg, marked my grand-mother until the end of her life.

The education there was superb, the young girls made all their studies, from a very young age, in three languages. One day in Russian, one day in French, one day in German. When they left, they were fluent in all

three languages. They were not taught much in science, but the literature of the three countries was studied in depth. They learned versification, linguistics, and of course music, sewing, how to run a household, but also how to be a woman of the world.

Olga, the oldest sister of my grandmother was a very brilliant girl, cheerful, passionately happy. On the pictures we have of her, she seems to have been a very beautiful girl. My grandmother was devoted to her and a little in her shadow. The smallest, Marie was apparently the least loved.

The boys were in boarding school all year, the oldest Vladimir was very gifted, he finished his studies as an engineer and had a tragic end, killed by a shell which exploded unfortunately during his studies. He was 22 years old.

[Irina is mistaken here, it was her great-uncle Vladimir who died in that manner when he was 33 years old and a Director of his company, a gun factory. Brother Vladimir Vassiliev became a military man, he was the aide-de-camp of Kerensky and was shot in 1931].

Serge, the youngest one, became a land owner and loved to raise horses. In fact, Vassili Vassiliev had bought and substantially enlarged his domaine at Kainka. During the holidays the whole family went to the countryside for a stay in the fields which, for the children, must have been a real change from their almost monastic life in St. Petersburg. As soon as they became of age, the property was divided and Serge received Polana and Lydie received Kainka.

And there we were in 1877. Olga has finished her studies at Smolny with excellent results. She left school full of spirit and happiness to start her life. The first balls were a triumph and she met almost immediately a young officer of the Yellow Guard of Curasseers of her Imperial Majesty. Lev Baranovsky was very seductive. He is a charmer, he is handsome and very romantic. The best of all : he has a slightly younger brother, Vsevolod, an officer in the same regiment and just as seductive.

The novel seems to be perfect : the two daughters Olga, 19 and Lydie, 17 and the boys, Lev 26 and Vsevolod 25, fall in love. The families give permission and after a few very official meetings, the very severe

Vassili, the father of the young girls, agrees and the engagements of the two brothers and the two sisters are official.

The two young girls are dreaming. Life seems to promise them everything. Finished, the austere boarding school and the home where the father is unbelievably severe. But no, a drama happens. One day, when the four have gone out, with the full permission of the lady in charge to go shopping and have a stroll in the park, time passes too quickly and they come home a little late, at 5 or 6 o'clock and accompanied by their men. He does not like it.

When all these happy people came home, there was a terrible welcome. The father is in a rage, he is very furious. He enumerates to his daughters all the sacrifices he made for them, his lonely life, only to produce these trollops who roam the streets. He does not know anymore what he says in his anger, probably doubled by jalousy. What happens in the heart and head of Olga ? Her joy turns into despair. Still in her hat and coat, devastated by this torrent of reproaches and terrible words, she runs to the window, opens it and jumps. She was 19 years old.

The age of nineteen years has been very important for the women of my family. Olga committed suicide at 19, Lydie, my mother Elena and myself, we have all married at 19.

After this drama in the Vassily home, life became truly impossible. He seldom left his room, he did not talk any more, he seemed to be cut-off from this world and was internally eaten away by remorse.

The boys are more free already, but the two girls spend two terrible years full of sadness and fear. Until the end of her life, my grand-mother will be marked by that drama and the brilliant image of her sister will never leave her. All her life, she will never forget the birthday of that loved sister, nor the day of her death.

Finally, the youth and the will to live are the strongest, and the marriage in 1878 of Lydie and Vsevolold happened anyhow. I have kept a photo of grandfather, it is truly a handsome man : tall with an extraordinary presence. She is very small at his side, a little plump but with very pretty eyes. All her life she'll adore him and raise her children in the cult of their father.

The first years of marriage were very difficult. The young officer, after a short time in Petrograd, looks for an apartment. Lydie, already pregnant, has to climb many steps. She has a miscarriage and will stay without children for 7 years. The young couple is transferred from one garrison to another. In 1885 they have their first child, a girl, Vera. Vladimir the next year, then Olga. In 1892 my mother Elena and then the last one Tossia (Sviatoslav) the darling of his mother.

