

**A Brief History**  
of the family of  
*Sonja Escherich-Eisenmenger-Weber*

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Sonya Escherich-Eisenmenger, 1895 until 1936

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M.A. DESIGNS  
Tryon, NC

An Introduction to Sonya & Ernst Weber

An address by James M. Flack  
(son-in-law of Sonya Weber)  
at the Cosmos Club in Washington, D.C.  
Tuesday, October 14, 1975 on the occasion of the  
establishment of the  
**Sonya & Ernst Weber Scholarship Fund.**



Dr. Bugliarello, Friends, Associates and Family of Sonya and Ernst Weber. It is my honor and privilege to speak on behalf of the dose members of the Weber family.

Dr. Bugliarello, we are grateful to you and to Polytechnic for establishing the Sonya and Ernst Weber Scholarship Fund. The criterion for the awards - based on excellence and regardless of need is most appropriate. This is consonant with the lives of the Webers. They have searched for the good - for things of real value. And when things of value were discovered, they were able to recognize, cherish, nurture and reward them to assure their continuity and growth.

Sonya and Ernst Weber are well known - both nationally and internationally, each in her and his own field. They have each been showered with honors for their achievements and contributions to a better way of life in our time and for the future to come - Ernst in the field of science as a physicist, engineer, educator and administrator; Sonya also in the field of science as a doctor of physical medicine and physical fitness.

This scholarship fund in their names together is most fitting. They live and give of themselves as one. They have the same objectives, the same high standards.

Each is the other's greatest supporter. In many respects they are so close as to be almost indistinguishable - yet each is highly individualistic and with a most singular and charming personality. We, as members of the family have watched with pride throughout the years how Sonny and Ernst have given of themselves to Polytechnic - Ernst's Vision of excellence for it, his assuring the highest standards of quality of faculty, students and facilities. Sonya's loyal and dedicated drives for student scholarships. We rejoiced with them and with all of you when deserved recognition came for Polytechnic. We continue to applaud new successes. And we extend congratulations and best wishes to Dr. Bugliarello and to the members of the Polytechnic Corporation for success is the "Program for Change," the "change from sole emphasis on facts and quantification to a broader approach that includes new emphasis on value and quality judgements." The Sonya and Ernst Weber Scholarship Fund is designated to enhance this program.

We salute you Sonny. And we salute you Ernst. We extend to you our full love and deepest affection. As members of your family we are proud to share this occasion with you; and we are honored to participate in the Sonya and Ernst Weber Scholarship Fund.

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## Part I

### **PFAUNDLERS, OETZ, PIBURG**

compiled by Ernst Weber

To appreciate how the family Pfaundler relates to Oetz and Piburg, it is necessary to go back to the great-grandfather of Sonny, Ignaz Maria Johann Baptist Pfaundler, who was born July 31, 1808 in Innsbruck and studied law, obtaining his Ph. D. in 1832 at the University in Innsbruck. He married May 10, 1838 Rosine Bolland from Salzburg whom he had met on a trip to Salzburg in 1834. Ignaz and Rosine Pfaundler lived first in an apartment in the Museumstrasse in Innsbruck where Leopold, the grandfather of Sonny was born February 14, 1839.

Rosine's mother then bought for the family Pfaundler a house, Maria Theresienstrasse 37, where Marie Pfaundler, great-aunt of Sonny and sister of Leopold was born June 16, 1840. Apparently, the family needed more space when in 1846 another daughter and in 1848 another son increased the family circle so that they bought and moved into a larger apartment house Museumstrasse 25 in 1848 with a larger garden. The obligations of a landlord were carried out by Rosine, since her husband Ignaz Pfaundler had a law office, was rather idealistic and generous with his services, but had the ambition to obtain a professorial appointment at the University, which finally came in 1858 when his health was already somewhat impaired. He died March 28, 1861, only 53 years old. His widow, Rosine was then 45 and she dedicated her life to the daughter Marie who was then 21 and who never married.

Actually, Marie was as a young girl quite independent and must have caused consternation at home, so that she was sent for three years into a convent which apparently taught her much in literature and music, but also must have dampened her exuberance. She retained, however, a love for the outdoors and was an avid hiker and with her mother often visited Oetz during the summers, taking a room at the "Kassele", a small Inn, replaced in the late 1880's by the Hotel Post built by Johann Tobias Haid, the postmaster of Oetz.

Marie also had visited the lake near Piburg of which she became very fond. Actually, this lake had belonged to the Monastery Stams in the valley of the Inn, now about 20 minutes drive from Oetz, and the monks had stocked the lake with fish which, to their dismay, the farmers in the hamlets Piburg and Haderlehn much enjoyed. Although the monks imposed fines, they could not really control the situation and in 1856 sold the lake to a locksmith in Oetz, Leitner, who planned to gain grazing ground for his cattle. In the mountainous areas around Oetz grazing facilities were very scarce. Leitner had tried to lower the level of the lake and in fact could achieve a little success, but certainly not enough without blasting rock because the only egress of the lake was through a small brook running over solid rock.

Marie Pfaundler had, of course, heard of Leitner's intentions and when, to her delight, Leitner gave up disgustedly, she offered to buy the lake from him in 1873 comparatively cheaply. She then improved the path to the lake and from there to Piburg, there was of course no road at all at the time.

Leopold Pfaundler in the meantime had obtained his Ph. D. in Physics and Mathematics, July 26, 1861, and taught at a secondary school (Realschule) and in 1866 was called to serve in the war of Austria against Italy. At that time the

northern part of Italy belonged to Austria, but wanted independence, which it achieved with the help of the French army. Upon returning home with decorations, Leopold Pfaundler was appointed in the Fall 1867 full Professor of physics at the University of Innsbruck at the age of 28.

When Leopold then married Amalie Steffan in August, 1869, they lived in the house with his mother Rosine and his sister, Marie and in fact, Sonny's mother Margaret was born there July 8, 1870, as well as her uncle, Meinhart, June 7, 1872. In 1873, Leopold attended the World's Fair in Vienna with Amalie.

By 1877, Rosine Pfaundler, then 61 years old, felt burdened by the administration of the apartment house, sold it and had built a new family house in Innsbruck, Meinhartstrasse 5 in the name of her daughter Marie. The family, composed of Leopold, his wife and two children, Margarete and Meinhart, his sister, Marie, and their mother, Rosine, moved into the new home in 1878. Sonny and I visited that house in 1953 and I have a picture of it. Today it has been replaced by a modern building.

Leopold Pfaundler was elected to the City Council of Innsbruck in 1879. He was also elected Rektor (President) of the University of Innsbruck for the academic year 1881-82 and obtained a place in the Assembly of the State (Land) Tyrol. Early in the fall 1881 Emperor Franz Joseph visited Innsbruck for several days and Leopold as Rektor presented the Faculty Senate and attended the court Banquet. Later that fall 1881 he went to the first International Electrical World Exhibit in Paris, France, but this time alone because his wife, Amalie, expected a child, which was born January 25, 1882 and named Richard. To Amalie's great consternation she bore another son in the same calendar year, December 12, 1882, who was named Hermann. During the summers of 1885 and 1886, while Amalie was rather

housebound with the new arrivals, Leopold undertook major hiking tours in Switzerland and the north Italian lakes, around Lake Lucerne, and at Easter, 1887 along the Italian Riviera. May 26, 1887 he was elected active member of the Austrian Imperial Academy of Sciences and in May 1888 he was awarded the Imperial Order of the Iron Cross, 3<sup>rd</sup> class, for distinguished service and went to Vienna with Amalie and the daughter, Margaret, to a reception by the Emperor. On that occasion, Sonny told that her mother had to make the curtsy and stumbled over her Jong dress when she tried to get up so that the Emperor had to help her –much to her embarrassment.

When Marie Pfaundler had to give up, about 1888, the room in the "Kassele" Inn which they had rented every summer since about 1862, she acquired land on a rock ledge high up near the church in Oetz and got permission from the Aldermen to build a summer house, which she called the "Schrofennest". The village could grant the building of a year-round house only when sufficient land was available to maintain a family with its farm products, i.e., becoming self-sufficient. The Schrofennest was built in 1889. Unfortunately, Marie's mother had an accident, breaking her hip in June 1891, from which she did not recover and died August 17, 1892 in Innsbruck at the age of 76. Marie Pfaundler bought then additionally a farm house in Piburg with appropriate land and woods, which she enlarged so that eventually the whole family of Leopold Pfaundler could spend summers there. This became particularly convenient, when Leopold Pfaundler was invited to Graz to become Professor of Physics and Head of the Department of Physics there. He personally moved on April 4, 1891 to Graz and his family followed in the Fall. Since this meant Marie would have been alone in the house in Innsbruck, she decided to sell that house and become full-time resident of Piburg with a devoted woman as servant. She then improved the paths to the lake and around the south

shore of the lake and enlarged the private bathing hut at the west end of the lake as well as built facilities on the east end of the lake for summer guests in Oetz who then were not very numerous, but steadily increased. Because Marie Pfaundler was a devout Catholic, she insisted upon a separation of sexes among these summer guests while bathing in the lake which led to amusing incidents since certainly visitors from larger cities did not see her concerns.

In Graz, Leopold Pfaundler had a large apartment in the University building right next to his laboratories where he had installed one of the first seismographs in Austria: there is a fault line running from Vienna south with warm springs and I remember vividly a slight earthquake in the early 1920's in Vienna which did not cause much damage but could be felt distinctly.

It happened that in the School of Medicine at the University of Graz the chair of pediatrics had become available in 1889 and Theodor Escherich from München was then appointed as professor and Director of the children's clinic at the age of 32. Rather soon he must have made the acquaintance of the Pfaundler family when they moved to Graz in late 1891 and on March 16, 1892 he got engaged to Margarete, the oldest daughter of Leopold and they married on June 4, 1892 in Graz. In the Fall of 1894 the Pfaundler family spent some time in Oetz and Piburg with the family Escherich who had been enriched by a son Leo born April 29, 1893: and then, on January 22, 1895, the daughter, Sonya (Sonny) was born in Graz. In the Fall 1895, the whole Pfaundler family spent their vacation for the first time in Marie Pfaundler's house in Piburg, and almost annually thereafter, often joined by Margarete and her children. Leopold Pfaundler, Sonya's grandfather, soon became very fond of Sonya and she of him and they spent, during summers, time together with Marie Pfaundler in the house in Piburg as well as on the Piburg



lake where Sonny and I in 1952 still found, in the private bath and boat house, the dressing room with clothes hooks marked Leopold, Richard, Hermann.

In 1900 Leopold Pfaundler was made court councillor (Hofrat), an honorary title without obligations. He attended the same year the Paris World's Fair and I remember that my parents also were at that Fair. With the appointment of Escherich to the chair of pediatrics in Vienna in 902, Margarete moved to Vienna and the contacts became somewhat less frequent. During 1903 Pfaundler wrote a book "Physics in Daily Life" which was very successful and which, after his death, was reedited by Dr. Paul Ewald who later joined the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn as Head of our Physics Department.

In 1909 Leopold Pfaundler was celebrated at his 70th birthday and he retired in 1910. Then in August 1910 he was given by the Emperor the rank of nobility, by awarding him the designation "Pfaundler von Hadermur" for him and his direct family members: this designation was selected by Leopold because Hadermur is the name of the main brook coming down the mountain behind Piburg, thus a geographic reference. The original coat of arms of the family Pfaundler, dating back to 1535 was amplified and redefined and is reproduced on the family tree. A very formal letter-certificate dated August 20, 1910 and signed by the Emperor was transmitted to Leopold. Of course, the demise of the Empire in 1919 brought a socialist government, which immediately abolished all titles of nobility and dispropriated most if not all tangible properties of the Imperial family and of nobility.

Inasmuch as Leopold Pfaundler upon retirement had to give up the University apartment, he bought a one family house in Graz, Merangasse 5 where he took care of a lovely garden. During the summers he went with Amalie, his

wife, to Piburg where he stayed in the house of his sister, Marie, for the last time in 1912. His oldest son Meinhart had acquired in 1907 substantial land around the Piburg lake and built in 1911-12 on a bluff overlooking the lake a large house in typical local style which he named Seebichlhof. Leopold and Amalie spent the early summer 1914 in Piburg when end of July the first World War erupted. With great difficulties could they return to Graz, where he died in 1920 having suffered a severe stroke. His sister, Marie, stayed on in the house in Oetz and spent the summers in Piburg where she died in the Spring of 1924.

Her will left to her niece, Margarete Escherich, the Schrofennest in Oetz, to the two nephews, Richard and Hermann, the house in Piburg which they divided among themselves and the lake she left to the oldest nephew, Meinhart, who in 1906 had become Professor of Pediatrics at the University in Munich and director of the children's clinics and was best able to care for the valuable property which he could survey from the Seebichlhof.

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*The main reference is the "Chronik der Familie Pfaundler von 1486 bis 1915", published by Leopold Pfaundler von Hadermur, printed by R. Kiesel, Salzburg, which Leopold Pfaundler had distributed to the members of his family living in 1915, dated January 1, 1915. I have added my memories from stories told by Sonny and members of her family but cannot be certain of all facts.*

Part II

**THEODOR ESCHERICH**

and

**CHILD-CARE IN VIENNA**

Compiled by Ernst Weber

Sonny's father, Theodor Escherich, was born in Ansbach (near Nürnberg), Germany on November 29, 1857. His father, Ferdinand Escherich was a well-known Physician and later, Professor of Medicine at the University of Würzburg- which had been founded in 1582 by the Bishop Julius who also was the Duke of Würzburg and after whom the well-known Julius Hospital in Würzburg was named. Ferdinand Escherich was also royal government counsel and "Kreis-Medizinalrat" (circuit medical adviser). He was born in Aschaffenburg, Germany, April 29, 1810 and died in Würzburg, March 21, 1888. The mother of Theodor Escherich was Maria, Freiin Stromer von Reichenbach (daughter of Johann Sigmund Ludwig Karl Freiherr Stromer von Reichenbach) born January 21, 1818. She was married (as the third wife) to Ferdinand Escherich on February 17, 1857 and died September 24, 1862 most likely as the result of the birth of the younger son, Ferdinand, brother of Theodor, who died himself January 1, 1867. At that time, long before cognizance of bacteria, many mothers died in childbirth and almost half of the babies died before getting 4 or 5 years old.

