

# Barbara Pym in Germany

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The story of Barbara Pym in Germany is essentially the story of Barbara and Friedbert Gluck. Hazel Holt and Hilary Walton have given an account of the five visits Barbara made to Germany between 1934 and 1938, and of her relationship with Friedbert, in *A Very Private Eye* and *A Lot to Ask*. In this paper I am attempting to draw together the published details of this story, and enhance them with some of Barbara's diary entries, many of which have never before been revealed.

Why Barbara became interested in Germany in her student days is not clear, but I think that in 1930s England there was considerable interest in, and some admiration for, the country whose economic recovery was demonstrating the power of united national effort; others, of course, were more percipient, like Stephen Spender, who in his *The Destructive Element*, foresaw the eventual disastrous effect this power would exert over the rest of Europe. There was cultural interest too, in novels like Christopher Isherwood's *Mr. Norris Changes Trains*, and *Goodbye to Berlin* (though these were both published after Barbara's earliest visit); in the films of von Sternberg and Fritz Lang; and in the popular music of Austria and Germany, which was prominent in the repertoire of Palm Court orchestras and radio programmes in Britain.

Political events did not much interest her at this time, but Barbara loved the music, and was affected by its sentimentality and nostalgia. While on a date with Rupert Gleadow on 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan 1932, Barbara wrote 'We dined at Stewarts (upstairs) and I felt in a very sentimental sad mood – mainly because the radio played *Auf Wiedersehen*', and again on 24<sup>th</sup> June, 'We went off to lunch – choosing Stewarts because of its happy memories and convenience...[There] they played *Wien du Stadt meiner Träume* – I heard it for the first time.'

She was a great picture goer, as we know, and certainly liked many German films, including propaganda – not, however, *The Blue Angel* which she saw with Harry Harker in Jan 1932. 'It's a horrid depressing flick, and Marlene Dietrich revolting – but it was interesting.'

We know also that early in 1934 Barbara was frustrated by the lack of progress in her relationship with Henry Harvey, who was being particularly unkind to her, and she longed for a change of scene away from him, temporarily anyway.

Whatever it was that sparked off her interest, in October 1933 Barbara was attending classes in German, a language which she loved and came to study seriously. Possibly this was in preparation for a National Union of Students visit to Cologne the following Easter. The NUS web site states that 'The National Union of Students was established in Britain in 1922 by ex-service people largely as a result of revulsion against the first world war, with an aim to promote world peace and understanding, and to enable British students to be properly represented in the international student body, the *Confédération Internationale des Etudiants*. It soon established a Travel Department which was held in high esteem by the members and actively used'. Unfortunately I couldn't find any details about those early trips.

Her passport and tickets arrived in March 1934, and on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> she wrote 'Today was the beginning of a very happy month in my life which may make some difference to my future ...I set off for London ... went from Paddington to Trafalgar Square by tube, [then to] the Strand Palace Hotel, where Pedley was waiting.' This was Dorothy Pedley who also went up to St. Hilda's in 1931, to read physiology. I think she is one of the girls walking down the High with Barbara in the photograph in *A Very Private Eye*. 'We had some food at a big Lyons Corner House', she continued. 'I don't like them, they are too big, but the food isn't bad and *one can observe life from there*'. [My italics. This is probably the earliest reference to what became a habit leading to many memorable characters in later novels.] 'I remember feeling rather depressed at the thought of Germany...'

Easter was early that year. On Good Friday, 30 March, Barbara and Pedley had breakfast early and walked to Victoria Station through St. James's Park. Rather a long walk, I should have thought, especially carrying a suit case!

In the train we met a charming Polish girl with red hair and brown eyes, but the other people were quite dull. Then Dover, and arrival at the boat. We had a lovely crossing and never felt the least bit ill. In fact we ate ham sandwiches and chocolate cheerfully – although the prices were scandalous. Ostend proved to be large and clean. We got there about 3.30 and went through the customs, which was far less of a business than I thought it would be. Then into a train and I was surprised to see hard wooden seats for 3rd Class which we were traveling. We got to Brussels soon after 6 and went to dinner. I felt depressed...and almost wished myself back in England. (How little we know of the future). At 11 o/c our train left ... it was lovely gliding into Liège in the early morning. I began to get really excited then. But the most thrilling moment of all was when we got to Aachen, the frontier, and the Customs people came in speaking in German. I managed to talk a little German to a man who came round to look at books [subversive literature?]...

Soon after that we were in Cologne – at about 6 o/c in the morning to be exact. I felt very tired and I've never been (and looked) so dirty in all my life! German students met us at the station and there I first saw Hanns Woischnik ... Buses were waiting for us at the Station and I staggered in half asleep. We drove a long way to the *Kamaradschaftshaus* – where we were to be put up. On arrival we had breakfast – ham and rolls and lots of tea ... Then all I wanted was to go to bed ... There was a large room with six beds in it arranged in three lots one on top of the other, which Pedley and I shared with two quite dull people. I slept until lunchtime, and even then I doubted whether I was really going to enjoy myself ... Then I had my first sight of real Nazis and of Friedbert Gluck. He was wearing black uniform [of the *Schützstaffel*, or SS, originally formed as Hitler's personal bodyguard but later greatly enlarged], although the others were in yellowish brown shirts with the Nazi swastika business on their left arms. [These would have been members of the *Sturmabteilung*, or SA, Ernst Röhm's private army, many of whom Hitler ordered to be killed in the Night of the Long Knives, the rest being absorbed with the SS under Himmler.]