My mother was` born in Verny and very soon spent her youth in Tashkent. Everyone adored life in that region at nowhere. All remember sunny images of its nature and of its inhabitants, so gentle and smiling.

During those days, the young officer made a brilliant career and the whole family installed themselves at St. Petersburg. The girls went to the Gymnasium, the boys : the elder at The Polytechnical School and the small last one still at home.

My grandfather was a very complete man, very brilliant in his career. When he came out of the military academy, HE specialized in law. He became a military judge, but resigned in 1905 at the time of the first uprisings. He refused to formally condemn some defendants.

I anticipate, but I write this to explain that my family was always very open-minded.

1998

Interrupted 18 years ago, I shall try to finish the history of the Baranovsky-Vassiliev branch of our family. [in this second part, Irina who never had a child, writes to her nephew, André Birukoff]

How to tell the rest ? The children, mother, our uncles and aunts became independent. Vera, the eldest, wanted to do theatre. Grandfather, following his conviction of letting everyone free to do what he liked, did not object. As you know, she became a great actress. My uncle Volodia [Vladimir], a little less loved in the family, became an engineer and even succeeded to start a small factory. Olga, always weak and fragile, want to follow in the footsteps of her older sister, in the theatre, but she did not have the same gift or temperament. Mother, your grandmother, wanted to become a medical doctor and succeeded, but after your father was born. She who loved her father and did not reproach him but for a

single thing, namely that he became a military man, fell in love with Colonel Birukoff, 20 years older than she and she did her final year of medicine being pregnant of your father. Tossia, the last one, went to the Military Academy.

Then came the war of 1914.

Your grandfather left at the head of his troops. You know his end. My own grandfather became senator of Finland. Mother was ill at the beginning of the problems. She left [for Finland] with her parents and your father. At the sanatorium she met a young lawyer, vaguely related to the family : A. Kerensky. Vera continued her beautiful career at the theatre. Olga married an actor Klolontzik and had a baby, Elena, nine months younger than your father.

At the very first demonstrations, Volodia who had been under a rain of metal bolts from his workers, packed his bags and left for the United States. He was my mother's favourite brother. He did not give us any news until 1930.

That was the 1917 revolution. I could have been born, almost, in the Winter Palace.

It's the revolution. The murders, the takings and re-takings of towns by the Whites or the Reds.

For my grandparents there was no way they could stay. They left to the South and waited until their children would regroup. Mama and Auntie Olga found each other back. They have the three children with them : Olik 5 years, Elena 4 and me a few months old. The artilley, White or Red, we did not know.

Nothing to eat and the children ill - children's cholera. It was written that it was not their destiny to die all five there. After so many horrors, they found their parents back at Anapa. Over there, Mama was asked to serve as a doctor. It had been decided that the grandparents, Olga, and the children would try to leave as soon as possible to Constantinople. Mama was not there, nor Tossia who was on his armoured train. Grandmother did not want to leave without him. They waited at Odessa. In the very last days of the evacuation, Tossia arrived so that the family – 4 adults and three children – could leave for Constantinople.

From there I have my first personal souvenirs. After the horror of the refugee encampments where my grandfather caught a cold and where he died very quickly of pneumonia, we were transferred to one of the Princes Islands in the Bosporus across from Constantinople. A souvenir of Paradise. It was warm there, there were fig trees, plenty of fruit and the sea. And then Mama arrived. She had fled from Russia, passing through Roumania and she finally arrived at Antigone but too late to see her father. But for me, three years old, that remains a very precise recollection. My own mother was there, with a sailor's collar. I still see her. In my memory, Antigone was the paradise, but it did not last. The reception centre was closed and we had to stay elsewhere. It was a kind of a slum at Galata, a miserable neighbourhood in Constantinople. Mama took the washing elsewhere and me and Olik where in a sort of boarding room at Bouyouk-Dere on a small island in the Bosporus. There were no other children as small as me, but I was taken there with my brother. Those are really bad memories. It seems to me that it was always cold there, the contrary of Antigone. Mama arrived by some sort of felucca, once a week. It was very hard. Luckily, I had my big brother.

