CHAPTER TWO

THE SUMMER OF 1938

At the Harvard commencement exercises on 5 June 1948, General George C. Marshall, then Secretary of State, was awarded an honorary degree. He chose this occasion to enunciate a daring program of massive economic assistance to war-ravaged Europe, since styled the Marshall Plan, which Churchill would later ascribe as "one of the least sordid acts in history." Dean Acheson, our brilliant Under-Secretary of State at the time and a Yale man, had objected to the selection of this venue for a policy statement of such import, not because it was Harvard, but for the very sensible reason that no one ever listened to commencement addresses, especially those for whom they were intended. And I can personally attest to the soundness of Mr. Acheson's logic, for of the hundred or so commencement speeches that I have either delivered or been forced to listen to, there is only one that remains steadfastly in my memory. The time was 5 June 1938, ten years to the day before General Marshall's pronouncement. The occasion was my own undergraduate commencement from The University of Texas at Austin. The speaker was Howard Mumford Jones, Distinguished Professor of Literature at Harvard and himself an alumnus of UT.

As the Class of '38 ruminated about the kind of world we would be stepping into, our prospects seemed dreary at best. At home, the nation was still in the throes of the Great Depression, despite all rhetoric and attempted nostrums of the New Deal. Most of my male classmates had had to work their way through college at whatever odd jobs they could find. My salvation was a Magnolia filling station where my average wage was $2 a day, for which I was thankful, and the stakes at my Saturday night poker forays were whether I could afford a date next week. But I was among the fortunate; my father was a college president with a handsome annual salary of $7,500 from which he happily provided my room and board, but as an object lesson, spending money was mine to earn. And during those four collegiate years, whenever foreign affairs intruded into a conversation, our elders were for the most part isolationists, unpersuaded by President Roosevelt's progressively determined but carefully understated warnings that grave dangers for the free world, including us, lay ahead if totalitarianism continued unabated.

Our class was not loathe to look abroad as part of the world we were entering, but there our prospects seemed even dimmer. The world we saw was dominated by dictatorships: Hitler in Germany, Mussolini in Italy, Stalin in Russia, and Tojo in Japan. Just in our collegiate lifetime we had seen Japan launch her Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere by seizing Manchuria by the throat and then invading China proper, culminating in the capture of Shanghai and the unspeakably cruel rape of Nanking.

We had seen Mussolini avenge an old Italian defeat at Adowa by swarming into Ethiopia and derisively demonstrating that tribesmen on horseback were no match for aerial bombardment, tanks, machine guns, flame-throwers and poison gas. We watched in despair the League of Nations' reaction to these events, proving itself worse than useless by convincing the dictators that there would be no organized resistance to future aggression. Indeed, we watched and heard on the newsreel when Haile Selassie, the only head of state ever to address that hapless body, after pleading for air, pronounce the League's

epitaph with his pathos-ridden last sentence, ". . . God and history will remember your judgment."

We had seen Austria disappear in the Anschluss under the goose-stepping boots of Hitler's Reichswehr. We had borne witness to the formation of the Rome-Berlin Pact, the Anti-Comintern Pact. We were watching General Franco and his Fascist allies decimate republican Spain, aided only by Russia's spurious support; and after Guernica, the first city ever wholly destroyed from the air, and this by the Luftwaffe's Condor Legion, we saw more than one of our colleagues driven by despair to the futility of the International Brigades.

And what of our erstwhile democratic allies? There was Great Britain, still trying to recuperate from horrendous losses in the Great War, impoverished in physical, material and emotional resources, still trying desperately to hold together Empire and Commonwealth, her Royal Throne barely surviving the assault of an American tramp, dangerously under armed, especially in the air, and now under the tutelage of an honest, sincere, strait-laced, able but totally unimaginative Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, who had become convinced that appeasement of the dictators held the only glimmer of hope for his nation's security.

And there was France, also trying to recover from even greater losses in the 1914-1918 holocaust and having totally misread all the lessons of that war, now standing numbly in defensive posture behind the vaunted unassailability of her Maginot Line, backed by supposedly the best army in Europe under the leadership of the most brilliant General Staff extant. Yet any disinterested observer of the French scene in the 1930's could discern that she was floundering, that the venality of her politicians and the endless succession of governments had robbed her of any sense of national unity and purpose, that her army was a hollow shell, lacking organization, discipline and élan, and that the General Staff was a mere congeries of ego-driven, posturing charlatans, an embodiment of their chief, General Gamelin, himself.