The family tree of the Escherichs, collected by Leopold Pfaundler in 1892 from notes of Theodor's father, Ferdinand, reaches back to Andreas Escherich,

born 1612, who died 1672. Earlier data are probably lost due to the atrocious Thirty Year Wars (1618 to 1648) between Catholic South Germany and Austria against the Protestant Northern Germany and Sweden. Sonny told of the Escherich family going back certainly to about 1200, having then possessions in the neighborhood of the then Habsburgs, and carrying the title of Freiherr, i.e., landlords directly responsible only to the reigning Emperor, then designated "Holy Roman Emperor of the German Nation". The attractive and elaborate Coat of Arms of the Escherichs is also reproduced on the family tree. Actually, one of the nephews of Sonny's father who wanted to join the Austrian military officer corps requested Sonny's father to support his application for restituting the title but did not succeed because Escherich found it useless since he had no male heir.

Apparently, as a young man in the "Gymnasium" (secondary school) Escherich joined in pranks which brought him rebuke and referral to a school run very strictly by the Order of Jesuits which, however, did not leave any mark on his personality.

Theodor Escherich studied 1876 to 1880 in Würzburg and in Strassbourg which had become German in 1871 but still used French as the common language so that Theodor spoke French fluently. He also spent time at the Universities in Kiel and Berlin. He obtained his M.D. in Würzburg in 1881 at the age of 24. He spent 1882 at the Würzburg medical clinic where under Professor Karl Gerhardt, an outstanding internist, he advanced soon to first assistant. Gerhardt had charge of the then small but outstanding baby clinic of the Julius Hospital and had started publication of a handbook of children's diseases, the first one in the German language. Probably through his influence, Escherich now developed keen interest in young children, particularly babies and the high mortality that then existed. He took leave and went to Paris where Charles Michel Billard (1800-1832) had

published the first scientific treatise on illnesses of new-born babies, working in Paris at the first children's hospital in the World! Escherich also studied there with Jean Martin Charcot (1825-1893) one of the greatest figures in French medicine, from whom he also learned hypnotism and became very adept but never used it in medical treatments. Escherich also went to Vienna where Professor Widerhofer had attained a high reputation in children's disease identification in the St. Anna Children's Hospital, then, the first children's hospital in the German speaking countries! Here, Escherich must have decided to concentrate on bacteriology as applied to babies' metabolism.

Back in Würzburg, as assistant to Dr. Gebhardt, Escherich was sent by the Bavarian government to Naples, to participate in the study of a cholera epidemic which again directed his attention to bacteriology which had been developed under Robert Koch and had found strong interest in the medical world. Dr. Robert Koch (1843-1910) received the Nobel prize in physiology in 1905 for his outstanding bacteriological techniques and investigations. Escherich now went to München in late 1884 and associated with Dr. Frobenius who had worked closely with Dr. Koch.

In the laboratories for bacteriology of Dr. Otto Bollinger and the chemistry laboratory of Dr. Carl von Voight, Escherich studied the intestinal flora of infants for possible clues to the epidemics of diarrhea. He published in the issue of August 15, 1885 of "Fortschritte der Medizin" (Progress reports in medicine) the original research paper "Die Darmbakterien des Säuglings und Neugeborenen" (in German) "The Intestinal Bacteria of the Newborn and Infant" with on page 518 of volume 3 the description of "Bacterium Coli Commune", today referred to as Coli E. or Escherichia Coli To quote from an article "How E. Coli got its name" in Hospital Practice, December 1982 by Dr. Harold J. Morowitz: "Today's wonderbug, E.

Coli, entered human history in the messy diaper of a Munich infant, a truly modest start for the most widely chronicled organism in modern biology ... and so it happened that Dr. Theodor Escherich has been immortalized, his name or the abbreviation E. appearing thousands of times each month in scientific literature".

Whenever Sonny and I attended meetings of the National Academy of Sciences and we met a biologist or medical researcher or practitioner and he learned Sonny's maiden name was Escherich, he bowed in respect. When we visited Israel in 1971 and came to Rehovoth, we found a medical pavillon named Bela Schick Pavilion (Schick was a student and assistant of Escherich). Inside the building was one section with babies under observation and the medical guide said upon questioning by Sonny: "Oh, this is a special group. We study all possible effects of Escherichia Coli" whereupon Sonny, of course, replied "you meet with an Escherich" which had as effect that we had to take photographs.

But, to come back to Theodor Escherich, the same publication also described the bacterium lactis aerogenes which occurs normally with E. Coli; he identified both of these bacteria as normal parasites as long as the intestinal functions run normally. Because of his bacterial findings, however, Escherich became a strong advocate of breast feeding finding the mother milk germ free but external feeding exposing the infant to environmental and often dangerous bacteria. How correct Escherich's advocacy was is indicated by the recent note "New medical research findings show that breast milk may contain antibodies against cholera, that it affords greater protection against diarrheal diseases than other feeding modes, and that it contains a substance that kills a variety of parasites responsible for intestinal disorders." (UNICEF, 1987).

On the basis of his many fundamental publications, Escherich became associate professor in 1886. He continued the studies of nourishment and digestion of babies particularly at the clinics of Hauner's Children's Hospital in München and arrived at a faultless description of the flora of the meconium and feces of infants and perfected fermentation tests as emphasized in a letter to Sonny by Dr. Gilbert Dalldorf (1900-1979), member of the U. S. National Academy of Sciences whom we had met in Washington, D. C. From these physiological studies, Escherich then developed an entirely new System of baby feeding on the basis of regulated volume and protein content in accordance with quantitative tables which he developed, and which were then used generally for several decades.

In 1890, only 33 years old, he was called to Graz as Professor of Pediatrics and Director of the children's clinic which he rather rapidly renovated and developed into one of the best equipped children's hospitals in Austria. As indication of the recognition by the public, within ten years the number of children in the outpatient division grew from 3,000 to 10,000 and the number of medical care days spent by children in the hospital increased from 15,000 to 26,000.

When early in 1890 an epidemic occurred of infant tetanism, i.e., a muscular hypertonicity similar to tetanus with strong nervous reactions, Escherich concentrated upon this illness and together with Wagner-Jauregg (later guardian of Sonny) applied for the first time ever galvanic diagnostic examinations. He reported in Berlin at an International Congress in the summer, 1890, on this "idiopathic tetanism in children".

It happened that in March 1891, Professor Leopold Pfaundler came to Graz as Professor of Physics at the same University. He was joined in the Fall by his family, then comprising wife and four children, the oldest a daughter, Margarete

just 21 years old. In November, at a visit in the home of Professor von Graff, Margarete met for the first time Professor Escherich and both appeared interested to meet again. 13y March 16, they confronted her parents with the announcement of their engagement which Leopold found surprising but, after short reflection, accepted. In fact, the wedding was set for June 4, 1892 and took place in the chapel at Maria Grün near Graz. Margarete had as family witness her uncle, the Lt. Colonel Hans Steffan and Theodor had as his witness, General von Limprunn from Bavaria, his brother-in-law. The young couple spent their honeymoon on the Wörther lake in Velden, Carinthia, Austria. Margarete was a very beautiful young lady with strong artistic talent for oil painting which she perfected later so that all the family has lovely samples of her art in their homes. She was elected member of \*the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna about 1934. In 1893, April 29, Margarete had the first child, a son, whom she had baptized Leo after her grandfather Leopold, and to whom she was very attached. Actually, that summer the entire Pfaundler family spent their vacation in the newly built "Schrofennest" of Marie Pfaundler in Oetz, whereas the young couple Escherich stayed in the Hotel Kassel in Oetz recently built by Johann Tobias Haid.

Continuing his research in infectious diseases, Escherich also established a pavillon für diphtheria, studying bacteriology as well as possible serums and with Klemensiewicz he could in 1893 demonstrate complete cures. The summer of 1894 was again spent in Oetz where Leopold made photos of the baby Leo. He celebrated on August 2 the 25th anniversary of his wedding in the Schrofennest and we discovered a photo of the muchly decorated "Stube" of the Schrofennest.

In the Fall of 1894, Escherich was appointed to the Chair of Pediatrics and in early 1895 he published the monograph, "Diphtheria, Croup, Serum Therapy", followed by an annual list of 5 to over 10 outstanding publications. Actually, the



intense research and clinical activities had already brought many outstanding members to the medical faculty in Graz, like Rollett, Nicoladoni, Friedrich Kraus, Wagner-Jauregg (already mentioned), Anton von Rosthorn (a distant relative to the Pfaundlers).

On January 22, 1895, the daughter Sonya was born and appeared at first somewhat weak but recovered easily though always kept a tendency to refuse food. In fact, she fell sick in February 1896 with digestive trouble. That summer, the Escherich family stayed in Oetz in the Schrofennest, whereas the Pfaundler family for the first time lived in the large house that Marie Pfaundler had acquired in 1893 in Piburg and which as an old farmhouse had still an open fire place in the kitchen with an iron crane from which to hang pots and pans for cooking; Sonny and I still found these in place in 1949 at our first visit to Piburg after World War II. Marie Pfaundler had great preference for the genuinely antique kitchen equipment.

The proximity of Piburg to the lake, which had moved Marie to acquire the farmhouse, also made possible frequent use of the boat house that Marie had built on a bay of the lake and where they kept one fairly heavy row boat permanently stored. In fact, Leopold Pfaundler had bought a speedier boat in 1894 especially for Theodor Escherich with the name "Margarete" painted on it and had it brought to Piburg Lake. Again, when we visited in 1949 we found in that boat house where they normally also changed clothing, several hooks in the "men" cabin marked "L" for Leo, "H" for Hermann, "R" for Richard and "TH" for Theodor Escherich.

At Easter 1897, Leopold traveled with the Escherichs to Triest, and on April 14 by boat to Zara (now Zadar) and through the bleak landscape of the Karst (Kras), rather barren limestone plateaus, to Cattaro (now Kotor). They visited also Cetinje, the capital of the Duke of Montenegro (subsequently King of that

principality) as well as parts of Albania. On the 19th of April they returned to lovely Ragusa (now Dubrovnik) from where Escherichs returned home to Graz.

During the summer of 1898, Meinhart Pfaundler who had obtained his M.D. with Escherich in 1896 and then had served his one year voluntary military service, travelled with Escherich to Düsseldorf and Holland and then continued his studies at the University in Strassburg. That Fall Empress Elizabeth of Austria was murdered in Geneva by a mentally deranged person which affected the whole Austrian Empire deeply. That winter, the Christmas celebrations were held in the apartment of the Escherichs in the presence of additional distant family guests.

The Summer of 1899 was spent by the Escherichs on the Weissensee, a lovely lake in the Corinthian Alps near Tischendorf, which Sonny always remembered as particularly impressive. On their return they stopped in Piburg where the Pfaunders had spent their summer as usual. Leopold finished at that time the geodetic map he had produced with his sons as assistants in the detailed survey of the terrain.

Escherich published that year in the Year Book for Child Care "On the Streptococcus-Enteritis in Babies". He also described in a publication in 1900 "The Institution of a special section for babies in the St. Anna Children's Hospital with a description of a new life sustaining chamber for premature babies and babies with low life expectancy". (Reports of the medical association in Styria). In that same year, he had requested from the Director of the very well-known and newly established Sanatorium for Lung Infections in Alland, Lower Austria, the opportunity to arrange a special visit by the medical association of Styria. This request having been granted, Escherich arranged the visit for June 26, 27 and expressed surprise that his request was apparently the first one submitted. He then

published a paper describing the special arrangements for the care of children exposed to the Tubercle bacillus,

After the summer of 1900, which was again spent in Piburg, Escherich attended the World Exhibit in Paris where both Leopold and Meinhart Pfaundler also appeared, though their interests were in different directions. Also, the Summer of 1901 was spent in Piburg with the Pfaundler family where Leopold made many extensive hikes with his two younger sons Richard and Hermann, and where, according to Sonny, her father also hiked above the Schrofennest up to the (old) Bielefelder Hütte below the top of the Acher Kogel.

When in 1902 the Chair for Pediatrics in Vienna became available through the death of Widerhofer, the faculty unanimously proposed Escherich as his successor. Because of the far wider possible impact being in the capital of the Empire, Escherich accepted, knowing full well he had to build up again from the rather outdated St. Anna Children's Hospital. Escherich actually moved to Vienna in April 1902 whereas the family stayed on in Graz so as not to interrupt the school year. In fact, Margarete spent the Summer with her two children on Wörther lake in Carinthia and the family traveled on September 14 via Graz to Vienna in order to arrange for the transfer of their belongings. Their first apartment was located in a new building on Schottenring No. 10, where the Ringtheater had stood which had burned down in December 1881 with terrific loss of lives having been lit, as then customary, with open gas lamps (before the advent of the incandescent electric lights). On November 9, Escherich telegraphed to the family in Graz, that Meinhart Pfaundler had been appointed his successor at the Anna Children's Hospital in Graz. The next day, Margarete's mother travelled to Vienna to assist in the relocation.

Shortly after his transfer to Vienna, Escherich arranged a meeting of a select group of aristocratic ladies on January 25, 1903 in the Salon of Mrs. Ida von Friebeis, pleading with them to organize a voluntary association "Säuglingsschutz" (Baby Care). He pointed out that because newborn babies were not admitted to hospitals, there was a need for special care for babies due to the high incidence of digestive disorders and severe infections which led to the high infant mortality. His strong and charming personality achieved that Archduchess Isabella (Erzherzogin) accepted the honorary leadership (patronage) and the Princess Rosa Croy-Sternberg the Presidency, which assured at once generous financial support permitting the establishment of a dispensary and a training school for nurses who soon became known all over Austria as the "Escherich Nurses". Escherich developed this organization "Säuglingsschutz" into a counseling agency for mothers to strongly advise breastfeeding and at the same time make available carefully checked milk for babies that could not be continued on breast feeding.