I do not recall very well anymore how long that lasted. A winter, I think. The rest of the family had already left for France. Finally, mother had found the money for a passport and visas. A poor man who worked as a diver somewhere, lent her the sum. We saw him back in Paris. He was a pretty uneducated young man, Serge, the soldier. He was always welcome.

Years later, in Paris, life had started in the rue Mouffetard. The whole family packed into one room. Tossia worked at night. Grandmother did not go out very often. Olga and Mama went out every day to the Bourjois factory. They put powder in boxes. The three little girls Elena, Lydie and Irina stayed with the Sisters and Olik in the college at Meulun.

Then, life became better organised. Mama, who could not practice as a doctor, found work as a nurse and Olik and me obtained scholarships as half-boarders in the Lycée Janson de Sailly and the Lycée Molière.

5 Tombstones tell a story

After the death of Elena (Hélène), it was decided to rebury, together with her in one grave, her mother Lydie, her sister Olga, and her sister Vera, at the New Cemetery at Billancourt, France.

Hélène Birukoff
1892-1967
Lydie Baranowsky
1860-1949
Olga Baranowsky
1890-1940
Vera Baranowsky
1885-1935

It is very telling that Elena is called Hélène *Birukoff* although for the others their maiden name was used. Four magnificent women united also in death.

In the case of their equally admirable cousin Olga Lvovna Kerensky-Baranovsky, it is remarkable that her ex-husband Alexander Kerensky is buried at her side, together with their two sons, at Putney Vale Cemetery, Wimbledon, London. Kerensky had remarried Lydia Ellen (Nell) Tritton (1899–1946) in 1939. When he died in New York in 1970, the local Russian Orthodox Churches in New York refused to grant Kerensky burial, because of his past, as did the Serbian Orthodox Church. His body was then flown to London and he was buried at the side of his first wife Olga, who had always considered to have stayed married to him anyhow.

The inscriptions on these graves are as follows (from left to right):

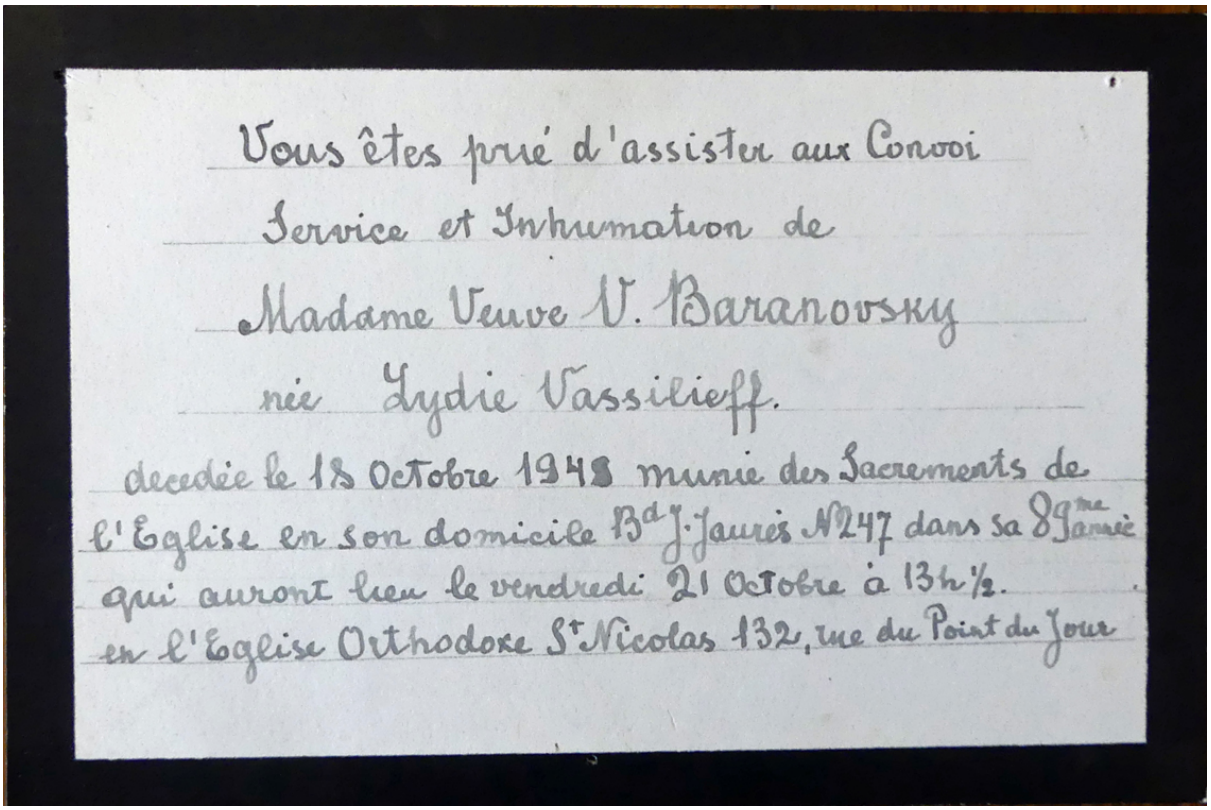
Doctor Oleg Alexander Kerensky
1905-1984
In fondest memory by his son Oleg and for ever and ever deeply loved by his wife Dorothy
DOROTHY
1908-1985
Dorothy
In loving memory of my darling mother
TONY