Hitler's first great gamble, the invasion of the Rhineland in 1934

in direct violation of the Treaty of Versailles, without the slightest counter-response, proved beyond peradventure the lack of French—and British—resolve. So Britain and France, individually and collectively, seemed to us bewilderingly slender reeds in the defense of democracy. And this, less than twenty years after the guns had gone silent in November 1918, less than a month before I was born.

All this Professor Jones had in mind as he addressed us in our black gowns and mortar boards on that sunny June morning. He went straight to the point. We were facing a world that seemingly grew more irrational day by day, but we must not lose faith in and forsake the enduring qualities of reason. If their ends, as well they might, seemed totally irrational to us, the dictators were establishing their noxious tyrannies by rational means. When Hitler, for example, at a Nazi party congress, launched into one of his impassioned, mesmerizing tirades, his arguments had been rationally chosen and rehearsed for their effectiveness. Herr Goebbels' masterful propaganda machine was a model of rational organization, application, and the effectiveness of repetition. Mussolini's flamboyant gesturing and the stridency of speech as he bounced along the balcony of the Palazzo Venezia were rationally calculated to inflame the Italian hubris. The simplistic slogan: "He made the trains run on time." was a rational palliative to deep-seated discontent. Stalin's brutal programs and mass butcheries, such as the massacre of the Kulaks, though terrible to contemplate, were a rational means to silencing dissent. Japan's ascendency in the Far East was the result of meticulous planning and execution. The results, Professor Jones paused to note, could not always be anticipated; the rape of Nanking, for example, was nothing but the sheer, unadulterated orgy of innate cruelty gone berserk, illustrative of the frightfulness abroad in our world.

"So the problem that your generation—and what is left of mine—faces is not the disappearance of reason, per se," he continued, "but that the dictators have abandoned reason in determining not their means but their ends. Here the operative words are greed and guile, the voracious lust for power. History, however, tells us repeatedly

that irrationality cannot withstand the rule of reason, steadfastly applied. The Inquisition, for example, no longer awaits the non-believer. The sole objective of your formal education thus far has been to endow you with the tools of reason, and your presence here today indicates that at least you have begun the mastery of those tools. Now the future depends entirely on the persistence, the passion with which you apply those tools in defense of the free world."

So, our future was to be a dogfight, and what we had unmistakably heard was an intellectual call to arms and a battle flag on which was writ large, "The tools of reason and the passion for the fray." And I wanted to shout. "Take that, Messrs. Chamberlain et Daladier. Take that, Senators Burton and Wheeler, Take that, Joe Kennedy and Charles Lindberg!" And what added immeasurably to my excitement was the knowledge that before long I would be seeing the "battlefield" at close hand.

HARRY FULWEILER WAS a fraternity brother in Delta Kappa Epsilon and one of my closest friends, who at age 21 was two years my senior. He stood barely 5' 7" but had a stocky build, with a shock of wavy blond hair, an infectious smile, and was fairly bursting with energy. Short girls thought he was a dream, and taller ones wanted to give him elevator shoes. His 1938 red Ford convertible did not diminish his popularity. Sober, he was about as attractive as a guy could be, but like many people of short stature, he carried a chip on his shoulder which became evident when he got on the outside of too much beer, and he would invariably try to pick a fight with the "biggest man in the bar". What saved him from utter destruction was his well-practiced habit of choosing a sufficient number of tall and muscular chaps as his drinking companions. At any rate, sometime during the course of our final semester we conceived the idea that the perfect graduation gift from our parents would be a trip to Europe,

and during the Easter break we drove in his car first to his home in Abilene and then to mine in Denton to promote a "poor students' grand tour." We had done our homework and had discovered what seemed to be a perfect vehicle in a tour sponsored by the Students' International Travel Association (SITA) which would take us to Britain, Holland, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and France for $699 for everything, including ocean transportation on the Holland-American Line's new flagship, the SS *Nieuw Amsterdam*. Our parents had not only been amenable but enthusiastic, and so it was that as Harry and I sat together listening to Professor Jones, it was with a heightened sense of self-interest.