They saluted each other in the Heil Hitler manner. Then we went into lunch and various speeches were made. Friedbert spoke in German – I remember being much impressed by him, and thinking him a marvellous unapproachable Nazi. What did he look like? Tall, with a lovely figure set off to advantage by the black uniform – very dark with smooth black hair and a high forehead – dark complexion and greyish green eyes, [not a typical blonde Aryan, then!] rather strange looking but undoubtedly fascinating. After lunch we went into the town and to the Museum where we went around in parties conducted by German students – we were with a charming boy who spoke English well ... The Cologne Museum has some wonderful pictures in it. I was particularly impressed by the huge Rubens pictures and some of the Cologne painters' work of about the 13th century – lovely colour and some wonderful demons in 'The Temptation of St. Anthony'. They also had some modern ones – several by Van Gogh – including the well known one of the bridge – an interesting one by Picasso ....

After the Museum we went all round Cologne in the buses and saw quite a lot of it. They have some modern looking buildings of which they seem very proud. The cathedral is the centre of the town...and all along one side of the Rhine... Before dinner Pedley and I ventured to the shops and managed to buy cigarettes, oranges, and Pond's vanishing cream, asking for them all in my uncertain German...I can't remember much else of that day, but I suppose I ended up by being still in love with Gabriel, however much the Nazis had impressed me.

*Sunday 1st Apr:* April Fool's Day and the beginning of a new month and I almost think a new period in my life. Today I was completely unfaithful to Gabriel – I mean in the sense I regard it – kissing other people. I began it with a kind of desperation but how it ended is a different story, to be told in good time if I ever finish writing up the account of the next two days.

After breakfast that day Barbara had her first cigarette in 6 weeks [apparently she gave up smoking during Lent], and then went to the cathedral. 'The Service was Roman Catholic and I could not of course follow it, but the singing was remarkably good...' Then there was reception in the Town Hall. 'I got into conversation with a bearded man of our party who seemed to have taken something of a fancy to me. The afternoon was spent wandering in town and we were shown round by a student – a nice serious young man'. Dinner was at 5, then they went to the Opera at 6, where Barbara shared a box with Pedley, the student who had shown them round the town, and another girl.

*Die Valkyrie* – very good especially scenic effects, but of course Sigmund was too fat... During the interval I had some beer with Noel Wallace, the bearded man, who seemed quite nice. I went and smoked a cigarette with him, and Friedbert Gluck came and spoke to us. After the 2nd Act I was talking to three nice medical students from London and Friedbert, who translated some of the German summary of the opera for me, in very sweet and not very good English...I had another cigarette with the bearded man and went into his box where he sat on the floor by me and stroked my arm and ankle ... after the opera was over I went out with him ... we went to the Café Wien and had some lovely cool hock...there was a lovely band which played 1933 tangos and Viennese waltzes...the man is doing research in psychology at London, he told me. We got to the river and then went to another café – a lower class one – where there was real dancing and fat families swaying in time to the music. We danced too, and I enjoyed it. Then by the river again where he kissed me...

The top half of the next page has been cut out. The lower half continues:

Eventually, about 2o/c, we got on a train and arrived back at Mulheim, to find others also returning. One of the Germans, Hanns Woischnik, was coming downstairs with a bottle of something so we all went up to somebody's room and had a little party. We made much noise and drank quite a lot. Hanns was a little tight. After the party had broken up Hanns and I went round the corner and he kissed me several times in the German way, perhaps 'with inside lip', but I did not mind. He was very sweet and asked me to go to his...

and the next lines are lost on the other side of the torn-out page. Was Barbara trying to conceal her activities with the bearded man or with Hanns? Both, probably!

*Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> Apr:* A day of unmixed happiness – undoubtedly the loveliest of this year. The weather was lovely and we set off for our trip on the Rhine. At first I sat quietly on board the steamer and talked to Pedley, the bearded man and the beautiful Yolande Rolla who had reddish blonde hair and brown eyes. As we were given our tickets for the steamer Hanns looked at me intimately with his bright eyes and said 'How are you?' I was wearing his grey silk scarf with my green frock and little black coat. The Rhine was lovely and full of people canoeing in summer frocks and bathing costumes. We were all happy and waved to each other... After a time I got into conversation with Friedbert Gluck. He was looking sweet and he hadn't shaved because his chin was gloriously black and rough. He was wearing flannel bags and a brown tweed coat – a lovely greenish pullover with a nice flowery sort of tie and exquisite shirt. To crown all a very *schön* green hat. We talked a lot and I tried to practice some German on him. He is fond of sports and is good at skiing. I talked also to Hanns who gave me his address and said I must write.