Alexander F. Kerensky
born 4th May 1881
died 11th June 1970

Gleb Kerensky
beloved husband of Mary
1907-1990
Mary
1920-2013

On the small stone at the top of Gleb's grave (she is buried in the same grave) :
Olga Lvovna Kerensky
1884 - 1975

The following very touching cards were found between Elena's papers concerning the burial of Lydie in 1949.



Vous êtes prié d'assister aux Convoi
Service et Inhumation de
Madame Veuve V. Baranovsky
née Lydie Vassilieff.
décédée le 18 Octobre 1948 munie des Sacrements de
l'Eglise en son domicile Bd J. Jaurès N°247 dans sa 89me année
qui auront lieu le vendredi 21 Octobre à 13h½.
en l'Eglise Orthodoxe St Nicolas 132, rue du Point du Jour

ENTREPRISE DE MONUMENTS FUNÈBRES

EN MARBRES, GRANITS, GRANITS RECONSTITUÉS ET PIERRES

E. BOIRON

133, Rue Thiers, BOULOGNE-BILLANCOURT (Seine) -- Tél. MOLITOR 02-35

Mêmes Maisons : Cimetières de Boulogne Ancien et de Saint-Cloud

*Inhumation de M^me^* Vve Baranovski

décédé le 18 octobre 1949

Division 6 *Ligne* 8 *N°* 44 *à* 88 *ans.*

Avoir en Dépôt ..... *Couronnes Perles*

.....

.....

La Maison ne se rend responsable des Couronnes que pendant un an et ne les rend qu'à la Famille.

The first grave of Lydie

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Jan Doets would like to express his heartfelt thanks to all those generous and friendly people who have helped him with information and photos since the year 2000. He presents them here in historical sequence…

Way back in the year 2000, my son **Arie Jan Doets**, gave me a short novel by the Dutch diplomat/writer F. C. Terborgh, pseudonym for R. Flaes (1901-1981), way back in 2000. After having also read Terborgh's other work, I contacted his son, **Reijnier Flaes**, a retired diplomat. He has stayed my friend until today. With him, I spent some years reading the finely hand-written journals of his father. Very interesting. His father was posted to many countries in periods they were in the news. For example, he was in Spain during the Spanish Civil War, in China in the years leading up to the Japanese invasion and war. In England and Portugal during the Second World War and then in Poland at the time that the Poles were taken over by communism. It was in those journals 1930-1950 that I found some details about Moussia Sila-Nowicki and I found her so interesting that I decided to dig a little deeper into the story of her life.