Our tour group was to rendezvous in New York before our sailing day of 16 June, which gave Harry and me time for a fairly leisurely drive through the Southeast and then up the East coast. We fell into a speed trap in a North Carolina hamlet, where we were hauled up before a drunken county judge who demanded $25 or a night in jail, but otherwise the trip went well. Thanks to my father's penchant for extended summer automobile tours, I was a pretty seasoned traveler, but this was my first experience in the Northeast. We stopped for two days in Washington, D. C. which we found astonishingly impressive and worked very hard at seeing the sights. It also gave me the chance to call upon Commissioner Walter Splawn, a former president of UT, who had appointed Dad as his Dean of Students and who had been subsequently named by Roosevelt to the Interstate Commerce Commission. Our families had remained close, and on this occasion he invited me to return to Washington the following year as his private secretary, on the proviso that I would have completed my M.A. degree. Then the drive into New York City was a real adventure, but we finally made it to our hotel without injury, Holland Tunnel and all.

Dad had suggested that we stay at the Biltmore Hotel at 43rd and Madison, noted for its reduced rates to collegians and under whose fabulous clock God knows how many Ivy Leaguer's had begun their amorous adventures. The first thing we did was get rid of the car—

New York was awesome enough without having to drive in it, and we found a garage in the vicinity which would store it for the summer. Then, armed with a map, we took to the streets—two fresh young college graduates on the loose in the world's greatest city.

We first headed for Broadway and there, within sight of the clock on the Woolworth Building, we found a little bistro called the Silver Dollar which was notable for three things: a huge shrimp cocktail for 25¢, draft beer for 10¢ a copious mug, and a jukebox loaded with Benny Goodman's latest releases. This, we concluded, was about as near to Heaven as we were likely to get and the Silver Dollar became our headquarters. Yes, we did all those things we were supposed to do —the Met, Carnegie Hall, the Public Library, Central Park, up the Chrysler Building, up the Empire State, Rockefeller Center, St. Patrick's. We mastered the subway to the Polo Grounds to see the Giants play the Cardinals. It was hard work but it was glorious, every minute of it.

The highlight of this adventure was to be the return bout at Yankee Stadium between Joe Louis, the Detroit Brown Bomber and Max Schmeling, the German heavyweight champion who in their first fight had given his younger opponent a memorable boxing lesson. This return engagement was being billed as the fight of the decade, of the century, maybe of all time, and the sporting world was transfixed at the prospect. Harry's father through a banking friend in New York had somehow managed tickets for us, and we scrambled aboard the uptown express at Grand Central about as excited as two youngsters can get. Why, just to see Yankee Stadium would have been thrill enough. The crowd disgorged at 125th Street station, sweeping us with it. We had trouble finding the right entrance, and then the right section, and then the right aisle, all the while hearing the announcements and introductions booming from ringside. Never had we seen such an arena and such a crowd. Finally we were headed for our seats when the bell sounded for Round 1. But before we could get to them, the fight was over; Louis had come out of his corner like a panther and demolished the German in something like two minutes, and we

had never seen a blow struck! But the whole spectacle had been worth it, we concluded back at the Silver Dollar, for we had been physically present where history was being made even if we hadn't actually seen it.

The day before departure we met our tour group, headed by Dr. Collie Sparkman, a kind of Chipsean professor of French at the University of Alabama and a SITA veteran; there were nine girls and six boys, all recent graduates and the rest were parents of some of our group who had decided to come along. It all seemed amiable enough, but as Harry was quick to observe, pulchritude was in very short supply; one red-head seemed promising but, of course, she was one of those with parents.

The next morning Harry and I joined Dr. Sparkman in a cab for the Holland-American berth in Hoboken, and as we drove up, there rode our ocean liner sparkling in the sun, immense, beautiful. For two country boys from Texas, this was breath-taking, the simple act of going aboard memorable. Given the price of our passage, our cabin had to be deep in the ship's bowels; it was small, with two bunks one above the other, two chairs, some hanging space, a basin and a toilet, with the baths and showers not too far away; but it was so neat and trim that after four years of living in a fraternity house, we decided it had to be uncomfortable.

Then the loudspeakers blared the "going ashore" signal, there was the usual last minute flurry of activity but it was all new to us—the hurried good-byes, the band, the confetti, the frantic waves to those ashore, and finally the deep-throated blast from her foghorn as the tugs eased her out into the Hudson River. And, of course, no one left the rails until one of the greatest sights in the world hove into view, our Lady of Liberty. "Harry," I said, "honest and truly we are on our way!"

We sized up our travel group pretty quickly as being nice enough but without much sparkle, so we saw little of them except at meal-time; and although we must have seemed much of the time as typically loud, boorish Texans, we found plenty of fun-loving Rovers

aboard who put up with us. We were into all the deck sports, usually as partners, and we won more than our share of matches. I suppose we were typical neophytes on our first ocean voyage, all over the place and into everything, and we ran out of time every day.