Friedbert and I moved over to where the sun was. I hardly thought of anything, I was too gloriously happy. Then there was a glorious drinking party with lots of white wine. Fancy being nearly drunk in the morning! I sat by Hanns. We landed at Bonn and went ashore – we were to have lunch there and see the University. I talked to the medical students, one of whom cut off a lock of my hair with a penknife, when we were looking at a chapel! Friedbert and Hanns were of course walking with the officials of Bonn University. After a good deal of wandering we had lunch – a good lunch too, although I felt excited and hot and couldn't eat much. During the many German and English speeches I caught Friedbert's eye and we smiled at each other. It was a

merry meal but we had to hurry quickly on board the steamer again to go on to Königswinter.. Here I was with Friedbert all the time. He and I with Adelman led the party to Petersberg. The district is lovely – mountains with forests topping them and romantic looking castles. Many cafes and tables outside of course ... everyone happy and lovely weather. We went up Petersberg in a mountain train and in parts it was very steep ... woods on each side and lovely air when we got to the top. Arrived at the top we went to a café. It was very hot and sometimes I wore Friedbert's hat to shade my eyes from the sun. The cakes were of a size and lusciousness quite unequalled in England ...

After tea we wandered and looked at the lovely view – mountains and woods in the distance – the Rhine and town down in the valley. All the time Friedbert was very sweet – why couldn't I have stayed there always – so happy with someone so nice? At about 6 o/c we went down in the train again, and on arriving in Königswinter we found we had some time to spare, so we went to a café – a lot of us – and had a drink called bohle – or something that sounds like that! It was made with five bottles of wine, slices of orange and various herbs, and stirred round. I cut the oranges and Friedbert did most of the stirring although we all had a turn at it. It was a lovely drink. I walked back to the landing place with Friedbert, and we said how lovely it would be if I could stay, and if we could go together all round this lovely country. It was as romantic as anything could possibly be. Friedbert said he laughed when everything was *too* romantic. We then met the others and saw Hanns again. He paid me charming compliments and said that his afternoon would have been much nicer if I'd been there – and we were all crowded together and he held my hand.

Aboard the steamer again I was with Friedbert and we had a party with some other people. By the time we'd finished there were nine bottles on the table – all empty. I was as near to being intoxicated as I've ever been and was gloriously happy, madly so, with Friedbert very close to me and his arm around me. Once he kissed me and I suppose we didn't behave well - but what did it matter. Indeed what did anything matter? We exchanged addresses... there was much merriment – shouting and singing too, English and German songs. We sang *God Save the King* and *Deutschland über Alles*. That rather worried Friedbert although I couldn't understand why. He and Hanns had an animated talk about it in German. Hanns was drunk I think but very sweet. Then Friedbert and I went down to the lower deck and stood in the front of the ship away from the crowd. 'Closed kissed' we stood and watched the lights of Cologne drawing gradually nearer and it meant saying goodbye I knew, but somehow I could not care. I was really living in the present – an exhilarating sensation too seldom enjoyed. It was so lovely to have someone saying nice things to me after Gabriel's rudeness and unkindness. I at last began to realize that there could be something in my life beyond Gabriel [one of Barbara's names for Henry Harvey].

Friedbert said he had noticed me before he knew my name and that I was like the English song, his *Secret Passion*. I feel somehow that even if we never meet again there will always be this short happiness to remember. Parting seemed at that moment to be romantic. I sat by him in the bus, and at supper in the exalted place. I ate very little and gave Hanns' scarf back to him. Friedbert made a wonderful and passionate speech in German – which Müller translated, badly Friedbert said. Going to the Station we stood together in the back of the bus and he put his arm around me. When we got to the Station we found that the train didn't leave until 10/c. Friedbert took my luggage and found me a place. He kissed me goodbye and we shook hands publicly. As the train slid out of the station I realized that I had left my heart behind in Cologne.

*Tuesday 3rd Apr:* Days were really merged into each other at this time. I was in a carriage with uncongenial companions, separated from Pedley, and felt unhappy. Hanns was traveling as far as the next station...but I couldn't see him to say goodbye which saddened me even more.

The journey home included an overnight stop in Bruges which Barbara seemed to enjoy in spite of her heartache. Before the English party broke up the leader suggested that people should write to thank Gluck if they felt they wanted to thank someone. So presumably Friedbert was the main organiser at the Cologne end.

*Back in London on Thurs 5<sup>th</sup> Apr:* I wandered among the bookshops in Charing Cross Road and bought Vernon Bartlett's new book *Nazi Germany*. Getting home, I realized all the time I was thinking about Friedbert Gluck and not about Gabriel – at least not with the intensity and longing which had formerly characterised my attitude towards him. I looked quite lovingly over my Cologne souvenirs.