Moussia, when Flaes senior met her in the 1930s, was married to his best friend, Gino Antonini, a Dutch -Italian writer and literary critique. She was first married to Vladimir Baranovsky with whom she escaped from Russia in 1917 and then to Alexander Borovsky, a famous classical Russian pianist before the world war. With Borovsky, she had a daughter Natasha, a poet and novelist living, in 2001, in retirement in San Francisco with her husband Stuart Dodds, retired editor of the San Francisco Chronicle. A few years after Moussia's death in 1959, Gino Antonini remarried, with **Karin Barnsley**. I contacted her and visited her in Steep, Petersfield, England in the winter of 2001. I also contacted **Natasha Borovsky** and **Stuart Dodds** in San Francisco. But Natasha became ill and it took a few years before the contact was re-established. They then sent me anecdotes and copies of many photos, including of the Baranowsky family, even a picture taken of Vsevolod Baranovsky on his death bed in 1921. And a beautiful picture taken of Lydie Baranovsky taken in a photo studio in Paris in the late 1920s. It was clear that Moussia had maintained good relations with Vladimir's mother and sisters, also after she had married Borovsky. How come ?

Moussia's many photo albums stayed with Karin Antonini after the death of her husband. She gave permission to their son Niccolò to scan all Moussia's photos of interest to me and he did. She introduced me to **Andrzej Leszek Dzierzynsky**, better known as André Dzierzynski, artist painter, who knew his aunt Moussia and gave me access to his Polish family photos. His father Olgierd, cousin of Moussia, fought with General Sikorsky's Polish Army during the Second World War.

By 2012, I had already enough material to start the writing a story on the life of Moussia, and I began to publish it in two languages, English and French. The story grew as I was writing it and finally covered 50 episodes on my blogs The storycurator and Le curator de contes.

In the beginning of 2013, as the story grew, I got into contact with the **Meal family** in Indiana USA. Why ? They are related to Fern Scull, Vladimir Baranovsky's wife of more than 50 years.

Fern Scull had a twin sister, Faye. Faye married Chester Meal. They had five children all of whom have known Vladimir very well. One of Fay's daughters, Beverly (still very much alive at 94) and her son Paul, a scientist at Tufts University in Massachusetts, USA, sent me anecdotes and the most important of all: they gave me a copy of Vladimir's passport on which he left Russia via Vladivostok and Japan to San Francisco, and the sound tapes of an interview Beverly had with Fern in 1990, and photos of the his wodka cup, and the certificate of his birth. Two children of Beverly's brother Harlan Meal, Doug Meal and his sister Katherine Goetz-Meal helped me with the first but still rather incomplete genealogical information. Kevin Laird, the son of Beverly's sister Faith Meal (married with Bill Laird), sent me copies of articles and of extracts of municipal forms filled in by Vladimir in the 1920s and the 1930s. Faith sent me pictures of an old gold watch once owned by Vladimir.

So, this family has provided me with essential information. In June 2013, when Beverly became 90 years old, the whole family got together for her party and they gave me the chance via Skype to talk with them, one by one ! I am still in touch with them.

I found lots of interesting detailed information on Moussia and even some on Vladimir in **Serge Prokofiev's** Memoirs 1915 - 1923 and 1924-1933. Moussia became his close friend from December 1920 onwards

and remained so until his departure from France to Russia in 1936. He called her Frou-Frou.

Apart from Prokofiev's diaries, I have made little use of books but I certainly have found very useful the book «Alexander Kerensky, the first love of the revolution » by **Richard Abraham, Columbia University Press, New York, 1987**.

I have consulted all the Olga Kerensky papers in the archives of the **Cadbury Research Library** in Birmingham, England.