There were a lot of recent college graduates aboard, most of them from the northeast. I was really smitten by a stunning blond from Boulder, but alas she was 24 and out of my league, being far more interested in the ship's younger officers. But nowhere could I find any expression of real concern for the state of the world. These were essentially people on a summer holiday and for most of our age group this was their first trip to Europe, the Europe of the guide books, and all anticipating the wonders of London and Paris and Vienna and Rome that lay ahead. Spain, of course, was out of bounds, but as far as anyone knew, Americans were still welcomed everywhere else. War, or the possibilities thereof, apparently was the last thing on anyone's mind, if, indeed, the thought occurred at all. So with this glorious ship, calm seas and bright skies, the festive mood was genuine and unabated.

As the social patterns began to shake down, Harry and I found ourselves more and more in the company of three comely Wellesleyites who had also just graduated; they were not part of a structured tour but were to follow an itinerary worked out by a New York travel agent which reflected their parents' tastes and means. It was our first exposure in depth to the Ivy League ethos and their first to Texans, and despite some uncomfortable fits and starts, we decided they weren't really snobs and they decided we weren't really crude bumpkins. In stature, one of them just fitted Harry, while either of the others suited me just fine, but it early became apparent that they had taken an oath, probably in blood, that no two of them were going to walk the deck with prospective swains and leave the other unattended. So in the evenings, at the bar or while dancing in the lounge, we were constantly on the lookout for a compatible third mate, but we never seemed to find one with any staying power. At any rate, the five of us became fast friends, and as we neared Plymouth, where we

were all disembarking, we sat up one night for a serious comparison of itineraries in the hope of finding points of juncture along the way, particularly since they had considerable flexibility which we lacked. We found that early on we would have a two-day overlap in London, but the next possible rendezvous would depend on their willingness to see less of Berlin and its environs in favor of a trip down the Rhine. If so, we could meet at Mainz and pick up a river steamer there; and secure in the feeling that Thomas Cook could do the needful for them, we agreed on the Hotel Adler in Mainz on 16 July.

We went ashore at Plymouth, and by the time our luggage was sorted out and stowed aboard our chartered bus it was nearly 9 p.m. when we reached our hotel. After depositing our overnight bags in our room, Harry and I left immediately to collect our Ivy friends at their much posher digs up the street and headed for the nearest pub, entering just in time to hear a bell ring and the publican chant, "Time, gentlemen, please; the law is no longer on our side."

Having no clue as to English licensing laws, we asked for beer, only to be told that the pub was closed, whereupon we pled that we had just got off the ship, this was our first night on British soil and our first visit to a pub about which we had heard so much, and could we please have just one beer? Our girls were especially pitiful and convincing, and the publican smiled and explained that he must perforce lock up his establishment to the public but that he could invite us to remain as his "personal guests" for "A bit of a dram." Included in this invitation were a couple of the "regulars," and thus we were introduced to pints of warm beer and lovely people. In retrospect I couldn't think of a grander start for us five pilgrims or to what became my life-long love affair with what I consider the most singularly satisfying social organization ever devised by man, the English pub.

The only Britain I knew came from the history texts and the shared devotion with my father of some of its literature, especially Shakespeare and the Romantic poets, Dickens and Galsworthy and Conrad and Kipling. And as we made our leisurely way inland in our

comfortable bus, we had our first exposure to the English countryside, and I began to get that feeling I have never lost for the "rain and the shine and the green of that blessed land." Eastbourne, Bath and its Victorian Crescent, Wells and the cherubic voices at Evensong in that vast Cathedral.

But as we made our progress, something began to nag at the back of my mind: did I detect a sense of apprehension among the British people, particularly as dusk approached, or was it merely a trick of thought? At Oxford, which we reached on the fourth day, we were to spend two nights; we were quartered in private lodgings which during term catered to students not housed in the colleges. Our particular address was Wellington Square, and we got our first glimpse of domestic arrangements with few basic amenities: tiny rooms, no hot water, and pretty primitive WCs, all of which faded before the glories that awaited us the next day. We had already learned that if there was one thing the British could do, it was breakfast, and filled the next morning with eggs, rashers of their wonderful bacon, broiled tomatoes, and jams and preserves on hot scones, we went off to have our first look at this fabulous university setting.