*Fri 6<sup>th</sup> Apr – Tues 10<sup>th</sup> April:* I may as well write up these few days together as there isn't anything special to say about them. One important thing seemed to have happened to me though. My tour in Germany meant that I began to take an interest in Hitler, Nazis and German politics. I made a scarlet box with a swastika on it. I bought a small swastika to wear on a pin. I wrote to Hanns and Friedbert, although I realized that one cannot bring back the past. The prospect of going back to Oxford and the possibility of seeing Gabriel did not really thrill me. The first night I came home we turned on dance music and the programme provided two appropriate tunes. *Let there be no more heartaches, no more tears*, was the first, and as far as Gabriel is concerned I don't think there *will* be any more, but of course I realize that I'm bound to be still fond of him, and I shan't really know how things stand until I see him again. The second tune was the old one *I'll see you in my dreams* – and that is probably the only time I shall see Friedbert again. I thought also of the lovely waltz from 'Bittersweet' – *I'll see you again – Whenever Spring breaks through again – Time may lie heavy between – But what has been – Is past forgetting*.

Here there is evidence that a double page has been removed, in spite of the fact that Barbara said there was nothing special to record. After that intensely romantic episode, Barbara returned to Oxford to prepare for Schools, as the BA examinations in Oxford were called.

*Tues 17th April:* The post came and brought me (Oh, joy!) something from Friedbert. A long letter all in German – which I have not yet deciphered, and a lovely snap of him. Also a book containing a speech of Hitler's (in English). Dear Friedbert ... I am longing to decipher my letter. I'll do it on the nice large pages of Henry's notebook – it seems a suitable place for such an undertaking.

*Wed 18th April:* At about 6.30 Gabriel passed by and invited himself in – we talked, and he asked me to supper that evening – very nice it was too – and I felt happy and excited. Henry, by the way, had insisted on reading some of Friedbert's letter [she must have showed it to him, possibly to make him jealous] and had translated a little of it – very satisfactorily. He'd wanted me bring it to supper that night, but I didn't, although I'd said I would.

The next few days' entries show that Friedbert and his letter were in the forefront of her mind, and she thought a lot about going to the Rhineland again. 'I bought a frame and put Friedbert's photograph on my desk so that I can see it when I'm working.'

*Tues 24th April:* Went to the flicks with Pedley after supper – 2 Silly Symphonies, a Laurel and Hardy, and Whither Germany which affected me greatly.

*Wed 25th April:* After tea I felt terribly depressed about Schools – but the mood gave way later to one of exuberance. I am just going to write to Friedbert.

*Fri 27th April:* After another evening at 86b Banbury Road where 'Henry was rather rude to me', Barbara got back to college. 'I looked at my photo of Friedbert and said aloud 'Oh my darling – it's you I love'. I wonder'.

*Sat 28th April:* When I went to 86 this evening Henry and Jock quarreled rather a lot and I left in a furious temper with Henry. Also, I lost my swastika and burst into tears in the Banbury Road because of it.

In spite of this loss, she records on Mon 30<sup>th</sup> Apr: 'April has been a happy month and I am sorry to see it go.'

*Wed 2nd May:* At Bodley again. Henry came and spoke to me - they can't find my swastika - Jockie said so too. I am fed up...very depressed about work and a disquieting feeling that I may be in love with Gabriel still. I wish Friedbert would write, that would cheer me...

*Thurs 3rd May:* If Friedbert does not write soon I shall find myself as deeply in love with Henry as ever I was before.

It seems as though she is here secretly playing off the two men against each other. When Henry is nice to her, Friedbert fades into the background, but when, inevitably it seems, he turns nasty and is rude to her, she pines for the polite and considerate Friedbert. And whenever Henry is away, she only thinks of his good side.

*Sat 12th May:* I went to London again for the NUS reunion party...quite a lot of the actual people who'd been on the tour were there together with some Belgians and Germans who had been invited for the evening...there were some nice snaps about. I got hold of a lovely enlargement of me and Hanns on board the Rhine steamer - artistically grouped with 8 bottles in the foreground - glasses raised and all smiling. 'Promoting International Goodwill' I called it.

*Tues 15th May:* I tried all over Oxford to get a swastika and was unsuccessful - except for a gold one which was too expensive. Oh dear - darling Friedbert, why don't you write? I want so terribly to go to Germany again and I'm 12/10d overdrawn at the Bank.

I die for a letter or something from F. Gluck.

The following week: 'Not seeing Henry isn't really very good for me. How sentimental I get about him these days, every evening without fail. Now if only God would arrange that Friedbert would write to me things mightn't be so bad. But as it is I can only conclude that F. meant not a word he said or wrote (possible) or that I've offended him (vaguely possible) or perhaps I didn't translate his letter rightly, or - lots of things. Anyway I have very little faith in mankind now although Hope *does* spring eternal in the human breast, especially in Sandra's!' [Sandra was a name Barbara had invented for herself.]

*Sat 26th May:* No work all day - a passionate desire to go to Germany.

*Mon 28th May:* Had a very affectionate letter from Hanns Woischnik written in good English with many darlings in it. Apparently F. has told him that I am 'going there' in June - if so I wish F. would write! I did not realize that Hanns was at all fond of me. He says he will never forget me, but seems to think I am irretrievably Friedbert's! I suppose the truth is that I belong to a cruel, sweet Englishman called Henry Stanley Harvey, but at the age of not quite 21, it is not possible to be certain. Henry does not write, nor do I see him. The Germans, at least, appreciate me if the English don't...I do want to go back to Germany.