Since the building of the new hospital got delayed, Escherich renovated and expanded the old one, installed laboratory and xray facilities, and created as a first undertaking in Europe, a children's open-air terrace on the roof of the new clinic.

Escherich then published in late 1903 an extensive chapter on the Bacterium Coli E. in the "Handbook of Pathogenic Microorganisms". That Christmas found again the Pfaundler and Escherich families united, this time in the more luxurious apartment of the Escherichs in Vienna on the Schottenring with a view of the Votiv Church.

Actually, by this time, Escherich had become the leading bacteriologist in the field of pediatrics and an authority on infant nutrition so that he was invited as the sole European pediatrician to address the International Congress of Arts and

Sciences held September 19-25, 1904 at the St. Louis World's Fair in the U.S.A. Actually, Escherich spoke at the opening session on September 21 in the Great Hall of the World Exhibit and gave his specific address on September 23: "Foundation and Objectives of Modern Pediatrics at the Turn of the Century" which was recently republished by Professor Theodor Hellbrügge in "Documenta Padiadrica" (Pediatric Documentation) as reprint from the Journal "Der Kinderarzt" (The Children's Physician) and as part of the collection "Founders and Fundamentals of Pediatrics", 1979. In this brochure, Theodor Escherich's picture is reproduced together with four of his students, all counted among these founders; namely, Dr. Meinhart von Pfaundler (1872-1947) (brother-in-law), Director of the University Clinic for Children, Munich; Dr. Ernst Moro (1874-1951), Heidelberg; Clemens Freiherr von Pirquet (1874-1929), successor to Theodor Escherich in Vienna, and Bela Schick (1877-1967), Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York, (1923-1942).

Meanwhile, Margarete spent, as often before, the summer of 1904 with her parents and her children in Piburg, Tirol where her Aunt Marie Pfaundler had acquired that large farm house in Tyrolean style near the Piburg Lake. The children loved the place and the grandparents were delighted with them. In fact, a photograph near the Piburg Lake shows part of the family, namely, Meinhart Pfaundler, Marie Pfaundler and the two children, Leo and Sonny, aged 11 and 9 years old. Because Leo was very intelligent but more difficult to handle in school class, and since Theodor Escherich had to concentrate all his attention on the requirement of his professional responsibilities, it had earlier been decided that in the fall of 1904 Leo would be given into a private institute in Graz, where the grandmother, Amalie, could and did visit him frequently. Apparently, Leo took up fencing. During practice he felt pain in the abdomen but paid no attention until he

got violently ill. Meinhart Pfaundler, who was in Graz, consulted Professor Ebner and they diagnosed appendicitis. Leo was immediately transferred for operation and his parents were notified at once and arrived quickly. But in spite of close attention and care (before the days of antibiotics), Leo died on November 24. His body was taken to Vienna and buried in the city's central cemetery but was transferred later to the cemetery in the suburb Dornbach. Margarete never forgave herself to have let the boy be away from home and carried resentment for considerable time. So much so, that on her 36th birthday, July 8, 1906 Theodor gave her a photograph of himself with the note on the back "To the 36th birthday, What God has joined, man should not separate". In fact, early that year Escherichs moved from the apartment on the Schottenring which might have reminded Margarete too much of Leo, to a rather sumptuous apartment on the Maximilian Square in what is today the Hotel Regina next to the Votiv Church and closer to St. Anna Children's Hospital where Theodor had his office. When in 1974 we flew directly to Vienna from New York with Austrian Airlines, I had requested a relative to make reservations for us in a Hotel near the inner city, it turned out to be Hotel Regina! When Sonny entered our room on the second floor, normally the most prestigious with high ceilings, she explained: "This was part of my apartment section!" explaining that as a girl of 11 years she had in her "bathroom" an actual large bath basin in the floor where she could make two swim strokes!

Although Leo's death weighed heavily on the father as well, he could not neglect the professional responsibilities. In that year, 1906, he published 7 articles in the Vienna Weekly Clinical Reports as well as additional 8 publications on post-diphtherial weakness of the heart, on isolation and avoidance of contact in children's hospitals, on studies and promotion of breast feeding by mothers, etc. In April of that year, his brother-in-law and former student Meinhart Pfaundler was

appointed Professor of Pediatrics in München, and director of the Hauner Children's Hospital where Escherich had worked 20 years earlier.

The demands on Escherich's time had become enormous. In March he was named Hofrat (court counselor), was received by the Emperor Franz Joseph and invited on several occasions with his wife, Margarete, to dinner at court. He also was called as medical consultant to Czar Nikolaus of Russia whose son was a bleeder, to the King of Bulgaria and other royal families.

Inasmuch as Vienna was a cultural center of world rank, the home of Escherich had also become a meeting point of society and Margarete Escherich gave frequently so-called "soires" and formal dinners at which scientists, military dignitaries, theater and opera stars as well as poets and performing artists participated, as for example, Gustav Mahler, Leo Slezak, operatic tenor, Josef Kainz, actor and Olga Wohlgemut, actress at the Burgtheater, August Eisenmenger, fresco painter, Rudolf Hans Bartsch, novelist, and many others; a circle well described in the book "Osterreich Intim" (The Intimate Austria) by Bertha Zuckerkandl, whose husband was the well-known Professor of Anatomy, Emil Zuckerkandl, at the University of Vienna, colleague of Escherich and friend.

Because of the organizational activities and responsibilities, as well as important calls on emergencies, Escherich had to restrict somewhat his personal research, but he followed closely the work of, and made many recommendations to, his numerous assistants of which only the most prominent were mentioned above. Pirquet had observed that repeated vaccination against small pox produced a definitive reaction, but of lesser intensity than the first vaccination and concluded from that and other examples in 1906 the general sensitivity of the body to substances that are harmless, and he called "allergy". He then surmised that this

might indicate a means for diagnosis of certain infections and used tuberculin, a protein substance elaborated by the tubercle bacillus. In fact, he tried this on Escherich, upon his suggestion, and on all the faculty members, only to find that all of them reacted in a positive manner as if they had tuberculosis infection. Sonny mentioned that her father, Escherich, had pointed to the fact, after reflection, that in Vienna many people were found to have had slight tubercular lesions but never had active tuberculosis, i.e., had sufficient defenses not to let the infection become virulent. With adjustment of the dosage, Pirquet could then in 1907 announce the tuberculin skin test as definitive indication of active infection and therefore institute treatment and thus save many instances from getting severe. In fact, in the United States, tuberculosis had been the chief cause of deaths before 1909, but by 1960 had dropped to sixteenth place!

November 19, 1907 was the fiftieth birthday of Escherich which was celebrated with addresses by representatives of patient children, of students, of faculty, and hospital administration. An artistic certificate memorialized his contributions as pioneering researcher, as outstanding teacher, as marvelous organizer and as leading modern physician.

Escherich was also keenly interested in prophylactic measures to prevent diseases in children. He had written a special paper in 1906 on "The Importance of the School Physician in the Prophylaxis of Infectious Diseases" and arranged for special discussions of the proper function of school physicians in meetings of the Austrian Association for Infant Research (Kinderforschung) held under his chairmanship. The Secretary of this association was his former student Dr. Clemens von Pirquet. He also had encouraged another former student Dr. Robert Dehne in 1907 to establish a model for the office of school physicians in the City



Berndorf near Vienna where a large noble metal factory of the firm Krupp was located.

One year later in 1908, Bela Schick, after experimentation could announce the intracutaneous test for Diphtheria using the serum that Escherich had developed with Klemensiewicz already in 1893. In fact, the American Medical Dictionary lists under the heading Reactions these four reactions established by students of Escherich: Moro's reaction: an eruption of pale or red papules on a cutaneous area after the application of an ointment of 5cc of old tuberculin and 5g of anhydrous wool fat; Pfaundler's reaction: for the detection of typhoid carriers and the differentiation of recent and old cases, with Mandelbaum. Pirquet's reaction: a local inflammatory reaction of the skin following inoculation with tuberculosis toxins; Schick test: Intracutaneous injection of a quantity of diphtheria toxin equal to one fifth of the minimal lethal dose diluted in salt solution.

During July 1908, the Pfaundler family moved again to Piburg where Meinhart Pfaundler had acquired a large area of land on a hill overlooking the Piburg lake to build a permanent residence but in the style of the old Tyrolean gentleman farmer in which he eventually housed the exquisite collections of butterflies and insects indigenous to that area of Tyrol. In turn, Escherich acquired in November of that year a charming summer cottage in Dornbach, suburb of Vienna, with lovely gardens. Margarete had that house changed into a very comfortable and elegantly furnished villa where she could follow her talents of painting, and where Sonny cultivated an attractive Rose garden. Late that year, Escherichs moved from Maximilian's Square to a large apartment at 28 Alserstrasse, in the 9th Bezirk (borough), rather close to the children's hospital. At Christmas the whole family visited Leopold in his University apartment in Graz. Sonny apparently came on December 31 and was joined on January 11, 1909 by

her mother, Margarete, who took her then back to Vienna after spending three days with the family.

On February 14, 1909, the colleagues of Leopold Pfaundler had arranged an elaborate celebration of his 70th birthday at the University in Graz to which Theodor and Margarete also came from Vienna. It signified also 1910 as the last year of Pfaundler's active professorship and the need to move from the apartment within the University. In fact, October 22, 1910, the faculty met for a farewell reception at a well-known restaurant.

For several years, plans for a new children's hospital in Vienna had been discussed and Escherich had participated in the layout of an ambitious institution meeting the most modern medical requirements for infant and baby care. Actually, Escherich had always dreamed to create in Vienna a large "Reichsanstalt" (Imperial) Center for "Säuglingschutz" (Baby Care) and for proper guidance and medical care for mothers. After 8 years, he was finally successful to get the necessary financial commitments in the City budget, the budget of the State and funds from the Fund created in 1908 to celebrate Franz Josef's 60th Anniversary as Emperor of Austria, as one of the longest ruling monarchs. Escherich actually would see the foundations laid and first walls erected when on February 15, 1911, three days after having complained of headaches, suffering fainting and loss of speech, he died from cerebral hemorrhage. Thus, this most ambitious plan could only be realized after his death, and the actual completion came only in 1914. It was then put in Operation by Leopold Moll, another student of Escherich who directed it for about 20 years. After months of indecision, the Chair of Pediatrics was offered to and occupied by Clemens Freiherr von Pirquet, also an outstanding student of Escherich, in charge of pediatrics at the University of Breslau.

A summary paper on Scarlet Fever and its treatment had been left unfinished by Escherich. And yet, with all the organization innovations, the number of publications carrying the name of Theodor Escherich up to 1909 is at least 158, and in addition, there are 271 publications which he supervised; he always let an assistant be named first or even alone in order not to detract attention from the effort, even when under his guidance. Meinhart von Pfaundler published in the *Münchener Medizinischen Wochenschrift* (Medical Weekly of Munich) No. 10, 1911 a biographical memoir in which he said: "Escherich did not recognize his limits, only the urge to more intensive living, to stronger fight, to more work. That even his amazing energy could give out, that anything could interfere that was stronger or more powerful than his will to create, that he could not think."

The Annual Report of the Association "Säuglingsschutz (Baby Care) for the year 1910, issued May 9, 1911. had still been signed by Theodor Escherich as Director, and by Mathilde Gräfin Stubenberg Tinti as President and contains a brief memoir with emphasis upon the selfless service given by Escherich to humanity.

In 1912, a committee was formed to raise funds for a monument to Theodor Escherich. The President of the committee was Johanna Countess von Hartenau, the Vice Presidents were Clemens Freiherr von Pirquet, the successor to Escherich and Rudolf Sieghart, Governor of the Creditanstalt Bank. The efforts of this committee were, however, soon impeded by the murder of the Austrian Crown Prince Franz Ferdinand in July 1914 and in fact, World War I followed, ending with the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in 1919 and the economic breakdown of the surviving new Republic Austria.

In early 1952, Dr. Bela Schick living in New York and having his professional office there, called, in a letter, attention of Dr. Henry F. Helmholtz,

emeritus member of the Mayo Clinic staff, Rochester, Minnesota, to the early leadership in Vienna, Austria for establishing proper baby care. Dr. Helmholz replied: "... When I was in Vienna during my stay in Europe for the UN International Emergency Fund, I was very much impressed with the set-up of the Reichsanstalt (Imperial Center for Mother Counsel and Baby Care), as it was undoubtedly the most complete institution of its kind that I know of." He also wrote to Dr. Reuss emphasizing the importance of restoring to the Institution its original purposes. In June 1952 an executive committee for the now called "Infant Protection League" was formed, and Drs. Reuss and Hans Czermak published a paper pointing to the need for action in view of the post WWII decline of baby health, but political events interfered again.

However, in connection with the Centennial of the discovery of Coli Escherichia in 1986, a newly established "Theodor Escherich Plakette, pro meritis" has been awarded to Professor Walter Swoboda at the University of Vienna for his service in furthering Pediatrics in Austria and for his contributions to the "Austrian Society for Promoting Children's Health". The Ludwig Merkle G. M. B. H. of Vienna, Austria has issued a Centennial leaflet with a photograph of Escherich and the title page of his dissertation dated 1886; this leaflet emphasizes the natural defensive action of the intestinal bacteria against enteritis which Escherich had already recognized in his research. on Coli Escherichia. And in the 19th borough of Vienna there exists now an Escherich-Gasse (Street).

### Part III

## *Sonya Escherich*

### **1. Graz - 1895-1902**

Sonya was born January 22, 1895 in Graz, Styria, Austria, sister to her brother, Leo, who had been born April 29, 1893. Her father, Theodor Escherich had come to Graz in 1889 as director of the children's clinic from Munich, Germany where he had established a wide reputation through his studies of the intestinal flora of babies and had discovered the bacillus coli communis, now referred to as *Escherichia coli*. He was born November 29, 1857 in Ansbach, Germany. Sonya's mother was Margarete Pfaundler, daughter of Professor Leopold Pfaundler, physicist, who had come to the University of Graz in 1891 as professor of physics: he was born in Innsbruck, February 14, 1839. It is interesting that both future parents had come from different cities to Graz to the same University, he in a leading position to the medical faculty, and she as young debutante: they met and fell in love, got engaged March 16 and married June 4, 1892, he 35 years old and she 22 years old. Both were exceptionally attractive, Margarete was a beautiful young lady and Theodor was tall, slim, and a very impressive personality. Both attracted immediate attention wherever and whenever they appeared.