From my father I had long known about the Rhodes scholarships, but since as an undergraduate I had not been nominated by my university for the competition, I could only look with envy at the colleges, the courtyards and the quads, the Bodleian, the playing fields. My college would have been Magdalen, where Harry and I tried a punt on the Isis with little success. Our hosts had insisted that we be back for tea, having invited their niece to come see what Texans looked like, and it was certainly welcome after a long day of sightseeing.

The niece, as it turned out, was a nurse, about 25 and most attractive in her white uniform and, I noted with relief, much too tall for Harry. Their notions of America and Americans had been gleaned almost entirely from the cinema, and they were actually disappointed that we Texans were not wearing boots, and that we were university graduates rather than cowboys. Surely we must have pistols in our

belongings. At least we had our own horses, and were Indians still a problem?

It was all great fun, but as it began to darken outside, the three of them—the husband and wife and niece—rose almost in unison; they were going to step outside for a moment and we could join them if we liked. As we stepped out into the Square, other householders were appearing. Not a word was spoken, and they all faced the east, looking into the sky and listening intently. And then it dawned on me. Oxford was considerably farther east than Plymouth and only fifty miles from London, and what these people were listening for was the sound of German bombers.

After we went back inside, the husband, half in apology, explained that he had been in the navy and his wife a nurse during the last war, which had ended only twenty years ago, and they knew what war was like, and they knew that Hitler and Germany were bent on revenge, and, yes they did this every night since the fall of Austria only two months ago, and that moonlit nights were dreaded most. The niece arose, saying she had to return to her nursing home about a mile away, and despite her objections I insisted on walking with her, saying that if I got lost, my "pardner" would come and find me. We had to cross two fields, but there was a distinct enough path, and at the end of the first field we stopped at a stile that enabled one to cross the rocky boundary.

"Tell me," I asked, "is what I saw tonight going on all over Britain?"

She couldn't speak to that, but certainly along the Channel coast and in all the towns close to London.

"You see, we know what the Germans did to Guernica from the air, and Mr. Churchill speaks in Commons everyday about how ill prepared our aerial defenses are. We all hope like our Prime Minister that Hitler will come to his senses, but who can tell. We also know that if another war should begin soon, you Yanks, even if you were willing, could not get here in time to save us."

"What about the French?"

"Rotten to the core."

The moon was beginning to rise, desolate and she looked so beautiful and discouraged and helpless, and to try to change the subject, I recited a couple of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's sonnets as if to prove that Texans weren't complete barbarians. Then we just sat there, holding hands. When she stood to leave, she took my other hand and faced me, and I'll swear there was a touch of Madeleine Carroll, still the most beautiful woman I have seen. I stammered something about wanting very much to kiss her good night, and she replied that she would like that—and meant it.

"Will you come to tea tomorrow?"

"I don't think I can get away, but I shall try."

"Please!"

In the meantime, Harry and her uncle had gone to a pub, where with much urging and a few pints, he had related some of his experiences in the Great War.

They say London is a man's town, a town comfortable as an old shoe, but there is no way adequately to describe its effect on five young Americans exposed to its wonders for the first time. Harry and I gathered up our Ivy girls and first off did Buckingham Palace and gawked at Queen Victoria. Then we strolled through Green Park up to Piccadilly, decided to throw caution to the winds and climbed aboard a double-decker bus and scrambled up to the top deck in the open air. We flew down Piccadilly, turned right on the Haymarket, across Trafalgar Square, up the Strand and Fleet Street to pause at St. Paul's, then down the Embankment to Big Ben, the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey. There we decided that each of us should go his own way and take his own time, and we would reassemble at the west exit just beyond the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Back outside, we had our first meeting with a Ploughman's lunch at a nearby pub, and were off again. Walking north, we passed the Foreign Office and Clive's statue, on past the Home Office and onto the Horse Guard's Parade, where on the right stood Kitchener "with his back on Downing Street," and at the eastern entrance, Field

Marshals Wolseley and Roberts, with their exploits on behalf of Empire etched in stone. And just beyond these worthies, in their full uniforms sitting at rigid attention on their chargers, were the two ever-present members of the Household Cavalry.

Then we faced west, towards St. James Park, with the Admiralty on our right, and there stood the white marble Cenotaph, Britain's principal monument to the 1914-1918 War, with the bronzed figures of Tommy Atkins standing at Parade Rest, the inscriptions of every unit that made up the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), and in chronological order the principal engagements it fought, beginning with Mons. For some years the Cenotaph had been considered little more than a tourist attraction, but now it had suddenly become a grim reminder of the dangers Britain might again be facing.