On Friday 1<sup>st</sup> June she had supper again with Jock and Henry. It was lovely - Henry said I looked blonde and Aryan, like something on the cover of *Die Woche!* [a German weekly magazine.]

Under this entry is written 'Goodbye Twenty', and the next page is taken up with the words HERE BEGIN YEARS OF DISCRETION

*Sat 2nd June:* My 21st Birthday

*Thurs 7th June:* Schools. I got my second.

*Tues 19th June:* The first day on the Dole...I want to go to Germany on the last day of term. I had a nice letter from Friedbert.

*Sat 30th June:* In the evening I found a letter from Friedbert awaiting me. [It appears that he was trying to find some sort of job for her in Germany - tutoring in a family, one imagines.] Now arrangements are to be made for me to go in September (D.V.) Links [Barbara and Hilary's nickname for their mother] isn't at all keen that I should go to a family purely on his recommendation, which is understandable, and I got very worried about what I should do about it...

Barbara was always a keen listener to the radio, and on 2<sup>nd</sup> July she wrote, ‘Some interesting talks on the wireless – about events in Germany – from Berlin by an Irishman...’ That would surely have been William Joyce, derisively known in Britain as Lord Haw-Haw, who broadcast Nazi propaganda to Britain before and throughout the war. As he also held US citizenship it was possible for him to be tried for treason, for which he was hanged in 1946.

*Sat 7th July:* ...negotiations about Germany still going on, but nothing definite is emerging from it yet. I still desire passionately to go there, and am still trying to acquire more vocabulary. I am reading some Goethe in the Oxford Book of German Verse. Tonight I cut out Nazi Germany cuttings ...at present my thoughts are most on Germany.

*Wed 10th July:* Today I thought sadly of Friedbert. I’m not going to Cologne now, but perhaps to Hamburg with the NUS. Perhaps it would be dangerous to see him again. I thought of him at the very first lunch in Cologne making a speech in his black uniform. Life is sad but sometimes very romantic.

There are no diary entries between 26<sup>th</sup> July and 1<sup>st</sup> September. However it later appears that she did go to Hamburg, presumably with the student group, on 17<sup>th</sup> August. And it may have been after this that she and Hilary went on to Budapest.

At the end of July or early August she must have written to Rupert Gleadow, because in a letter from him dated 3rd August he replied ‘Really I feel quite jealous of you going to Budapest becous [sic] I’ve been wanting to go there for some time, finding the Hungarians an amusing race, and it is now 10 years since I spent a mere 2 days there... One can not under any circumstances love a real Nazi. Yours I’m sure must be only a pretence. The real ones (and I’ve been arrested by them!) are all sadists and keep their women brutally in order. But lots of Germans are very nice for all that.’

It wasn’t until the 1<sup>st</sup> September that Barbara wrote in her diary ‘Germany was delightful and more than usually interesting as we arrived in Hamburg on the same day as the Führer and were able to see him. I thought he looked smooth and clean and was very impressed. The elections were to be held on the Sunday, August 19<sup>th</sup>. [This was a referendum to approve Hitler’s becoming supreme head of state.] There was plenty of publicity urging voters to say ‘Ja’ for Hitler.

She does not mention Friedbert, who was presumably still in Cologne, on that visit.

On 1<sup>st</sup> September Barbara also wrote, ‘Some time in July I began writing a story about Hilary and myself as spinsters of fiftyish. Henry, Jock and all of us appeared in it.’ This, of course, was the first version of *Some Tame Gazelle*. What is less well known is that Friedbert also appeared briefly in it. She envisaged a situation in which the Nazis had been defeated and the exiles were living in poverty in Africa; Barbara (later Belinda) and her friends were knitting vests and things to send to them. ‘Of course, it had been rather extravagant of her to use such an expensive wool to knit a charity garment, but she excused herself by remarking that after all the Nazis were rather “special people”. Friedbert [later Helmut] had been a Nazi. She was wondering whether to wear her little Swastika brooch or not. Dear Friedbert had been so pleased at this sign of her presumable sympathy with the National Socialist Party...Liebfraumilch always reminded Barbara of the Rhineland which she had visited in the spring when she was 20. The Nazis were young and arrogant then and she had hardly known which she liked best, Hanns [later Kurt] or Friedbert ...Barbara had always thought that Friedbert would make a good Führer, and much handsomer than Hitler.’ Of course, none of this appeared in the published version of *Some Tame Gazelle*.

Henry had gone to Finland on 19<sup>th</sup> September and hadn’t written to her.

*Thurs 4th October:* I still love him very deeply as far as one is able to judge, with no men to compare him with and absence making the heart grow fonder...

On 20<sup>th</sup> October, she had another letter from Rupert Gleadow. ‘It’s good that you have been to Germany and can talk about it. Oh, but *please* don’t admire those *filthy* Nazis in their beautiful uniforms: you won’t get a chance much longer, becous [sic] 1936 will just about see the end of Hitler. I think from your style you’ve had

another love affair in the last few months? I suppose you are as chaste as ever?' [Well, I am not sure about that, but her chastity seems to have been the reason why she and Rupert ended their amorous liaison. However, they remained friends and corresponded for several years.]