Early in 2013, I had some useful contacts with **Stephen Kerensky**, son of Alexander's son Gleb and Stephen's sister **Libby (Elisabeth) Hudson-Kerensky.**

Finally, I thank my co-author **André Birukoff** (Paris), his sister **Anne Marie Montoussé-Birukoff** (Marseille), her daughter **Christine Montoussé** (Quito, Ecuador) and André's niece **Ariane Solodennikov-Vassiliev**, who lives in Tashkent, Russia.

André joined my project very late and by doing so he gave it a tremendous boost. He had inherited papers from his grandmother Elena Birukoff-Baranovsky, which, as late as June 2017, he translated into French. The contents threw an additional light on my findings and made the book complete. He has translated our complete book from English into French.

Anne Marie has received us in May 1914 and July 2017 in her home in Marseille with great hospitality and has shown so many photos and papers. Her daughter Christine was there with her husband in July 2017 because it was Anne Marie's 80th birthday. I have to thank her specially because without her I would never have found her uncle André and her mother!

Ariane had written a novel, in the 1980s, in Russian, based on the contents of three exercise bools which her mother Elena, granddaughter of Olga, a sister of Vladimir, had filled with her memories of the flight to Paris from Russia via Constantinople. In chapters V-2 and VII-3, I have made may literal quotes from her book and augmented them with dates found in a little Black Notebook which belonged to mother Lydie which she kept since her youth in the nineteenth century

Throughout the last 5 years, I have often received instant help from my talented friend **Anna Mosina**, a young Russian and Arab translator, who lives in the The Hague, Netherlands. She even had a rather successful go at Alexander Kerensky's *undecipherable letter* of 1916!

Jan Doets with Anna Mosina in 2014

ANNEX 1

Account for the sale of affairs of O. Volia Baranovsky

Receipts

1918		
Autumn	Sale of two red and yellow beds with mattress, dish and bucket	325
1920		
March	Sale of large and small carpets of living room	2500
Septembre	Sale of white and yellow bed with mattress, 12 chairs, porcelain service in 12 pieces	3400
Septembre	Sale porcelain	250
Octobre	Sewing machine Singer	1000

	Report	7475
Recto		
Receipts)	Carry-over	7475
1921		
February	Divan, 2 armchairs and the desk of O.Volia	3000
"	Dining room furniture and glass cabinet	2500
"	Furniture living room and library	9000
Mars	Porcelain coffee service, small glasses etc	915
Mars	Cup holders, 1 carpet, 1 chandelier	950
Mars	Cigarettes of O.Volia	100
Mars	Kitchen table and red kitchen divan	50
Avril	Divan cushions et cetera	160
Avril	Some toys	30
Avril	Painted dinner table (not in oak)	75
	Total en marks finlandais	**24255**

The accounts and receipts for money transfers are kept with me, Maj.

ANNEX 2

Account expenses and money transfers O. Volia

			Marks finlandais
Spent 1920			
march 26	Storage, insurance, 1917,1918,1919 et Jan. Feb. March 1920		1290,2
September 2	Transfer to O.Volia by Nord.Fören.Banken 24 Pounds sterling		3400
	Cost of telegram		53
November 25	Transfer to Oncle Volia by Konsallis Osake Poukhi 900 francs		2718
	Cost of telegram		136,8
December 18	Transfer to O. Volia by Crédit Lyonnais Paris 1100 francs		2706
	Cost of telegram		81
"	Newspaper ads for sales in 1920		33
"	Costs safe O.Volia until end 1920		160
		Carry-over	10578
Spent 1921	Carry-over		10578
Jan-March	Costs of showing objects to buyers, storage, packing		266
Feb	Storage and despatch of objects to Storage Fix of 1april 1920 to 1 mars 1921 when all articles were retired from storage		948,7
Mars	Cost of ads in newspapers and transport of objects after storage		171
"	Costs of repairing frame		221
"	Transfer to O.Volia by Crédit Lyonnais Paris 1000 francs		2600
Avril	Transfer to tante Lydie by Crédit Lyonnais 500 francs		1528
Mai 1er	Still available for transfer		7942,3
			24255