That evening we went to the theatre to some farce at which the British are unexcelled, and then to Soho, for a late supper. Quite at random we chose a likely looking bistro on Greek Street named "L'Escargot," which quite lived up to its promise. There our companions announced that they had done their homework and secured confirmed reservations at the Hotel Adler in Mainz, after which it was back to their hotel and good-bye until, God willing, 16 July.

DR. SPARKMAN HAD ARRANGED for a briefing at our Embassy on Grosvenor Square, and he took Harry and me with him. His objective was to report our itinerary and find out if any unusual precautions need be taken, particularly in Germany and Italy. A young First Secretary ushered us into his office, and he seemed to be on top of his game. U. S. tourists, on the surface at least, were welcome in both countries, and if we were careful not to trammel on native sensibilities, we would be cordially treated. Recent American returnees, however, were reporting what seemed to be an increasing sensitivity as to our impressions about what was going on. In public places such as restaurants, bars and beer gardens, we might well be

politely approached by apparent civilians but who were Nazi party members announced by the swastikas in their coat lapels. They would probably ask if they might join you for a moment, which you should always agree to, and after offering to buy a round of drinks, they would begin to ask you how you liked their country. Had you ever seen a happier people, a greater sense of purpose and orderliness, public pride and the like. The trick is to humor them, to praise Germany and its leaders to the high heavens, to indicate that you have never been so impressed by a country before, and if you do it convincingly, I am told that your restaurant and bar bills will be significantly diminished. And you had better get accustomed to "Heil Hitler," now the standard substitute for "Good morning" and "Good night;" the words which Germans now used to start and end the day, and you will be well served to reply in kind, and better still with your arm upraised. Just play their game, and try to seem sincere.

Our SITA group made its way to the Continent via the ferry from Dover to Ostend, where we were met by a new and even roomier bus, a new driver, and a travel companion for the rest of our tour in Europe. Her name was Hilda Mueller**,** a linguist who made her living, she explained, through translations, private language lessons and turismo. She was in her mid-fifties and ugly as sin, skinny, flat-chested, uneven teeth stained from chain smoking, clothes barely hanging on her scrawny frame, disheveled hair splotched with gray, but with an intensity about her and a piercing gaze that caught one's immediate attention. She introduced herself with the admonition that if we paid attention to what she was saying, we might learn something on this journey. Our driver was a quiet little man in obvious awe of our interlocutor.

Belgium did not detain us long, but we spent a remarkable day touring the battle fields of Flanders, working out of Ypres and the Menin Gate, white crosses everywhere, British, French, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, Indian, and now black crosses, too, in the beautifully reconstituted German cemeteries by order from Hitler. And then it was into Germany proper.

The walled cities of Nuremberg and Rothenburg were our first major stops, then Frankfurt and its sausage stalls along the banks of the River Rhine. After Mainz, we headed for Heidelberg on the River Neckar with its university, Heidelberg Schloss, and dinner in the Zum Rhoten Ochsen, the fabled student inn. Then there was the jewel-like Dinkelsbühl, where Harry and I plagiarized Wordsworth's opening paragraph of his "Preface to the Lyrical Ballads" by substituting our word "Bier" for his word "Poetry" and leaving it in the guestbook of the little hotel where we spent the night before arriving in Munich.

It had been in Nuremberg, however, where our high adventures began. After our customary bus tour of the city, with Hilda doing her best to enlighten us, Harry and I wandered off in the early afternoon in search of a bierstube. We found one, a nice one with a dark interior of polished oak and tables set up alfresco in a sizeable garden. We took a table outside and had no sooner placed our order than here they came, three well-dressed gentlemen, the tell-tale swastika on their coat lapels, greeted us with "Heil Hitler."

"Heil Hitler," we returned, with right arms up. They paused beside us and asked us from which country we came.

When we replied "the United States" they asked if they might join us for a moment. Then they began, and we were flabbergasted at the accuracy of our First Secretary in London.

How did we like Germany?

The most beautiful country we had ever seen.

How had we been treated?

Our reception could not have been more cordial.

What did we think of Hitler?

He must be a remarkable leader to have taken a nation so debilitated by war and depression and the dictates of the Treaty of Versailles and brought about its rebirth as a great power.

What do you think of the Jews?

We despise them for the money grubbers they are and we hope Hitler puts them in their place.

What are you going to say about Germany when you return to your country?