Easter was late in 1935. On Good Friday, 19th April, Barbara went to Cologne again with the NUS. 'I travelled to Dover with Michie and her friend Barbara Sparkes, who is very nice and can speak German...there were more women this year than last, but I didn't concern myself much over that...Arrived Brussels 6.16 – dinner and tour of town'. They left at 10pm and arrived in Cologne about 6am on the Saturday. 'I was very tired, but sufficiently awake to notice who of last year's German students were there to meet us. I noticed Müller and then, to my pleasure, Hanns. It was so nice to see his familiar face again that I felt comforted although there was no sign of Friedbert. We stayed at the *Kameradschaftshaus*.' Very little more, except that on the next page, undated, Barbara wrote 'Friedbert was angelic to me. Such kindness as his one can never forget.'

*May:* After Germany I was in love with Friedbert in a way. I put it so because I realized even at the time that most of it was probably glamour – his being a foreigner – the little Americanisms in his speech like 'terribly' and the way he said 'Barbara' – it being in a foreign country with the *Höhenzollern Brücke* by moonlight and *zwei* Manhattan at the Excelsior, and his Nivea cream that I rubbed on my arm to remember the smell of him – our evening of love in *Volkspartenstrasse zwei und fünfzig* – for all these things I loved him and yet I hardly knew him as a person and didn't at all agree with his National Socialism, although I tried to read Feuchtwänger's book *The Oppermans*... My interest in the language was reawakened with the result that I really learnt a good deal more.

But – here we go again! - Henry's influence is always stronger. 'Now that I've seen Henry again I suppose it will be Swedish, which he seems to speak and read fluently and gets quite annoyed when I can't do the same.'

*Sat 16th Nov:* No letters today or indeed any other day it seems. Henry, Jockie, Barnicot, Friedbert, Sharp [another St. Hilda's student], London *Mercury* [a magazine to which Barbara had offered some short stories] – all silent.

There is no record of a visit to Germany in 1936, but in a letter to Henry reproaching him for not writing, she mentions that, 'Even Friedbert has spared a moment from the organization of the Olympic Games to send me a beautiful postcard.' If Friedbert was involved in the Games, and we heard earlier that he was good at sport, he may not have been free to meet Barbara that summer. She was obviously still thinking a lot about him though, because she mentions 'vivid and lovely dreams of Friedbert.' However, Henry came to the fore once again when in June and July Barbara was working as his secretary, for '30/- a week and a few caresses.'

There are no diary entries for the time that Barbara was in Germany in 1937. It appears from letters that they (Barbara and Hilary?) went to the Black Forest. 'Tonight,' she writes to Jock, 'I have been drinking beer to get into practice for the large quantities we shall consume there...We are going...on 1<sup>st</sup> August. ... I shall be home again about 20<sup>th</sup> Aug.' This seems too long for a NUS tour, but we have no details of this trip. It has to be assumed that they met up with Friedbert.

On 12 December Henry Stanley Harvey married Elsie Beatrice Godelhjelm in Helsingfors at the English Church. '*So endete ein grosse Liebe.*'

Early in the New Year of 1938, Barbara and Friedbert were in correspondence again. Apparently they were planning for her to visit him in Dresden where he was now stationed, and to stay almost a month. She wrote to Elsie Harvey on Easter Sunday, speaking of herself in the third person as she often did. 'She is making plans for visiting a foreign country, and dreaming at night of somebody she loves very much. But it is not anybody you know, so she will not tell you any boring details.'

This visit is recorded in pencil in a tiny diary, one page per day. Unlike her 1934 diary, she writes very little of her private feelings, confining herself almost entirely to fact.



On Tues 3<sup>rd</sup> May she left for Germany, travelling via Aachen, Cologne and Leipzig, arriving about 10 the next morning in Dresden, where Friedbert met her, and took her to the room he had found for her, which she seemed to like very much. They had lunch together but because Friedbert had a sore throat and was feverish, she had dinner alone in her room and went to bed early. Friedbert was in bed all the next day, so she didn't see him, but he 'phoned her.

On the Friday she visited some museums. Friedbert, still not quite recovered, met her at 5.30 at the Eden Hotel, where they read the English papers and had coffee, and later had supper in her room.

The next day, Saturday, Friedbert had to go away somewhere, so Barbara saw very little of him for the first four days of her holiday, but he returned in time for lunch on Sunday, after which 'We went to Pillnitz by train, walked about there and had coffee in a very nice café overlooking Dresden. After supper we went to Der Maulkart at the Regina Palast and afterwards had some beer at Zum Schwarzwälder.' You will note that no meal or drink ever goes unrecorded on this visit!

Friedbert did not take any leave during her visit, and indeed was away on duty on a number of occasions, when Barbara had to entertain herself. However, there was a general pattern to their days. Barbara went sight-seeing in the mornings, Friedbert usually joining her for lunch in her room, which was presumably supplied by her landlady. He then went back to work, and met her later, sometimes even after dinner time, and then they would go out to bars and cafes, often until quite late.