Actually, Sonny was baptized Charlotte and her Godmother was Charlotte von Hoff, widow. The certificate of birth and baptism, issued and dated March 8, 1911 (!) has printed: religion Roman-Catholic (it was the State religion), date of birth January 22, 1895, date of baptism February 24, 1895 and name of the baptized "Charlotte", name of the mid-wife Anna Kickmeyer, name of the priest performing the baptism Vincenz Schmidhofer. Apparently, and with no

documentary evidence; her mother, Margarete at once called her Sonny and the diary of her grandfather, Leopold Pfaundler, just states: "On January 22, 1895, Margarete brought a girl into this world, which was baptized with the name Sonny." Their domicile was Bergmangasse 8 in Graz.

Because of Theodor's strong commitment to his medical profession and research activities as well as organizations of staff and building renovations, he must have spent most of the day at the Hospital so that Margarete spent much time with the children in the house of her parents and likely most of their vacations in Piburg near Oetz, Tirol.

From Sonny's accounts it appears that she spent as a child many evening hours in the university apartment of her grandfather, Leopold Pfaundler. She recounted that often, after dinner (or supper, because the main meal always was at noon) he sat with tea and melba toast and told of new developments in physics, as well as of his dreams in which he seemed to enjoy reliving travels and wanderings in unknown territories. He had been a master in chess and played matches with many foreign experts, exchanging their moves by mail, which (no airmail!) often took weeks before answers permitted the next move. When he learned from a Japanese friend about the game GO he became interested, obtained a game set and taught it to Sonny who herself became a master in playing GO. She later taught it to me and we enjoyed the game to her very last days, when she still could beat me with her intuitive strategies. Whenever I could win, I made it a red-letter day.

Grandfather Leopold Pfaundler was then over sixty and took a number of photographs of Sonny who then had long blond hair. He used one of these pictures when she wore a long, seeming night gown for illustration of an expos of the GO game. In fact, he wrote by hand a guide to the GO game, telling it had been

invented in China before 1770 13.C., came to Japan rather early and only recently (around 1900) to Germany through a Dr. KorscheIt who had been a GO student of the Japanese master Murase Suho. This manuscript he dedicated to his "dear granddaughter Sonny Escherich" for Christmas, 1906 when she was 11, so that "she may always remember her grandfather Leopold Pfaundler". He then wrote a booklet in 1908 "Das Chinesisch-japanische GO Spiel" (the Chinese-Japanese GO game) published by B.G. Teubner in Leipzig, in which he relates some of the history of the GO game, as well as detailed instructions and examples. He emphasizes that chess is a single battle, whereas GO is a whole campaign, the battle is like the fight of the heroes before Troy, the campaign compares with the ingenious strategies of a MoItke (German Field Marshall, 1800-1891). All this primarily to defend his interest in this game as really worthy of a university professor. Leopold Pfaundler continued to play GO with Japanese friends by mail and had much correspondence with them.

Of course, his two younger sons, Hermann and Richard, had to learn the game GO too, and Hermann particularly became master in it, engaging in battle with Sonny in Oetz or Piburg up to his last days of walking in 1971: he died August 14, 1972.

From her Grandfather, Sonny also learned to like physics, though she was only a child and he explained to her many of the phenomena she wondered about. He took her also into the laboratory of physics where he had the first seismograph installed in Austria. Part of the summers she spent with the Pfaundler family in Piburg, in the house of her great aunt, Marie Pfaundler and at the lake which she loved. Her uncles Hermann and Richard introduced her also to rock climbing near Piburg. Hermann, in particular, schooled her on the so-called GO-grat, a rock ridge coming down from the "Karkopf", the mountain on which the "Armelen" Hut is

located farther up. Actually, when Bob visited Oetz in 1977, staying with the children in the "Atelier", Sonny and I walked with them from the lake to Habichen and as we passed the GO-grat, Betsy and Jesse, 9 and 6 years respectively, also climbed up and down under Sonny's supervision.

Grandfather Leopold Pfaundler was a great hiker and, of course, took his two boys, Richard and Hermann, all over the Austrian Alps. He also surveyed the Piburg Lake and surroundings with their help and published a carefully designed map in 1900. In his diary, he recorded making a beautiful trip with Margarete and Theodor Escherich in 1897 via Trieste through the now Yugoslavian mountains and Adriatic ports and back to Graz. Sonya, 2 years old and Leo, 4, stayed in Piburg with their great aunt Marie Pfaundler and the two younger sons of Leopold. Again, in 1899, he made a hiking tour with the entire family probably including the children, Leo and Sonny, through the "Mieminger" plateau and mountains near Oetz, north of the Inn valley.

Sonny's mother Margarete had early shown strong artistic talent, particularly in painting. She produced a number of portraits of friends in Oetz and Piburg, among them Johann Tobias Haid, the Grandfather of Agnes who was the Postmaster and had the Post Hotel built in Oetz and then built for his son, Hans Haid, the Hotel Drei Mohren, which is now managed by Agnes. Margarete also painted the owner of a cafe in Habichen, Perberschläger, a real original character, and many others from Oetz, Piburg and Haderlehn, Ebene, etc. She also painted in oil colors beautiful landscapes and flowers and all the Grandchildren have several of her paintings. In fact, she was elected member of the Austrian Academy of Painters.



## 2. Vienna – 1902-1913

In 1902, Theodor Escherich was offered the professorship of Pediatrics at the University of Vienna and became Director of the St. Anna Children's Hospital, and the family moved into an apartment in Vienna close to the hospital (September 14, 1902). For Sonny and Leo this meant a radical readjustment. Graz had been a relatively small City with a rather leisurely life style, whereas Vienna was the capital of the Austrian Empire.

Austro-Hungary occupied an area of 240,000 square miles, about all of central Europe and had a population of about 45 million inhabitants. All the government offices were concentrated in Vienna, It led the world in music, had attained an international reputation in medicine and in physics and philosophy. Also, it had initiated a new trend in architecture, a new movement in painting with Klimt and the "Sezession". The period around 1900 was, in fact, designated "Fin de Siecle" (End of the Century) and any number of books have been written about it. Politically, the Monarchy suffered from the nationalistic movements among the polyglot collection of nationalities within its borders and only the age of the Emperor (who was born in 1830, came to the throne in 1848 and thus had been reigning for 54 years in 1902) prevented the disintegration which then followed after the First World War (1914-1919). In Vienna there was a proverb: "As long as he lives no one will precipitate a catastrophe". An excellent American book, "The Austrian Mind" by William M. Johnson (published by University of California Press, 1972) covers the period from 1848 to 1938.

Now, the life style of Sonny changed, she had a French governess, was tutored at home so that she did not attend public school. With Leo, her brother, she was taken in a "Fiaker" (horse drawn carriage) into the "Prater" which had one

section for entertainment including the giant Ferris wheel (rotating with cabins) and a large expanse of woods with bridle paths and carriage roads; or she was taken along the "Ring" a very wide boulevard surrounding the inner City in place of the former city wall, which was only taken down in the 1820's. Sonny was seven, going on eight, Leo was nine, going on ten. Somehow, they must have longed for the former way of life because one day during the absence of their governess, they just left home, walking towards the railway Station to Tyrol. They had prepared for a long trip as children do--taking some chocolate and fruit. Actually, they reached the railroad station when the Vienna police spotted them having been alarmed by their mother, and - brought them back home. I do not know how they were received, but Leo was sent to a private institute named Koppel in Graz the following year as Grandfather Leopold reports. (Sonny had told me that Leo was sent to the military academy in Wiener-Neustadt, south of Vienna, named the Theresianum as it was founded by Empress Maria Theresia). There Leo became very interested in fencing. Tragically, in November 1904, he developed abdominal pains but insisted on ignoring them and collapsed during a fencing training. He was rushed to the hospital, but the appendix had ruptured, and he died a few days later of peritonitis. On the other hand, Grandfather Leopold reports that after some stroll, while in that Institute, Leo suddenly developed appendicitis and was taken to a Sanatorium in Graz. His parents were informed, arrived quickly, but Leo died a few days later of peritonitis (there were no antibiotics yet) on November 24, 1904. Actually, Sonny and Leo had spent the summer (1904) with the Grandfather Leopold and the great Aunt Marie in Piburg.

The death of Leo affected his mother extraordinarily. As Sonny related, she blamed her husband for having sent the boy away and pointed out that he was the most outstanding child specialist and here he loses his only son to appendicitis,

known to be particularly dangerous to children. Apparently, Margarete did not even want to see Sonny anymore and Sonny suffered deeply by such statements as, Why did just the boy die? In turn, Sonny admired her father with total devotion. She was nearly ten years old, spoke French fluently, started to read serious literature and even the philosophical classics like Kant. Schopenhauer and Nietzsche.

The Escherichs always traveled extensively in addition to their sojourns in Piburg during the summers. In spring, they often went to the French or Italian Rivas. Sonny remembered Santa Margherita well when we visited there in 1964. She was amazed how it had developed into a tourist center with many large hotels. Portofino on the other hand had hardly changed because it was restricted to a narrow strip of land at the foot of steep hills which prevented expansion and so retained a lovely atmosphere.

The Escherichs also visited Venice and Murano on the Adriatic and Sonny remembered how her Mother had wanted a red sail for her studio where she painted. She had requested fishermen on the shore to make for her such a sail like those on their boats and was shocked when they pulled a large piece of linen from a storage room, smeared a loamy substance all over the cloth and then threw it into the sea water. To her amazement it developed into lovely, red colored cloth which we still found in Oetz in the "Atelier".

Sonny also vividly remembered the visits to Ravenna, an old Byzantine town where Theodorich, of the tribe of the Ostrogoths won victory over the Visigoths in 493 A.D. and made Ravenna the capital of the new kingdom. His daughter, Amalazunta, succeeded him and became an historic figure, contributing

to the cultural development and the Ans. Ravenna is famous for old mosaics which are still well preserved.

The summer of 1905 the Escherichs spent on the Weissensee (lake) in Carinthia where Leopold Pfaundler visited them.

In Vienna, Escherichs had moved into a large apartment next to the Votiv Church: the apartment house was later converted into the Hotel Regina. By chance, in the summer of 1974 we flew directly to Vienna with an Austrian-American Federation charter plane operated by KLM. I had requested Hugo Winkler (who had married Hilde Eisenmenger a niece of Hugo Eisenmenger) to make hotel reservations for us. He called for us at the airport and took us by taxi to the Hotel Regina! And even more coincidentally, when we entered our room, Sonny called out: "this was part of our apartment when my father was alive-and next to it my luxurious bathroom with a deep bathtub permitting even to swim a few strokes!" We stayed there for just one night and took the Arlberg Express to Oetz the next morning.

Moving to that grand apartment in 1906, together with Theodor's increasing social obligations required Margarete to entertain frequently. In fact, their grand dining room table could accommodate up to 40 guests, literally a banquet style. A constant problem was for Margarete to have the proper seating order because Viennese aristocratic society was well brought up to respect military rank as well as in protocol of aristocracy. Artists and scientists were of lower order accordingly. Sonny told many times how her Mother worried with a society lady-guide. At one dinner, Gustav Mahler, being seated at what he considered the "lower end" of the table, simply ate salad with his fingers to demonstrate his "grade". Of course, Sonny learned that from her governess who loved to spy on guests and tell Sonny

stories. She also watched at the entrance to the apartment behind another door into the hall, when guests came, how ladies were dressed, etc. There appeared to be a kind of social rivalry between Margarete Escherich and Frau Dr. Zuckerkandl, wife of the Anatomy Professor at the medical faculty and a colleague of Escherich. Mrs. Zuckerkandl was journalist in private life, and therefore catered particularly to the literary circle, like Schnitzler, Hermann Bahr, Werfel, etc., the young members of the Sezession like Klimt and Otto Wagner in Architecture, Mahler and Schönberg in music. At that time Vienna actually was the center of modern art, as well as medicine. The book "Österreich Intim" (Austria Intimate) by Bertha Zuckerkandl is a really good account of Viennese life at that time portraying the bureaucracy as well as the jockeying for position and for rank.

There was little dose family life at the Escherichs due to Sonny's father 's position and almost constant official demands on his time. As a result, Sonny had only occasional personal time with him. She remembers one of his statements well: "Sonny, you will always be able to buy anything you wish, but I want you to think if you would not really prefer to feed a hungry man before buying any luxury!"

As mentioned before, Sonny did not attend public school, but was taught by a French governess until she was eleven years old, so that she spoke both German and French fluently. To be prepared for the University, boys had to attend a secondary school normally up to eighteen years of age. Since the sexes were strictly separated girls over the age of fourteen had to attend private school. Sonny's father reflected on the choice and selected a girl's school run by Mrs. Eugenie Schwarzwald, located not too far from the apartment that had a very good reputation for faculty and science courses. Sonny liked her study courses and soon made friends with other girls. From her grandfather Leopold she had learned a good deal about physics. Even though Eugenie Schwarzwald was Jewish-no one

interfered with her religious belief. I met her later on, about 1926, but the school had to teach the Catholic state religion. Fairly soon, Sonny came up against the conflict between dogma and physical facts. She asked her father about the dilemma and he arranged for the Bishop whom he knew well, to have a talk with Sonny. The Bishop very wisely referred to the symbolisms in language and how one needs caution in interpreting words that might be meant to be more practical than scientific.