Why, compared to Britain and France, Germany is the one great hope for an orderly and prosperous Europe.

"Herr Ober, Herr Ober," one of them fairly shouted to a waiter, "bring these gentlemen whatever they wish, for they are our guests." With that they rose to take their leave, in all geniality, but I asked them to stay for a few minutes because we had some questions.

We had noticed an almost festive air about the city and what seemed to us an unusual number of people in uniform, brown, grey, black and green. "Was this a national holiday?"

"Not exactly, but tonight is the meeting of the National Socialist Party Congress which will be held in the Sportplatz."

"Is this their annual rally?"

"Nein. That is in September but this is still a very important meeting. Der Führer is coming to address us."

"Could we attend?"

That stopped them cold. After a hurried discussion among themselves, they decided it would be quite impossible. But, we argued, think of what an impression it would create at home if we could say that we had actually seen and listened in person to your Great Leader and that we could describe the enthusiasm of his reception. And remember, the U.S. never tried to punish Germany for the last war, we did not ratify the Treaty of Versailles, we did not join the League of Nations. And besides, we could wear our lederhosen so we wouldn't be too conspicuous. Another huddle, and it was finally agreed that they would take us; we must be in front of this restaurant at 6 p.m.

The Sportplatz was a huge, cavernous steel and concrete horseshoe of a stadium that seemed as though it could seat a hundred thousand spectators, but tonight there would be double that number for every inch of the infield grass would be covered by the uniformed battalions of the Nazi faithful. The festivities were to begin at dusk to accentuate the hundreds of burning torches that rimmed the stadium

and the searchlights that were beginning to play on the infield and podium. The stadium was filling rapidly and we were happy to have found seats in the section reserved for the Hitler Jungend. The steady, muffled beat of the drums setting the cadence for the goose-stepping units of the brown shirted SS, the black shirted Waffen SS, and the field grey of the Wehrmacht had already begun as they filled the infield in an atmosphere designed to emulate the medieval aura of the Teutonic knights of old. The crowd was tense with excitement and anticipation of what was to follow, and in the event, Harry and I could have been sitting there naked and no one would have noticed.

As darkness settled in, suddenly the drums went silent and every searchlight was extinguished, leaving the stadium bathed in only the flickering of the burning torches. Then a single spotlight riveted the podium and onto the dais strode the gangling figure of Goebbels, Hitler's Propaganda Minister who exerted totalitarian control over the media, the arts, and information of any sort. "Sieg Heil," he screamed into the microphone, and "Sieg Heil" was the thunderous response.

Now my German was far from fluent, but I could follow Goebbels' peroration well enough to realize that this was the old vaudeville shtick of warming up the crowd. He damned those envious of Germany's growing strength, damned those who opposed the absorption of every German who wanted to be part of the Third Reich. "Our answer to them is our answer to Austria: Anschluss!" He damned the Poles, the Czechs, the Russians, the French, the British, all conspirators against Germany in the last great trial of arms. Most of all he damned the Jews and encouraged spontaneous violence against them. "We have risen from the ashes of Versailles and today we have a leader who will not be deterred from reaching our rightful destiny." He stopped, quickly stepped aside, and standing before us was Adolph Hitler.

Nuremberg Rally

For the next ten minutes all that could be heard was the feverish "Sieg Heil" from every throat in that vast assemblage. And then when he raised his hand, silence. He started slowly, as if a father talking to his family. But then his practiced technique asserted itself, and by intonation and gesture, he worked his way up to fever pitch. The central theme was the Sudetenland, the harassment and persecution of the Sudeten Germans by the Czechs and Slovaks that was becoming intolerable.

But had I not understood a word, I still would have succumbed to this mesmerizing display of passion and guile, this consummate artist in jack boots bamboozling his people with controlled fury. What a frightening performance, and what a frightening response. Harry and I both had to admit later fighting against the impulse to join in the "Sieg Heils." At any rate, the next item on the Reich's agenda had been announced to the world.

When our escorts dropped us off at our hotel, they told us there would be a parade the next day featuring Hitler and his entourage, and that our beer garden would be a good place from which to view it. So having alerted our SITA group, we all assembled there for lunch. The street was already being lined with excited spectators, and when the first strains from the distant band could be heard, the

cafe emptied, lock, stock and barrel. We were pressed against the restaurant windows by the exuberant crowd, but by standing on tiptoe, we could still manage to view the proceedings. That is, all but Harry, who went back inside and brought out a chair to stand on. We could follow the parade's progress by the swelling roar of the viewers, and in good time the first units began to appear: the Army band, a platoon of Storm Troopers, a company of light tanks, personnel carriers, and motorcyclists. And then there they were, in a huge open touring car with its top down: Hitler, Goering, Himmler, Goebbels, and Hess—the architects and prime movers of a Reich designed to last a thousand years. The crowd was quite beside itself with the frantic waving of flags, the weeping and the shouting for joy.