*Mon 9th May:* F. came to lunch. Had tea at Rumpelmayers and supper at home with F. We then went to the Olympic Games film [no doubt the famous film made by Leni Riefenstahl] at the Prinzess Theater. Very good. Then some beer at Zum Schwarzwälder.

*Tues 10th May:* Lazy morning. F. came to lunch and I walked with him to the tram stop...[he] came very late to supper and we went out to meet friends of his, Walter Naumann and a girl called Inge. We drank a lot – Rhine wine and cocktails...then had something to eat. Then to the Regina Palast where we had champagne and danced till nearly 3. Not much sleep that night.

*Wed 11th May:* Felt very tired...F. came to lunch. I slept in the afternoon then to the Eden where I met Friedbert and Walter. Then we went in Walter's car to a spot outside Dresden and walked a bit and then came back to my room for supper.

*Thurs 12th May:* F. didn't come to lunch but afterwards he took me in a car into the town and we had tea at a café...We had supper together and then stayed in my room until he left at about 11.30.

It is all beginning to sound rather dull and repetitive. But a visit to Prague was being planned.

*Fri 13th May:* F. came very late from Leipzig. We went out to the Alt Bayern Beergarten and made plans about going to Prague next day.

Barbara's diary account of this weekend visit is somewhat laconic.

*Sat 14th May:* Packed my small bag. I went to the station and got the tickets. Friedbert came just in time, 12.36. Train full and very hot. We had lunch, then sat in the dining car for coffee. Passed through the lovely Sächsische Scharz to the frontier at Bodenbach. Then into Czechoslovakia...we got to Prague about 4. Went to the Hotel Bevanek. Doppel Zimmer. Had a bath. Walked about. Ate at restaurant Procheski, wandered in Wenceslas Square...then bed quite early.

*Sun 15th May:* Had breakfast 8.30 then sightseeing tour of the town which lasted until after 1. Saw very much. Very hot. Lunch at Deutsche Haus. Packed and left hotel. Had coffee in the town, then caught the 50/c train – carriage to ourselves. F. slept. I had ham and eggs in the dining car...got to Dresden after 8.

But in a letter to Jock on 23<sup>rd</sup> of the month she was more expansive. ‘Did I tell you that we went to Prague the weekend before last? ... It was as hot as August and we sat in the restaurant car mopping our faces and making rather waspish remarks to each other and then we went back to our carriage and a handsome young Czech began speaking to me in perfect English, and dear F. kept on wanting me to look out of the window at things ... I was so terribly excited in the taxi to think that we were really in Prague, but F. was not at all, although he had never been there. “Oh the Golden City”, I kept saying, “The Golden City”. “No, I do not think it is Golden”, he said ... In the evening a sort of Czechish Mr. Barnicot attached himself to us ... somehow there was never a time when he wasn’t with us. He was quite pleasant and helpful and spoke German. He thought F. and I were English as we occasionally spoke to each other in that tongue, and after a time F. said to me “I do not like to go with this gentleman more”, so after we had politely exchanged addresses and I had coyly waved at him out of the back of the taxi we found ourselves alone.’

I have the feeling here that Barbara and Friedbert may have started to get on each other’s nerves. Certainly Friedbert must have become fed up with Barbara always talking to strange men, which in itself suggests that she was beginning to be bored with him.

On the Monday after the Prague weekend Barbara was alone most of the time. ‘F. came late to supper – had to go to the Büro again at 9, but we met later at Alt Bayern, drank beer and talked. Then he walked home with me.’

He was then away for the next 4 days, returning on the Saturday afternoon. ‘F. came about 3.30. Very glad to see him. Went to Vespers at Ihren Kirche then had supper here. Afterwards a Manhattan at the Eden, then beer and food at the Trampeter Schlosschen – then to the Schloss café. Small bar, very amusing – had sidecars, black velvet and coffee. Very good accordion and piano player. Left about 1.’

And on Sunday ‘F. came to lunch. We both slept in afternoon, then went to the Eden for coffee at 5. At supper we had a long talk, and F. went about 9.30’, a bit early for him – they may have quarrelled. This was the first of several long talks they had. They may have been assessing their relationship, which might have been getting a little stale, or perhaps the nature of Friedbert’s work was worrying her.

The next day she says in her diary that Friedbert came to supper. To Jock on a letter of the same date, she writes, ‘Supper has been brought in and I am waiting for dear Friedbert to come; it is all so domesticated. I feel I should say “The Master has to go to Pirna today – he will not be here for lunch.” And then in he comes – the hasty husbandly kiss.’ After this supper Friedbert went back to write some letters but they met outside his house at 10.05 and went to the station, had a glass of beer and walked home. The talk that evening was ‘very amusing’

During the next two days Barbara was largely alone. She went to picture galleries where she struck up conversations, first with a Sudeten German, then with a Hitler Jugend, as she describes him. He came to her room and she gave him some stamps. I think she must have been feeling lonely with Friedbert away such a lot. Later Friedbert came to supper, after which they walked to the Station and she wrote some postcards. He walked home with her and they parted about 10 – another early night.

It sounds as though they are beginning to tire of each other’s company.