Sonny also related that her father often talked about his attending lectures of the famous French neurologist Jean Martin Charcot, (1825-1893), who also used hypnosis and seemed to have stimulated Sigmund Freud to use it in connection with the treatment of hysteria. Apparently, Sonny got enough information about hypnosis so that she tried to hypnotize some girl classmates in her Suite one afternoon after class. She was somewhat successful, but with one of the girls so much that she could not awaken her. When she heard her father returning from the clinic, she had to confess and, of course, quickly reawakened the girl. However, ever afterwards Sonny had to be careful not to look too hard at that classmate so as not to hypnotize her again.

At this time, the family often had noon day meal together and in Vienna this was the main meal and normally had two hours allotted to it. For that purpose, the large dining room banquet table had a small side table attached at one end so that six to eight people could have their meal there. Frequently, Sonny's father brought one or more of his associates to lunch and she was able to listen in on stories about their interesting experiences.

In this way Sonny learned about the discovery of the tuberculin test by Dr. Clemens Freiherr von Pirquet, as related by her in Appendix A. A close friend of

her father, Dr. Julius Wagner, Ritter von Jauregg, who had worked with him in Graz, was now Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Vienna and related his differences of view from those of Dr. Sigmund Freud rather vividly. A particular case demonstrating their opposing views that became a public issue is recounted by Sonny also in the Appendix A.

Wagner Jauregg had studied the functions of the thyroid gland and had related these to the goiter prevalent among the Alpine village population. Sonny told of visiting him in his villa in the outskirts of Vienna where he kept a number of dogs at different stages of cretinism. By administering minute amounts of iodine, he could control the behavior of his dogs from violent activity to placid inactivity and even approaching cretinism. Out of these studies came the practice of adding to table salt tiny amounts of iodine which eventually practically eliminated goiter in Alpine countries, as well as around the Great Lakes region in the United States.

Among the friends of Sonny's father was also Dr. Victor Eisenmenger who was the personal physician to the Archduke Franz Ferdinand who had become the Crown Prince of Austria upon the death in 1889 of the Only son of Emperor Franz Josef. For this reason, also, Sonny knew the children of Victor Eisenmenger, Hilde and Anni very well. They were about the same age. Normally, the Emperor spent summers in the Imperial Villa in Ischl, upper Austria, the "Salzkammergut", the lovely Alpine lake region of St. Wolfgang. He then preferred hunting around the Chateau Laxenburg, south of Vienna in the fall. This made it possible for Hilde and Anni Eisenmenger to spend summer weekends at Laxenburg and Sonny joined them there. As young teenagers between 11 and 16 years, they also played a number of pranks. Sonny played "ghost" in the Chateau, dressing in a long, white gown and walking late evening in the castle corridors where guards were stationed

outside. It was not certain whether the guards just tolerated that or were really frightened.

Once Sonny made a bet with the girls that she would enter the Emperor's bedroom. The only way to get from their bedroom to the Emperor's room was on the outside of the building. They apparently knew that the windows were unlocked and opened into the room. Sonny was a good rock climber, taught by her young uncles in Piburg. One afternoon she really got into the Emperor's bedroom and took a photograph of herself in the dressing mirror. We have that photo in one of the albums.

The castle was located in a beautiful park on a lake and was known for mosquitos. The man in charge of the property was a real old Austrian bureaucrat. Sonny told me, when we visited Laxenburg again on September 5, 1973, that this man, Nepomuk, was charged to do something about the mosquitos. Upon advice he got about a dozen large wooden water basins, filled them with water in July, I believe, so that mosquitos would lay their eggs conveniently. The understanding was, that then in two or three weeks before the larvae were fully developed, the basins be emptied, thus preventing swarming. Apparently, Sonny and her friends again visited Laxenburg and found the situation worse than ever. They asked Nepomuk and he replied rather exasperatedly, "But, Mademoiselle, I just could afford to have those basins put up. I have no money left to get them emptied!" It may sound incredible, but Sonny emphasized the fact.

Apparently, Sonny had made good progress at the Schwarzwald school. Leopold Pfaundler, her Grandfather, reports a very enjoyable visit from her in the fall of 1907, probably before classes started. On November 19 of that year, her father had his fiftieth birthday which was celebrated by the family and by the



whole hospital staff and the faculty. Even the newspaper printed a notice and congratulations.

The following year, 1908, Escherich bought a house in Dornbach, in the outskirts of Vienna, known as The Vienna Woods, which Margarete remodeled and where Sonny cultivated a rose garden. In October of that year, Austria formally annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina which it had occupied already in 1878 in accordance with the Berlin Congress. Austria had invested heavily in building roads, schools and generally improving living conditions. Sonny's father recounted a very interesting experience: the farmers kept some containers with moldy cheese which had some white fungus growth on it and if someone injured his hand or foot, they applied this mold to prevent infection! Much later it could be shown that this mold contained, in fact, natural penicillin, one of the most prevalent antibiotic substances in use in the Second World War. At the turn of the century, however, medical knowledge made the procedure very suspect.

In December 1908, Sonny had a bad attack of Scarlet Fever, so that she could get to Graz only on December 31 to spend a belated Christmas with the Pfaundler family. Her mother came to call für Sonny in January and spent three days with her parents. Actually, the whole family reunited on February 14, 1909 to celebrate the 70th birthday of Sonny's Grandfather, who subsequently retired from academic life and received in 1910 from the Emperor Franz Josef the letter of nobility, henceforth being Professor "Leopold Pfaundler von der Hadermur". Since Leopold Pfaundler now had to give up his apartment within the University, he found a new house in Graz, Merangasse 5 and started moving into it on July 21, 1910. With the help of Sonny and her mother, the move was completed in the fall.

Very tragically, Sonny's father died of a severe stroke and cerebral hemorrhage on February 15, 1911. Two days earlier, Sonny related he gave a class to medical students and suddenly spoke only French: he was taken home, complained of severe headaches and succumbed. To Sonny, this was almost the end of the world. Fortunately, Wagner-Janregg, who was Escherich's closest friend, agreed to be Sonny's guardian, she always had referred to him as Uncle Julius; he also helped Margarete much in matters of settling the estate. Margarete had to change her apartment of course, so she moved with Sonny to Garnisongasse 22, still a sizable apartment but more modest than the earlier ones. Her father, Leopold, visited from Graz in May, but his heart condition did not permit him to be of real assistance.

Early in 1912 Sonny had to submit to an appendectomy fortunately without complications. Then, in the summer of that year Sonny and her Mother stayed in Piburg and helped Meinhart Pfaundler to furnish the Seebichlhof, the building of which had just been finished. In Piburg and at the lake, Grandfather Leopold took many photographs of Sonny, whom he always called his "Liebling", his favorite of the family; she was then 17 and, indeed, very attractive.

In September of 1912, the Eisenmenger family including Victor and his wife Anna spent a few weeks in Molveno, in the southern part of Tyrol in the Brenta chain of the Dolomites. The occasion was the visit by Hugo, the younger brother of Victor Eisenmenger, who was an engineer with General Electric Company in Cleveland, Ohio and had to discharge technical assignments in Vienna. The wife of Victor, Anna, whom we all subsequently knew as "Tante Anna" must have had special anticipatory thoughts, because she had invited Sonny to join them. Sonny, of course, had been close friends with her daughters, Hilde and Anni as mentioned earlier and seemed interested in meeting this brother of Victor, Hugo Eisenmenger.

He had apparently been sent by his company, which was engaged in electric light bulb production, to visit Siemens-Halske, an Austrian subsidiary of the major Siemens Company of Berlin to learn more about the advances in the production of electric light bulbs, a then new electrical development in keen competition with gas lights which were yet predominant. Before his employment in the United States with the General Electric Company, Hugo had been serving as engineer with a British firm in Egypt and the Sudan, at about the same time that his brother served as private physician to Archduke Franz Ferdinand. The latter needed southern warmth and sun to avoid the danger of Tuberculosis in Vienna and therefore, spent most Winters in Egypt. Hugo Eisenmenger had also been in Japan in 1910 and also in British Singapore and was well versed in the English language. The meeting of Sonny with Hugo resulted in another common sojourn during the early winter skiing in the Alps.

One may suspect that for Sonny the chance to get away from Vienna and to start a new life in a foreign country was a special challenge. In any case, on December 27, the engagement of Hugo Eisenmenger with Sonny Escherich was announced to the family. Because Wagner-Jauregg was the legal guardian of Sonny, he had to formally agree to a marriage of Sonny which he did by letter dated June 16, 1913, and also stating that he agrees to her emigration to the United States of America. The wedding took place in the Votiv Church in Vienna on June 21, 1913 with Richard Pfaundler and Victor Eisenmenger as witnesses. It was apparently understood that Sonny would travel with Hugo to Cleveland in America and that eventually they might return to Vienna.

Because of Sonny's love of Piburg, the newlyweds travelled first to Oetz and Piburg and from there via Antwerp by boat to New York.

### **3. America - 1913-1936**

Though we have no record from Sonny's mother, Sonny sent a telegram on August 5, 1913 to her Grandfather, Leopold Pfaundler, announcing her and Hugo's safe arrival in New York. On August 16 the first letter from her arrived in Graz, followed by another on September 3 in which she announced the fact that she had rented an apartment in Cleveland and got furniture for it. Sonny called it a "Railroad" apartment because all the rooms went front the long corridor in file to the right. Sonny's mother sent by the next steamship a lady-cook and housekeeper, because she could not imagine Sonny to manage a household.

Apparently, Sonny did rather well in the new environment. The Austrian Embassy had established contacts in society circles in Cleveland so that Sonny and Hugo were invited to a visit with Rockefeller whose estate was on the outskirts of Cleveland. The Eisenmengers also had dinner with Leo Slezak who had a guest engagement at the Cleveland Opera for a Lohengrin performance. However, the political situation in Europe had begun to confront Austria-Hungary with the Slavic groups in the Balkan Peninsula, in particular with Serbia. When the Crown Prince Archduke Franz Ferdinand visited Sarajevo, on June 28, 1914, a Serbian irredentist killed the couple by gun shots. Hugo and Sonya had been on a vacation cruise to Greece when this murder occurred. They interrupted the voyage at once and got to Graz on July 1 to meet Margarete, Sonny's mother, but then proceeded to Molveno to meet Victor Eisenmenger who, fortunately, had not joined the Crown Prince on his trip to Bosnia. The political situation worsened: Austria presented to Serbia an ultimatum on July 23 which was disregarded by Serbia on advice of the Russian military. As a result, Austria declared war against Serbia, which caused Russia to declare war on Austria. In turn, Germany as ally of Austria, declared war on Russia on July 29 which provoked the catastrophe of the

first World War, involving also France and England. Italy, which had been allied with Austria, declared itself neutral on August 4.

Inasmuch as Sonny and Hugo had reservations to return on September 12 by boat to America where Hugo had his position with the General Electric Company, it became critical for them to reach Rotterdam. But since both of them were Austrian citizens, this became a real problem for diplomacy. Dr. Victor Eisenmenger apparently could bring Sonny and Hugo from Molveno to Laxenburg on August 6 which was helped by the authority of his position and relations with Court personnel. From there, Victor could secure a transitory apartment at the Hofburg (Imperial Palace) in Vienna. With a special Imperial passport Sonny and Hugo could then reach Rotterdam in time to board the boat for New York. Of course, the British warships were already patrolling the waters about the Channel and close to Ireland, but with good luck they got through inspection and arrived safely in New York and then, Cleveland, Ohio.

Since the United States remained neutral until 1917, Hugo would continue his work at the General Electric Company though agitation by British propaganda against anything German became increasingly effective. This made life much more strenuous. Additionally, Sonny had been pregnant and on October 10, 1916 gave birth to Hertha in the hospital in Cleveland.

When China severed diplomatic relations with Germany on March 14, 1917, the Austrian Ambassador A. von Rosthorn returned to Vienna via the United States and stopped in Chicago where his sister Misa Bacon lived. Dr. Charles Bacon, her husband had studied medicine in Vienna with Sonny's father, so Sonny had come to Chicago to possibly give messages through Rosthorn to her family. Sonny told that the days she spent with the Bacon family, a representative of the Federal

Bureau of Investigation (FBI) was stationed in front of the house and she had to report every move she made as well as see Rosthorn only in his presence. In fact, Sonny was now advised to "disappear", i.e., to leave Cleveland with Hugo and the baby. Fortunately, Charles Bacon had a close friend Carus who owned coal mines in Illinois and was willing to employ Hugo as electrical engineer for the maintenance and operation of the mining machinery, shaft elevators and the like. The Eisenmenger family thus moved to LaSalle, a real coal mining town in Illinois which worked at top speed because of the war requirements in Europe. This move was well-timed, because on April 6, 1917 the United States entered the war formally.

The war ended with the complete disintegration of the Austria-Hungary Monarchy. The Emperor Franz Joseph I had died on November 21, 1916 and his successor, the grand-nephew Karl Franz Joseph abdicated in early November, 1918 when already national governments were being organized in the successor states. The final Armistice was signed on November 11, 1918 in the forest of Compi4ne, France. Coincidentally, Sonny gave birth to the second daughter Greta on November 13. Sonny always emphasized that Greta seemed very anxious to see the light of this world, that Sonny hardly had arrived at the hospital when she needed immediate attention for safe delivery.

Even though the War had ended, it took considerable time before communications were reestablished. Sonny learned then that her mother had literally suffered hunger, that a large part of her money which was left in Vienna under the authority of her guardian Wagner-Jauregg had to be invested in government war loans. With the complete breakdown of the Monarchy all of this money was lost without chance of recovery. It was thus Imperative to reorient their lives completely and Hugo and Sonny decided in 1920 to move to New York

where Hugo was able to obtain a position with Consolidated Edison Company of New York in downtown Manhattan. They then acquired with sufficient mortgage a house in the suburb Mount Vernon north of New York. Sonny, at first, took on rather menial jobs in the garment district of Manhattan to earn additional income. When she learned of the St. Vincent Hospital in downtown Manhattan, she negotiated a position in the children's clinic where she developed corrective exercise programs for children with poor posture. Sonny remembered her father's contacts with school physicians and the growing emphasis upon physical exercise and therapeutics as opposed to medications and "pills".