With the passing of the principals, our group went back inside, but not so the Germans, who stayed in the street transfixed. With the place all to ourselves, Harry and I took over the bartending, and when much later the restaurant began to resume normal operations ours was a jolly company, but no one paid the slightest notice, so transported were they by the sight of their leaders.

Our day, however, was to end on a dreary note. From time to time we had all seen the sign "Juden Verboten" plastered on an occasional storefront, cafe, or public building. But that afternoon we witnessed for the first time Nazi goon squads in action. Seemingly inspired by the spectacle they had witnessed the night before, they burst into Jewish shops and places of business, dragging the occupants into the street, beating, kicking, cursing and urinating on them. It was nauseating, loathsome, and I had seen nothing like it since witnessing the lynching of an innocent black man years ago in Texas.

We left the charms of Nuremburg and arrived in Mainz, from whence we were to embark on a week's tour of the Rhineland and its castles by steamer and bus. Harry and I had already explained to Dr. Sparkman that we had invited the Wellesley girls to accompany us on this segment, and furthermore, if we found an inviting spot en route, the five of us might just leave the steamer and stop for a spell, but not to worry for we would meet the tour back in Mainz at the appointed

time. When we told Hilda, who by this time was a member of the family, what we had in mind, she suggested that there was a charming little village just below Koblenz that was noted for its vineyards.

"It might just suit your needs, whatever they are," she said, her eyes smiling. But the great question was, of course, would anyone be waiting to meet us at the Hotel Adler? No one was, but they had booked a room for that night. We waited up for them, and I must say we all seemed mightily pleased to see each other. They were travel weary and they readily embraced our notion of stopping a spell in some quiet, out of the way spot, and we agreed to travel as lightly as possible, with only our overnight things in our rucksacks, in case we did any hiking.

So buoyed by the prospect of a happy reunion, we boarded our steamer the next morning to begin our cruise up the Rhine Valley. The weather was gorgeous, the river fairly glistening and alive with traffic; the steep hills rising abruptly from each side of the river all seemed given over to vineyards, which at this time of the year were lush in green vegetation. The castles high above stood like immense guardians, which I suppose was their original intent. Nuremberg seemed to be on another planet. After a splendid lunch with a goodly sampling of the regional wines, Hilda told me Bacharach would be coming up in about an hour's time; the stop was brief so have our gear ready. Leaning over the rails, we saw this tiny, picture post-card village slowly slide into view, nestled beneath its towering vineyards that came right down to the water's edge. We couldn't have gone ashore with lighter hearts.

A short walk from the pier took us to the town center, a little square with a small band pavilion and surrounded by little business houses, a green grocer, a butcher shop, and the like. At one corner there was a larger building, the town hotel, and in we went to inquire about lodgings. The manager's English was better than our German, happily, but he explained that he was fully booked and would be for some time, the town being unusually full of visitors and we would be

better off by taking the next steamer to Koblenz. Pensions? None that he could recommend. That was all very discouraging, but on leaving I spotted the post office, which is usually the font of all wisdom in a small town. There, a jolly, plump post-mistress told us she knew of one pension that might be suitable; if we would walk down the street off the square that parallels the square, in about an 1/8th of a mile, almost to the edge of the village, we would come to a small park on our right, directly across from which was a row of small houses, one of which was the pension, which had a sign. So down the street we went.

The town certainly didn't appear to be crowded; few people were on the streets although I did notice occasional men in uniforms that I was not familiar with. We found the pension without difficulty where we were warmly greeted by the proprietor and his wife; yes, they could take us for the night or even longer if we wished; yes there were places to hike; yes, they would give us breakfast; yes, the town was famous for its wine, and there was a noted weinstube that also served good food to which they would direct us.

"But," said our host, "are you sure you want to say with us. We are Jewish, and Jews are not liked in many parts of Germany."

Road into the vineyards in Bacharach

We merely replied that now we were even more certain that we wanted to stay. Our two rooms were larger than expected and neat as a pin, and there was a separate WC which adjoined a bath with two