On Thurs 26<sup>th</sup> May, Friedbert came to lunch and apparently had the afternoon off. ‘Shops were closed. We went to Kuvart Rathen by train, stopping an hour in Pirna, which he showed me, and we had tea. Climbed up the rocks at Rathen and had a lovely view into Bohemia. Came back (second class both ways) and got to Dresden about 8. After supper we had a long, long talk and cleared up many things and ended up very happily’.

What were these matters which had to be cleared up? They could have been personal, but I am inclined to think that at last Barbara was having doubts about German politics and Friedbert’s part in it. If that were the case, it seems that he was able to reassure her.

*Fri 27th May:* F. came very late for lunch, about 3.30. He brought a letter from Jock. Went to Rumpelmayers and read the papers – then met F. by the station 5.30 and had a lovely walk in the Grosser Garten until 7. Met him again at Alt Bayern at 9. Walked down Prägerstr. And had

more beer and food at the Baren Schauke. Also looked at the Elbe. Came home, had a talk, and parted friends.

- which might suggest that there was a falling out earlier.

During her last weekend Friedbert was away all day on Saturday and most of Sunday. Barbara met his train at 9 pm. On Mon 30<sup>th</sup> May, the day before she left, her entry is enigmatic. 'F. came to supper. Went to his room while he typed a letter. Then to the Weindorf in Prägerstr. Very nice. Then mock turtle soup at the station. I chased my hat down Uhlenstr. at 4am'.

That was the last time she saw him. He did not come to the station to see her off the next day, probably because he couldn't leave the office. Barbara wrote in her diary, 'June 1<sup>st</sup> - Henry's 27<sup>th</sup> birthday. Shopped in the morning, and in the afternoon a last visit to the Eden...Went home and packed, had my last meal in my dear room. Left at 8.34. Many soldiers on the train, all very nice to me. Slept quite a lot.' Not a mention of Friedbert. She was still on her journey home on her 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

In August she went to Katowice in Poland to teach English to Ula Alberg, but because of the worsening political situation Dr Alberg sent her home in October. Evidently she did not meet with Friedbert on either journey.

Throughout 1939 Barbara's diary tells of the seriousness of the international situation, until they heard on 1<sup>st</sup> September that Hitler had taken Danzig and invaded Poland. 'Bombed many towns including Katowice.' she wrote. Fortunately the Jewish Albergs got out in time and went to England.' 'Spent day making blackout curtains ...Everyone cheerful. Constant news bulletins. Our Ambassador at 9.40 pm gave a note to Germany saying that unless hostilities ceased and troops withdrawn we should fulfill our obligations.'

*Sun 3rd Sep:* We gave Hitler until 11am to withdraw from Poland and at 11.15 Mr. Chamberlain spoke to the nation and told us that we were now at war with Germany.

On 12 Jan 1940, Barbara wrote to Jock, 'I have no recent news of Friedbert for you as I have not written to him since September – nor he to me ...One does not expect letters from enemy aliens...'

On Wed 10<sup>th</sup> April she remembers that it is Friedbert's 29<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May was a day of national prayer. 'Church packed morning and evening. 2 fine sermons. I thought, "Friedbert, against this, you haven't a chance".'

Just after the Germans had declared war on Yugoslavia and Greece in April 1941, it was Friedbert's birthday again and Barbara wrote in her diary 'I put a vase of spring flowers by the portrait of one who may be in the Balkans and whom I shall always love.' However, Hazel Holt thinks that this refers to Julian Amery.

By November, Barbara had applied for work in to the Censorship Department. 'Started brushing up my German – reading poor F.'s letters.' Throughout the month she was assiduously studying German, 'Reading Goethe's letters,' and 'Struggling over Rilke – perhaps Friedbert was right about my not being able to understand him.' And on Tues 18th Nov: 'After tea, translating a letter from Friedbert, one of the last I had and painful to me. One feels one ought to be ashamed of ever having been fond of a German. Where are you now?'

Hazel Holt tells us in *A Lot To Ask* that in December Hilary heard from Nora Wahn [who had written several books on Nazi Germany, and was working at the BBC]...that Friedbert has 'gone anti-Nazi'..., but as Hazel says 'It is hard to imagine how an SS officer could have done this and survived.'

Even as late as 1943, Barbara still sometimes thought of Friedbert. In a letter to Henry from Bristol she says, 'I was tidying a drawer this evening and came across a photo of poor Anton Feudrich! [He was a mutual friend who used to live in England.] I wonder where he is now – also my dear Friedbert...' and on Sun 24<sup>th</sup> Oct: [In London] '...went to a big Lyons where I got a seat at a table with two young men – (one very dark and good looking, who reminded me of poor Friedbert)'

There are no further references to him in the diaries until after the war. As the appalling events in Germany were gradually revealed, the feeling of shame at having known and loved a Nazi must have intensified, and Barbara would not have wanted anyone to know about this episode in her life. Friedbert evidently survived, for on 31<sup>st</sup> July 1946, over a year after the end of the war in Europe, and again on 24<sup>th</sup> September, her diary records letters from him, but their contents are destined to remain unknown. Even Hilary was not aware of them. It is unlikely that Barbara responded. The romantic dream was finally shattered by stark reality, and another great love ended.

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