At the turn of the Century, Dr. Adolf Lorenz in Vienna had caused sensation by a radically new approach to remedy the congenital hip dislocation. He attempted to force under narcosis, preferably several months after birth, the head of the femur in a fixed position against the rudimentary antabulum until a socket is formed. He designed special plaster casts mounted on low carriages which children could move thus promoting the forming of the socket. His success in healing many cases brought patients from many European countries as well as the daughter of Ogden Armour of Chicago, Lolita. In fact, in this case Armour had arranged for the voyage of Lorenz in order to perform the Operation and change of the plaster cast. To allow for the necessary after care and exercises under proper supervision, it was agreed that Lolita Armour would spend a few months in the spacious home of Dr. Adolf Lorenz in Altenberg near Vienna.

When Lorenz first presented his method and showed the cases that had been restored to normal living conditions at the Berlin meeting of the German Association of Surgeons in 1897, he was severely criticized. However, the arguments of Lorenz led to the formation of the German Society of Orthopedic

Surgery and recognition of Orthopedics as confirmation of the new trend in therapeutics.

Of course, the tragic consequences of the first World War in Europe led to many charitable private undertakings. Most families in Vienna had become impoverished and Sonny learned that her mother had suffered lack of food as many others. Two former Austrians who had attained affluence in New York felt that they should undertake anything that could ameliorate the tensions that still prevailed as consequence of the violent war propaganda against Germany. Anton Wedl and Consul General Semmler now proposed to Dr. Adolf Lorenz to be an "Ambassador of Surgery". They would finance his trip by boat to New York, arrange for hotel rooms and publicity if Dr. Lorenz agreed to see patients. Adolf Lorenz had only limited command of English so that he had sent a request for assistance to Sonny in Mount Vernon. Because of headline publicity referring to his healing of Lolita Armour, the response by the public was utterly overwhelming. Long lines of patients formed, interfered with traffic. Sonny, who tried to keep order, called police, was offered money to let people see Lorenz and, of course, some managed to pose as assistants to "help" Lorenz directly. Dr. Albert Lorenz, the son of Dr. Adolf Lorenz accompanied his father the following year, wrote later a book "Wenn der Vater mit dem Sohne...", (When the Father with the Son, published in Vienna in 1952) in which he recounted these experiences which ended up with the disappearance of rather large sums of money and discovery of false identities and finally, court proceedings.

In proper time, the Health Commission of New York issued the required license to practice medicine to Dr. Adolf Lorenz. Dr. Dexter Ashley made his office available at 346 Lexington Avenue, Sonny obtained a massage operator's license dated August 2, 1922 to be covered for the post-operative care she provided



to the patients of Lorenz (of that time physio-therapy did not exist as professional occupation).

Fortunately, at the first opportunity, Hugo (Sonny's husband) had submitted a petition to obtain United States Citizenship which was granted by a special term of the Supreme Court of the State of New York in White Plains, on the 13th of January 1922 for Hugo Emil Eisenmenger, his wife, Charlotte, and the two children Hertha Emma and Margarete Hedwig.

Sonny now could really anticipate continuous professional activities and Lorenz encouraged her and so did Dr. Ashley, both of whom were impressed by her skill and efficiency. In fact, Dr. Lorenz, who realized substantial income from his patients also planned to return the following year and wanted Sonny to continue her assistance.

Sonny now visited also Dr. Luther E. HoIt, the director of the Columbia-University-Presbyterian Medical Center who had known her father when he visited the United States in 1904 as representative of the European expertise of child care and infant medical care. She related to him her interest in physical medicine, particularly as it related to children. She also reported her work at the children's clinic of St. Vincent Hospital where she had organized therapeutic exercise programs. Dr. HoIt referred her to Dr. Wilcox then head of Babies Hospital at the Columbia University then located at Lexington Avenue and 55th Street. She discussed some of her father's work in Vienna, which of course was known worldwide and came away with encouragement to study physical therapy, particularly radiation therapy which was well developed in Sweden because of its northern geographical location and lack of sun in the winter months.

Through correspondence with her mother in Vienna, Sonny found out that her mother had friends in Stockholm, Sweden who would be interested to have Sonny visit them with her children. In the spring of 1924, Sonny's mother wrote that Marie Pfaundler, the sister of grandfather Leopold had died and that her will left the Piburg lake to Meinhard von Pfaundler, the home in Piburg to the two sons Richard and Hermann von Pfaundler in equal parts, and the Schrofennest in Oetz to Margarete, the daughter of Leopold and Sonny's mother. Sonny then traveled to Sweden in late June, 1924, took some graduate courses of the University of Stockholm and attended the Vanfore Anstalt (Institute) for Physio-therapy. Then she visited Vienna, as well as Innsbruck and Piburg. Actually, she arrived at the Seebichlhof, Uncle Meinhard's place, with the children having infectious colds and she herself coming down with diphtheria, so that all of them had to be isolated. For several years, they were considered as the "American Pests".

However, Sonny also arranged in Vienna the transfer of furniture, rugs and porcelain to her home in Mt. Vernon, New York at 111 South Ninth Avenue. Hertha and Greta both went to the public schools in Mt. Vernon, which were of good standing with good possibility to be accepted at leading universities. Sonny held to the maxim that travel to foreign countries is part of good education. The father, Hugo Eisenmenger, emphasized at home the use of the German language, while Sonny used to speak English with them. When the two girls wanted to play with class mates and go to movies, etc., Sonny pointed out that they had the privilege of travelling every second year to different countries and that will be more valuable to them in the long run. It appeared to satisfy them.

On the basis of Sonny's report on her experience in Sweden, Dr. Wilcox put her in charge of the newly formed "Therapeutic Exercise and Posture Clinic" and requested her to lay out plans for the respective space and equipment in the new

Presbyterian Medical Center to be built on Fort Washington Avenue between 163rd and 168th Streets in Uptown Manhattan.

Because of the appointment at Babies' Hospital, Sonny had to restrict her assistance to Dr. Lorenz who had established his office on 86th Street and had Dr. A. Wiesenthal as associate. One day Sonny was called into the office of Dr. Wilcox who asked, "What have you done to Amando?" Amando was one of her boy patients who had muscular dystrophy and she got alarmed that he might have had some bad reaction. But Dr. Wilcox said: "He now goes to school! What have you done to him that he can do that?" Sonny explained how through consistent exercises she had been able to straighten his contractions. Whereupon Dr. Wilcox insisted that she give a lecture and demonstration before the whole faculty of about 200 physicians. As a consequence, many children that seemed hopeless were sent to her clinic for treatment. In the summer of 1926 Sonny again attended Vanfore Anstalt in Stockholm and lived with the children at the mansion of Mr. Lindwall. In Austria the inflation had reached disastrous levels which finally led to a loan negotiated by Dr. Ignaz Seizel, Prime Minister of Austria, with the United Nations. In December 1925 the government budget achieved balance and in March 1926 the financial control by the U.N. was withdrawn so that normal bank operations could resume. Sonny's account with the General Austrian Boden-Credit-Anstalt in Vienna was reported as of June 30, 1927 to amount to \$1,425. However, most of the deposits were shares that could recover in value with industrial productivity.

Sonny had kept up correspondence with her guardian Julius Wagner Ritter von Jauregg and was overjoyed when he was awarded the Nobel prize in 1927 for his pioneering work on Fever Therapy.

The real solution to the financial situation of Sonny's family came in 1928 when the State of New York defined Physiotherapy as a licensed profession. On the basis of the position as Head Physio-therapist of the Posture and Therapeutic Exercise Clinic of Babies' Hospital, and the letters of certification by Dr. Adolf Lorenz and Dr. Dexter Ashley, Sonny received her license to practice Physio-therapy. Licenses are issued annually upon qualification by the New York State Education Department.

Actually, at the time of issuance, Sonny had to prove false the allegation she had been involved in the "attempted robbery of the Napoleon Diamond Necklace". The story of this necklace is related in Appendix 2.

Sonny started her private office first in association with Dr. A. Wiesenthal with whom she had started diathermy treatments in the office of Dr. Alfons Lorenz. Shortly after she organized her own office at 1011 Lexington Avenue and engaged Lia Alber as assistant. She accepted patients only upon reference by one of the physicians she knew personally so as to be able to verify the treatment required. Her extraordinary knowledge of every muscle and bone in the human body made her exceptionally successful in prescribing corrective therapeutic exercises to restore muscle balance or strengthen weakened or atrophied muscle groups. Within a few years she had established wide reputation and counted many well-known families among her patients. The letter by Dr. H. B. Wilcox of March 20, 1929 acknowledges the outstanding value of Sonny's clinical work at the Babies Hospital, namely:

**COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY**  
College of Physicians and Surgeons  
Department of the Diseases of Children  
632 West 168th Street  
New York

March 20, 1929

Mrs. H.E. Eisenmenger,  
111 South 9th Avenue,  
Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

My dear Mrs. Eisenmenger,

I am glad to hear of your plan for more work at Mt. Vernon but hope that it will not crowd your time too much.

It is a great pleasure to us to tell you that the clinics for special treatment which you have established at the Babies Hospital have been a great success and have filled a much-needed want.

The Managers, Trustees and Medical Board are quite united in their appreciation of the importance of the work and in the admirable way in which you have conducted it.

I hope your success will continue, as you have something to offer which is of great value to any institution undertaking it.

Very truly yours,

#9 East 75th Street,      H. B. Wilcox  
New York City.

In the summer of 1928 she took Hertha and Greta on a trip to Paris, exploring the museums and churches, Switzerland with excursion to the Jungfrau joch with the newly constructed cog railway through tunnels. At the terminal of the cog railway, a Swiss mountain guide offered to the American group a glacier climb to the Sphinx and Sonny accepted with the girls, Greta and Hertha. They were put on the rope, but completely inexperienced. Hertha soon slipped, hung in the air and just laughed until the guide, angry and exasperated called some Swiss cussword and pointed to the sky where dark clouds gathered. He feared real trouble and wanted to hurry to shelter. Sonny never let Hertha forget this episode.

One of the physicians who worked closely with Sonny and also knew well her guardian "Uncle" Julius Wagner-Jauregg was Dr. William Maloney, psychiatrist. On a professional visit to Vienna, Dr. Maloney mentioned to Wagner-Jauregg that Sonny had been sick. In fact, she had written a letter to Wagner-Jauregg on August 4, 1931 in which she described her symptoms. Wagner-Jauregg advised Sonny in his long letter of August 17, 1931 to be examined thoroughly by a neurologist and have a lumbar puncture performed in a hospital with written reports of the findings and to send them to him. He diagnosed encephalitis with which she likely became infected in the children's clinic since it appeared epidemic at that time. He agreed that so-called Jacksonian epileptic seizures would occur, but that if she could lead a quiet, non-stressful life, these might disappear.

Just about this time, August 1931, I paid a visit to Professor Felix Petritsch of the Technical University of Vienna at his home in Hitzing. In fact, he had recommended me to the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn, New York as visiting professor of Electrical Engineering to teach graduate courses in 1930-31 and I had returned to Vienna to obtain my immigration visum into the United States because Polytechnic had offered me a Research Professorship. Though I had my position as

Senior Engineer in the Siemens Company in Berlin-Charlottenburg, the political situation appeared rather unstable and I had accepted. Now Professor Petritsch wanted me to visit a close friend of his, Professor Kann who was vacationing in Pisting, in the Vienna Woods and he drove me there. Professor Kann's first question was, "Do you know the Eisenmengers in New York?" "Of course not, how could I?" "You must visit them!" "Give Hugo Eisenmenger my regards," and he wrote their address in Mount Vernon, and their telephone number. It happened that they had been class mates at the Technical University!

It probably was in early December 1931 when I called Mount Vernon and it was (Sonny) Mrs. Eisenmenger who answered and upon giving my greetings from Professor Kann she invited me to come next Sunday afternoon when she expected several Austrian guests. She also gave directions for the train from Grand Central Station and how to get to their house. As Viennese I bought some Talisman Roses. After introductions, we drove up to Kensico reservoir. I walked with Mr. Eisenmenger, Hertha and Greta walked with Prisca Hornbostl who was Admissions Officer at the Juilliard School of Music and one or two others, and, of course, Sonny. We returned to the home and then had dinner with questions about my activities. Then Sonny went to the piano and lo and behold played a fine improvisation of Wagner's Rheingold Overture and of the Ride of the Valkyries, the Fire Music! I had been an absolute Wagner fan and this evening made the deepest impression on me. As we, the guests, took leave, Sonny offered invitation for two weeks later, again a Sunday afternoon. It was that Sunday after dinner that Sonny did not feel well, and indeed had a bad spell of convulsions and near faint. The family had had this experience before, but I was thunderstruck. It was then that I felt I should help however I could. In early Spring of 1932 I could rent a room with use of bath in the house around the corner of 9th Avenue so that I could

see from my window the back of the garden of the Eisenmenger house. I drove then often mornings with Sonny to the Presbyterian Medical Center where she examined children mornings. I would then take the subway to Brooklyn to Polytechnic. The Graduate courses that I taught were Tuesday and Friday evenings from 8 to 10 and I then took the subway and commuter train home to Mount Vernon. Sonny saw her private patients normally in the afternoons at her office at 1011 Lexington Avenue or evenings at their home, if necessary. When I had no lectures, we might have dinner together and then drive home together. Sonny had a housekeeper who prepared also dinner at home for the family.

In 1932 Sonny obtained at the Presbyterian Hospital the title of Administrative Director of the Clinic of Posture and Therapeutic Exercises in the Division of Physiotherapy which she held until 1948.

Since Sonny always had been interested in physics stimulated by her grandfather's stories, we often had discussions about new developments since quantum theory just had come into my own field of studies. The logic and definiteness of scientific inquiry fascinated Sonny and in turn, her familiarity with music opened new vistas for me and broadened my horizons tremendously.

To improve my pronunciation I took some lessons from Professor Leo Saidla who taught Rhetorik and became a real friend who also liked hiking in the Connecticut hills. When I mentioned my interest in a summer house for weekends, he pointed out that the Connecticut Light and Power Company had created a lake north of Danbury and several friends had called his attention to developments like Candlewood Isle where lots of land were for sale. I told Sonny about that and we decided to drive up to Connecticut and explore. One Sunday we drove about 60 miles to a development called Candlewood Lake Club which had a club house near



the shore of the lake, had laid out a large tract of land in lots of 100 by 100 feet on which a summer cabin or rustic home could be built. We were guided by the agent to look at a few houses and it looked attractive, except that one could anticipate crowding. But we had seen another sign "Ferriss Estates", so we drove over a newly cleared road to a small building of field stones where a Mr. Francis Ferriss explained that his family owned a substantial tract of land, he was one of the sons, that they had decided to sell but only in lots of 100 by 200 feet. They planned to put in a road and water supply system, that the Connecticut Light and Power Company owned the lake as a reservoir for a hydroelectric power plant with the generating station next to the Housatonic River in the valley below. To control the level of the lake, the Power Company would pump water up to the lake. I found later a publication of this pioneering project which involved a guarantee by the Power company never to let the water level of the lake rise beyond 440 feet, but that it would fluctuate by about 10 feet, getting low in the late Fall. Mr. Ferriss was frank to say that we would have to trust the family that they would carry through their plans over the next several years.

Mr. Ferriss then showed us around: he himself had reserved a lot to build his own house. Actually, close to the area which he had selected for the location of his house was a lovely hemlock grove which we immediately preferred, and I wanted to select as the site for my summer house. But this would be in the second tier of lots, the first being right on the shore. The whole property was in the township of New Milford and the town road was above the third tier of lots. I wanted to have 3 lots held for me from the shore to the town road and told Mr. Ferriss that I would phone him about my decision.

On the way home we felt we had made a real discovery because of the almost ideal pristine landscape we had found. We agreed that in two weeks we

would drive up again and drive around the whole lake to find the dams inasmuch as the lake was man-made. We also felt that buying property should be a good investment. After the financial catastrophe of 1929, in which many fortunes had been lost, people had become cautious and much unemployment became evident. Fortunately, in education the opposite was true, many young people tried to study, particularly evenings.

Sonny had planned to travel to Europe in 1932 and spend some time with Greta in Oetz and in Piburg during July and August.

We had joined earlier a Kayak Club which had a club hut on City Island, connected by a bridge to the mainland. To gain experience with "FaIt boote", paddleboats, which could be taken apart and stored in a large rubber bag and easily transported in the trunk of an automobile, we had paddled in the Sound waters and even around City Island. Now it was proposed that as a group we would drive to the Delaware River at Delaware Water Gap in upper New Jersey and paddle down the river, staying overnight in tents and taking provisions along, preparing simple meals at resting places. The group consisted of Hugo Eisenmenger and Hertha, myself and a young lady and a gentleman who had done such camping trips before. After the Delaware River trip which was quite successful, we went with a similar group in early August to Lake George, Silver Bay where we spent almost a week.

In the fall we often went to Pelham Manor where we could rent horses and ride on bridal paths. And when snow came, we drove to Tuxedo where we could practice some modest cross country skiing. At that time chair lifts did not exist.

I had given thought to design a summer house, had in fact bought 3 lots of the Ferriss Estate land and resolved to start building, but by April 1933 the economic depression had set in. Though September 1, 1931 my salary as Research

Professor had been raised to \$6,000, for 1932-33 it was reduced to \$5,000 which made things more difficult. With the help of Mr. Ferriss, I found an architect who could convert my sketch into scale drawings with proper dimensions of all the timber. As I envisioned and discussed with the architect, I wanted open gable, stone foundations and stone front wall with bay window, two bedrooms, my study in front, a large fire place with stone mantel piece, a kitchen, an elevated terrace outside the living room. Mr. Ferriss was enthusiastic about my design. In New Milford was a lumber yard which I visited but found out quickly that lumber measurements were not in accord with designations and that for cabinet carpentry one had to reinterpret what 2 by 4 inches really meant.

By chance, in April 1933, a Canadian builder offered his services promising to get masons and carpenters as needed, and I promised to appear every weekend with the payroll money. By that time there was still no road to our place, but one could get trucks through the woods close enough to deliver supplies and everyone was willing to do extra work to get cash money. In this way I could also follow the progress and could assure myself that everybody would be back the following week.

The masons worked hard and well on the foundations and front wall so that by fall we could finish the roof, put in all the windows and close the house over the winter in good form. My savings had now dwindled, and I had to count pennies.

In the spring of 1934, President Roosevelt had created the Public Works Administration (PWA) and I had an electrical engineer assigned (unemployed and on relief payments) to my research laboratory, a Norwegian by name of Holland. He was most delighted when I proposed to take him to the Candlewood house and at once offered to help in carpentry. We designed and built all the interior furniture

for the house, having learned now by experience, how to order wood at the lumber yard. We manufactured a large table which certainly could not be moved out of the house and requisite benches to seat easily a dozen guests for meals.

In June 1934, Hertha graduated from High School in Mt. Vernon. She had applied for admission to Swarthmore College. Her closest friend was Alma Helbing of a Quaker family who had also applied at Swarthmore; and probably that as well as the good grades of Hertha were in favor of her acceptance at Swarthmore. Sonny had attended a program of study designed for physiotherapy with good courses in physics and received the degree Dr. of Science from Eastern Reserve University in 1934. She then spent part of the summer in Oetz and Piburg. When she left by boat, I gave her cabin steward a set of letters and asked him to deliver one letter each morning with her breakfast. I had fallen deeply in love but realized that she did not want to break up her family. She told me later that she read the letters I continued to write on the path to the lake going through the ravine that we dedicated in 1985 as the "Sonya Weber Way". It was her favorite path and truly the most romantic approach to the private part of the lake.

I spent practically the entire summer with Holland to construct a cabinet with shelves for ruby red glasses and a rustic dinner set for 12 people, a large double decker double bed for the girls and their friends, 2 beds for the master bedroom and my study book case as well as ample shelving for the kitchen. When Sonny returned from Europe the whole family had a first night in the house, still somewhat primitive but soon it became a full weekend retreat with swimming in the soft water of the lake and beginnings of a flower garden. Greta has now immortalized this gem of a summer "Felsenest" (Rocknest) in a hemlock grove in Connecticut with the book, "Candlewood Lake".

The following year, bit by bit, we added comfort and pleasing adornments to the interior. Sonny produced pillows with red crosstitch dragons adorning the bench near the bay window which provided covered storage space. Holland stayed on and we started to build a boat house in which I could store my folding Kayak and over which we made emergency beds. There were two compartments which would be used as dressing rooms, one for boys and one for girls. We made a stone terrace and steps down to the water. Somewhat later we added a float and a gangway to it. Sonny's seizures were a constant concern to me, they occurred almost once a month and even Uncle Hermann wrote on a card to her: "When can you really relax and fully recover?"

Early in 1936, Greta had a serious talk with Sonny and insisted that they move out of the house and in fact I rented for them an apartment on Prospect Avenue. Sonny inquired of legal counsel how to obtain divorce. The simplest way was to arrange a 6-week residence in the State of Nevada and then, obtain a local divorce decree. Mr. Kirchway contacted for her the attorney Summerfield in Reno who recommended a pleasant Ranch outside Reno and we leased 2 rooms for 6 weeks up to August 8, 1936.

When Sonny informed Hugo of her intention to obtain a divorce, he was deeply hurt and tried to argue his case. She was willing to give up her private office, and in fact her assistant Lia Alber was ready to take over. Moreover, shortly after the divorce decree became effective, Hugo married Lia Alber.

Hertha, who had been a resident student at Swarthmore College, had finished her second year and with Greta they left for Europe when Sonny and I took trains via Chicago to Reno.

## Appendix A

*We, the family of Sonya, including myself, Hertha, Greta, as well as some of the grandchildren, had tried from time to time to bring Sonny to recount some of her recollections of her earlier life, but with rather little success. At one time Sonny started notes and fortunately Greta transcribed these which follow here, covering some of the period 1906-1910.*

\* \* \* \* \*

"As a little girl I was allowed to eat with the adults, sitting quietly with my French governess at the end of the table. It was here that I witnessed and listened to the world of my father and his associates. Since we lived near the hospital my father very frequently brought colleagues to dinner, one or more of his assistants or interns, or well-known physicians from all over the world. In this way he could continue his professional conversations at home.

On the continent the noon meal is equivalent to our dinner here, and Two hours were taken for dining, with the working day ending as late as 8 in the evening. Among my father's assistants and pupils were Dr. Pirquet, Dr. Meinhardt von Pfaundler (my mother's eldest brother), Dr. Bela Schick and Dr. Ernst Reuss. The first three are famous in medicine. Dr. Pirquet discovered the first tuberculin test, Dr. Bela Schick originated the Schick test for diphtheria and Dr. Pfaundler

authored an outstanding handbook on Pediatrics, as well as being the first man to write about allergy, actually coining the word itself.

One of my most vivid memories is a dinner probably early 1906 when my father arrived with Pirquet and some other doctors of his staff for the noon meal. They all appeared crestfallen and, on my mother's questioning as to the cause of their low spirits, I heard what had taken place at the hospital. It was the first time Pirquet's tuberculin test had been tried. Father had decided that they themselves would be the first human guinea pigs for the test. The results? All had violent positive reactions to the skin test. This meant all of them had contracted the disease, either previously (by exposure to patients most likely) or through their work with the tuberculin bacillus.

The following day they decided to try the test on the entire hospital staff. Again, the same results!, namely, positive reactions on everyone. They realized anyone could react positively if they had ever had an infection caused by the tubercular bacillus. At the time, this may have manifested itself only as a very slight cold. After such an infection, a positive reaction was always possible.

It took a long time to establish a reliable dosage, differentiating between an active infection and an unimportant former minor infection. This was a notable break through since Vienna, the only metropolis at that latitude, was, at that time, known as a city with a large percentage of tuberculosis patients. In fact, it was known as the Wienerkrankheit (Vienna sickness). With time and experimentation, the Pirquet test was so developed and graded that it became the first T.B. test used the world over.

Some years later, Dr. Pirquet accepted an invitation to John Hopkins University in Baltimore. From there he was recalled to Austria to be successor to

my father at the University in Vienna. Some years later, in 1929, my mother was invited for dinner by the Pirquets. where she spent a normal social evening with him and his wife as many previous times. When she left, Pirquet presented her with a package. She brought it home, unwrapped it, and found it to be an oil painting. It was a landscape torn by a terrific storm. In the foreground lay a huge tree, struck by lightning. Why would he present her with this, she wondered? That night he committed suicide with his wife. A tragic and much too early death for this highly gifted man.

Another frequent guest was my father's best friend, Wagner von Jauregg, Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Vienna and Nobel Prize winner. To me, he was "linde Julius" and, after my father's death, he became my guardian, so I knew him well. Walter De Cruif describes Wagner in his book "Men Against Microbes" as looking more like a wild west sheriff than a famous psychiatrist. With his deep set dark brown eyes and bushy eyebrows, he was a first-rate hypnotist. At that time in Vienna if you saw an elegant lady looking into her handbag before crossing an open square or wide boulevard, you could be sure she was one of his patients. He gave to his patients suffering "Platzangst" Agoraphobia (fear of crossing wide open spaces) his picture and wrote under it, "Nothing can happen to you." And this is what the ladies looked for in their handbags before making their crossing. In those days of mainly horse drawn carriages and relatively rare automobiles, it evidently worked.

When psychiatric expert opinion was needed in legal actions, Wagner-Jauregg was chosen by the prosecuting attorney for any criminal expertise, while his colleague, Dr. Sigmund Freud, was invariably asked by the defense.



One criminal case which intrigued the public and received much attention in the press was a tremendous railway yard fire which caused the death of the night watchman. The man who had set the fire was arrested and charged with arson and murder. The two attorneys, the prosecutor for the state and the lawyer for the accused, argued the case with great vigor on the basis of principle. Namely, the defense attorney claimed his client had committed the crime under hypnosis and was therefore innocent. The state called upon Wagner-Jauregg for his opinion, which stated that no one would commit a criminal act under hypnosis which is against his character, even though he might go through all preliminary steps dictated to him, but he could not commit the act itself. In Wagner-Jauregg's judgement the man was therefore at least guilty of manslaughter and arson. Both Wagner and Freud had often been on opposite sides in law suits and the general public took great interest in their arguments. Both men were well known, colorful figures in Vienna.

Prof. Wagner-Jauregg saw his private patients by appointment only. One day while the process was proceeding a highly excited young woman arrived at his office without appointment. Upon being told by the secretary she could make an appointment but not for that day, since Prof. Wagner-Jauregg was already booked until eight o'clock, she insisted that she must absolutely see him that very day, that it was of great importance. Moreover, she said she would not leave, no matter how long she had to wait. When Uncle Julius was told about this, he good-naturedly agreed to see her after his last patient if she was willing to wait that long. It was a long wait, for she came at 3 p.m. and Prof. Wagner-Jauregg had no time between patients before 8 p.m. All that time she was getting visibly more and more nervous and anxious. This was, after all, in the waiting room of a psychiatrist, so being excited was nothing very much out of the ordinary.

When she finally was admitted to the office of the doctor, she quickly crossed over to Wagner-Jauregg who sat behind his desk and handed him a letter. Wagner motioned toward the chair facing him and opened the letter. In large letters it said: "LOOK OUT. SHE WILL SHOOT YOU. (Signed) Freud." Uncle Julius looked up and saw the pale trembling young woman shakily aiming a revolver at him. He just looked at her with his deep-set eyes and said quietly, "Drop it". This, she did, whereupon the gun somehow went off on the floor. The nurse and secretary, hearing the shot, rushed to call the police. The gun had been loaded but only with powder, no bullets. powder, no bullet.

The poor young woman was arrested, and I remember hearing in private that Wagner-Jauregg had quite a lot of trouble getting her released. Then, of course, SHE became one of his patients, instead of a patient of Freud.

In the newspapers the discussion of who was right went on for some time, as did the proceedings in criminal court.

Wagner claimed the performance of the young lady was proof of his theory, while Freud openly declared it as proof of his own beliefs because she tried to use the revolver. I do not recall what the courts' verdict and the ultimate judgement was, but I do remember that the man who had supposedly hypnotized the criminal was never located."

## **Appendix B**

*Sonny's cousin, Wolfgang Pfaundler, son of Herman Pfaundler and grandson of Leopold Pfaundler, Professor of Physics at the Universities of Innsbruck, 1867-1891, and of Graz, 1891-1910, had heard Sonny relate the story of the necklace that Napoleon had given to Marie Louise Habsburg in March 1811 at the birth of their son, Franz Bonaparte, whom Napoleon officially designated as "King of Rome". Marie Louise was the daughter of Franz I, Emperor of Austria. When April 6, 1814, Napoleon abdicated, Empress of the French Marie Louise was given the title Duchess of Parma and possession of that small principality, and her son became the Duke of Reichstadt. Unfortunately, he died in his 21st year of tuberculosis.*

*Wolfgang Pfaundler, during the summer of 1973 phoned from Innsbruck to our house in Oetz that he would like to come with two friends, bring food and wine and talk about Sonny's very special experiences. He actually came August 4 of that year and it turned out that he wanted to persuade Sonny to tell the story of the "Napoleon Necklace" and record it. We actually had a very good time, sat on our balcony until it got dark, then moved to our stube and certainly enjoyed the wine which made talking easier. About a year or two later, Wolfgang sent a transcription which Sonny corrected where needed. But we heard nothing further.*

*Sometime in the summer of 1986, Wolfgang sent me a copy of the "Journal December 1985 / January 1986" which contained the story under the title, Al Capone and the Necklace of Maria Luise - A Near Grotesque Criminal Story Told*

*at an Interview by Wolfgang Pfaundler. Since it is printed in German, I have translated it to be added to the Biography of Sonny.*

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Al Capone and the Necklace of Maria Louise**

Almost a crime grotesque according to an interview by

***Wolfgang Pfaundler***

Last summer died in Innsbruck in her ninetieth year, Sonya Weber, the daughter of Theodor von Escherich, who was the Director of the Children's Clinic in Vienna from 1902 to 1911 and had achieved world fame through his discovery of the bacillus Coli Communis, now referred to as Bacillus E, E standing for Escherich. Dr. Sonya Weber worked in the United States of America up to her 86th year as orthopedic specialist. Except for the war years she came every summer from the United States to Oetz to visit her mother, and in fact, was buried in the churchyard of the mountain village Oetz. Her first husband, whose brother Victor will play a prominent role in this interview, was Hugo Eisenmenger. Her second

marriage was with the Viennese Physicist Prof. Dr. Ernst Weber who taught in New York City.

"I was born in Graz, Austria, in 1895 and emigrated to the United States in 1913. During the summer of 1914, I returned to Europe with my husband in connection with a Mediterranean cruise. By chance, we bought a newspaper in Genoa, Italy, and read about the murder of the Austrian Crown Prince Franz Ferdinand in Serbia. We knew that my brother-in-law Victor Eisenmenger always travelled with FF-Franz Ferdinand was commonly called FF-and so we thought at once, that he had been killed, too. Victor was the personal physician of FF, both had had serious infections of Tuberculosis. FF was rather arrogant and not an agreeable person and public opinion held that only nice people succumbed to Tuberculosis. Victor and FF spent considerable time in Egypt which was supposed to generally lead to cure. My sister-in-law, Anna Hohenberg, a lady of royal bearing, also had acquired the same infection, and, therefore, also stayed at that time in Egypt, as well as a certain Captain Townsend.

The story I am about to tell occurred in 1928 and relates to the famous necklace that Napoleon gave to Maria Louise at the birth of their son in 1811. When Napoleon was deposed, Maria Louise was smart enough to retain this necklace and bring it back with her to Vienna. The necklace had been composed out of the loveliest diamonds of Europe containing 40 large individual crystals with a pendant of five very large diamonds. Cartier in New York at one time asked me to wear it for examination, but it did not really fit my figure. Anyway, nobody would have believed them to be genuine diamonds.

At that time, I still had to work very hard professionally. One day I received a telegram from Anna Eisenmenger-Hohenberg, "Please call for me at the ship

wharf!" Not knowing what it was all about, I called for her. When she arrived, she acted rather secretively and with some dramatic posture. I always addressed her at "Aunt Anna" even though she was my sister-in-law. I had called for her in my personal auto and she immediately examined the back of the car as if she feared someone was hidden there. When the customs examination was finished, I asked again what was the object of her visit. She then said: "I have come as the confidential delegate of Archduchess Maria Theresia" and she confided that the Archduchess owned the Napoleon Necklace. Actually, when FF, Victor and Anna Eisenmenger sojourned in Egypt on account of their Tuberculosis, they had encountered this "Captain Townsend" who apparently was neither Captain nor carried the name Townsend, but was an absolute, but smart, fore flusher. The Archduchess who was a rational and practical mother had been looking for some contact that would facilitate the sale of the necklace and Aunt Anna had suggested Townsend. Maria Theresia had three daughters, Annunciata, not married, and the subsequent Duchesses of Württemberg and of Liechtenstein. Since the necklace could not be divided between the three daughters, the mother wanted to sell the necklace for something like three million dollars and divide the money. However, the economic conditions worldwide were not favorable, the best opportunity appeared in the U.S. The Archduchess concluded to send the necklace to America and to avoid any special attention, she packed the necklace in newspaper and a box for shoes, without insurance, to the address of that "Captain Townsend".

Thus, the necklace had been mailed, Townsend had rented, upon the recommendation of the Archduchess a safe deposit box at the Harriman Bank in New York and had given full power to this Captain to sell the necklace if he found a reliable purchaser. The Harriman Bank was the only one where one could get to the safe deposit box during 24 hours, thus exhibit or wear the necklace at any time,

and return it at any time. For the first few months after Townsend had confirmed receipt of the necklace, he sent reports. But when no further reply was received, even though the Archduchess had urgently asked for reports, the Archduchess became suspicious. She asked Aunt Anna Eisenmenger to travel at once to New York and check on the situation. At the same time, she had cancelled the power of attorney of Townsend, and had published that fact in the newspapers in New York.

Aunt Anna was quite adventurous and when she arrived and had settled down in our house in Mount Vernon, she wanted to go to the Harriman Bank to verify that the necklace was, indeed, there and had not disappeared with Townsend. I objected and told her that that would be very foolish because Townsend could bring suit against her! But we went to New York to the Hotel Belmont on Lexington Avenue, a good hotel, opposite the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. I have the suspicion that as we entered the hotel at one door, Townsend had gone out the same minute through another door! In fact, as we came to the Reception we were told: "Yes, he had occupied a room here, but he just departed." Now, what should we do? To break into the safe of the Bank - we had no key - I did not dare to suggest because it could have terrible consequences. We returned home, and shortly afterwards, the telephone rang. As I took off the receiver, I recognized immediately that it could not be one of my patients, the voice was coarse, and a strange man's voice asked if I was Mrs. Eisenmenger. When I answered yes, he said: "Would you like to know where the necklace is?" I said, "But it is, of course, in the Harriman Bank". "Well, he said, you better look again: it certainly is not there anymore! It is there and there..." and he hung up. I wrote quickly the address he had mentioned on a pad that was fortunately next to the phone, namely on 53rd Street between 5th and 6th Avenues.

Fortunately, I had at that time among my patients a very well-known lawyer, Lewis Untermayer, who, in fact, had warned me before not to break into the safe. I phoned him right away, told him the story and also told him that Aunt Anna wanted to rush to that address not to lose any time. He said, however: "Do not go there in any case! I will send an armed man to a certain spot (and he specified that to me and let me repeat) and when at that spot you see a man who gives you this exact answer, it is the man I am sending."

So, Aunt Anna and I jumped into my car and we drove to the designated spot. We saw there a tall man who gave the correct answer, and he entered my car. It was Mr. Steinhart, a nephew of Untermayer.

On 53rd Street are all jewelers and valuables stores, generally the large dealers. We entered at the specified house, a heavy iron gate opened and quickly closed behind us. I thought, of course, Here we are caught! But then opened a second iron gate and we entered an office where a man sat at a desk. Steinhart had instructed us, "Let me talk, don't say a word, but when I give you a sign, start to talk like a waterfall!" In this way he wanted to gain time. I just was on needles, because the whole thing, necklace or not, really did not concern me personally. I thought about my family and the many children at the clinic, the time lost here, because, after all, I had the office with patients! Well, the man at the desk sat like a spider in her web, and my "guide" began to talk: "I heard that you have the necklace here"... and the other replied, "Yes, I have had it, but I sold it". Steinhart in turn said: "I have been authorized by Untermayer to find out to whom you have sold it!" Oh yes, "I sold it to ... and he gave an address about two or three houses further along. We thanked the man, went to the next address, where again: iron gates opened, iron gates closed and again a man at a desk like a spider. He said:



"Yes, I bought it two days ago, but I have sold it again". "Oh, yes, and to whom?" He gave an address two houses further along.

At the third address, as we enter, the man says: "Oh, yes, I have it here". Now Steinhart said that we were the personal representatives of the Archduchess and could we see the sales contract? "Oh, yes", replied he, "with pleasure". He showed the contract of sale which amounted to less than \$100,000 dollars, though the value of the necklace was at least one million dollars. The sale was signed by witnesses, the last of whom was Archduke Leopold Salvator. Steinhart asked if the necklace was actually there and the man replies, "Yes, it is in the safe behind me." Steinhart now introduced us and said that Baroness Hohenberg had power of attorney from the Archduchess and also had a wax copy of the necklace. He gave me a sign and I started at once to talk, no matter what and at the same time tried to open the container of the wax copy with intentional difficulties. In the meantime, the salesman had opened the safe and taken out the necklace - when suddenly 40 policemen were in the room. Where they had come from, I had no idea, but here they were. Steinhart now said, "I confiscate the necklace". The jeweler tried to resist and referred to the sales contract, but our man answered, "Please, we shall ask for expert valuation of the necklace and when the sales contract is for less than 30 per cent of the valuation, the contract is nullified." It was terribly exciting, the policemen had their revolvers ready and pointing and when we finally were outside, I was completely exhausted. Of course, Steinhart had taken with him the necklace.

When we arrived home, we sent a telegram to the Archduchess that we had secured the necklace, but also that Archduke Leopold Salvator had served as a witness to the sale! Actually, he had already twice been imprisoned and had agreed to give his name for which he had received \$10,000 dollars. And what was the

final result? He was again put in prison, because he was penniless. However, many of the society ladies took pity, brought him ever caviar to the prison. I, myself, had even the greatest difficulties trying to obtain my physical therapy license. All the cost of the telegrams I had to assume since I was the only one with financial recourse. For me it was very disagreeable. And then, the Archduchess telegraphed, "If the honor of a Habsburg is put in question, I would forego the million dollars." I could have murdered her!

The next morning, I had to leave home by 7:00 a.m. because I had patients scheduled for 8:00 a.m., and Aunt Anna wanted to see Untermayer. Apparently, the excitement was not good for Aunt Anna. After we started with the car she sat in the rear of the car to be proper as passenger. She felt getting weak and, in the mirror, I saw her getting lower and lower. Finally, I had to stop, she vomited the scrambled eggs she had for breakfast, but more than that, she really appeared to be sick so that she could not possibly meet with Untermayer. I turned into 68th Street, stopped at a hotel to get a room for her.

Being in a better section, a black doorman in a red coat opened the car door where Aunt Anna lay on the seat practically unconscious. The doorman pulled Aunt Anna by the legs out of the car and I just could get close enough to prevent her head from dropping to the Street. The doorman and I carried then Aunt Anna to the hotel where unfortunately the doorman entered the revolving door, where of course we three got completely stuck, together with our heavy winter coats. This was a real dilemma. People wanted to get out, others wanted to enter, but nobody could move, and more and more people collected. At this point, a small Jewish hotel guest who probably had some subway experience, went back in the hall, took a good start and ran with full speed against the inner side of the revolving door so that the impulse projected the three of us into a heap on the floor of the hotel

Aunt Anna lay on the floor, moaning and complaining to be dying. When I questioned her she only whispered, "the heart!". I called for a doctor, tried to massage the heart until he came. Of course, they had to transport her to a room and there I phoned Untermayer that Mrs. Eisenmenger could not come because of her fainting spell. He said, "that really does not matter, we have control of the situation, all harbors are blocked, and all railways are being watched." I just had the presence of mind to ask, "But what will be the expense?" Untermayer replied, "\$2,000 dollars per day". I nearly had a stroke!

Two days later, Aunt Anna went again to see Untermayer. Since I had to attend to my patients, I brought Aunt Anna to a subway station on a line that led directly to Untermayer's office. In the subway, Aunt Anna felt a little weak, so she wanted to buy some chocolate. However, she mistook chiclet for chocolate, and of course, the chewing gum had practically caused her teeth to get stuck so that Untermayer had to extricate the gum.

Untermayer actually handled the affair very well and the expense was less than I had feared. Aunt Anna had to return to Europe but was scheduled to come back the following year for the court proceedings. For the meantime I was made the official representative of the Archduchess together with a Mr. Perry from Untermayer's staff. For a whole year I had the necklace near me, had to hire a chauffeur and personal guard, but nobody had interest to acquire the necklace. I got so desperate that at the St. Patrick's Day parade, I walked in crowds even though my personal guard warned not to do that. I thought that since the necklace was insured for one million dollars with Lloyds, should it be stolen, the Archduchess will get the money. But nobody made any attempt.

During the court proceedings it happened that someone approached Aunt Anna and said, "Al Capone who now is in prison, wants to offer one million dollars for the necklace!" When Aunt Anna came home and told us that, I told her: "When you do that, you will leave this house at once, that is out of the question."

In the course of the court process, the necklace was actually appraised to have one million dollars material value. The historical value could not be expressed in money value at all.

About two years later, the Maharajah of Haiderabud bought the necklace. What happened later on and particularly after World War II, I do not know.

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