

July 5<sup>th</sup> 1928

Adventure after adventure. Again I am in a small village far away from civilisation... Two days I travelled by steamer, and then 6 days on a small launch-boat by the river Kamchatka, which runs right in the middle of this half island.

My mission is a "forest expedition" finding out the possibility of exploiting the forests of Kamchatka.

The climate here is quite good. It is indeed warm, the sun shines as bright as anywhere in Central Europe, but... it is a plague of "moskitos" making you curse the very day you set out for this place. My face, neck & hands are one mass of red blisters, smarting all over. & yet, this is only the beginning... our party is to stay about here for at least 2 months. How one can stand this? - heaven only knows.

I have a veil for my face, gloves & a suit of clothes to answer the purpose, but the miserable, ghastly creatures penetrate through anything and poison your very flesh.

The misery on ~~experiments~~ when compared to suppose part of the naked body to administer natural functions - it is hell!!

It is indeed a nightmare! and yet, people live here, true not very many, but still human life exists. They work, & seem more or less satisfied. In winter time the atmosphere reaches 40-50 degrees below zero, and summer brings a plague of mosquitoes & poisons the air...

I wonder how you are now? I am held up here for a couple of days, as the river runs fast & we can not get across to the place where we have to begin our work, & will have to hire horses & go on horse back for a few days through marshes. True capital adventures in front indeed so....

However all this will pass & I shall have had the experience denied to most. This will remain in my memory for the rest of my life. But how difficult it seems at times, almost impossible to bear it any longer. And yet I have all that is only possible to obtain here. How I would love to see you all! How peaceful it must be where you are.

The garden must be looking beautiful, flowers, fruit etc.

To Sit in the Garden under the tent in the Garden chair mosquito  
 Here it is here! These things want give one a rest even at  
 night time. They seem to work 24 hours a day. How tiresome & beastly...

July 6<sup>th</sup>

To day for 8 hours I experienced hell.

Exploring the forests of Kamchatka seemed a  
 very interesting adventure at the beginning. Oh!  
 but I never imagined any thing of the kind.

It is quite true that for a few days it seemed quite  
 a nice trip on a motor launch on the wide river  
 Kamchatka under a bright shining Sun with nothing  
 else to do but read a book and look on the clear  
 sky & woods on either side of the river. But now  
 in the woods with billions of these beastly, ghastly,  
 maddening mosquitoes who give you no chance to breathe...

Oh! I would give any thing in the world for one  
 hours rest in a place where there are no mosquitos.  
 And yet another 6-7 weeks of this life is in front  
 of me. How will I stand it??

While I am writing this, I am being attacked, and  
 am forced to show fight. Some results of the  
 General Slaughter are visible here on this paper.  
 Thousands of lives fall on one side, and on  
 the other - a Swollen face, hands full of blisters,  
 legs bitten to the bones...

That's how we live here. How much I have  
 seen & lived through is all written down  
 and it will make a very interesting tale.

I am beginning to feel though as I have had  
 enough of this and would like to live again.  
 But how can I do it? My pay here is just  
 double to what it is in the Centre, and that  
 gives me an opportunity to let my kiddie  
 continue school. etc! I should not be  
 able to do it otherwise. So I must stick it  
 a little bit longer.

Sunday Morning. 8<sup>th</sup> July

It is impossible to lie a bed, a bed? no such dreams of luxury. One Room, where man & wife sleep in one corner, I and my learned friend and forest questions in another corner & our assistance in the middle of the room, all piled on a wooden floor. The room is full of moskitoes. Their music sounds like the music of a "Baltic waltz dance" and the question arises "To be or not to be?" I would not dream of touching them, if only they would leave me alone. But they want do that. They attack you everywhere: face, neck, arms, legs and lough at you. If you exterminate a few hundred it makes no difference at all.

How nice it would be to get up & have a nice warm bath, breakfast, go out into the garden & sit down on the green lawn & read a newspaper. "What mad dreams!!" But here I am going into woods on horseback with a rifle on my shoulder in case I meet a bear on the path. Is it not interesting? Oh! but the moskitoes, I havent a part of my body free of bites. For 2 days I am keeping of going into the lavatory. It is simply impossible. I cant ~~not~~ uncover my body.

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> July

To day is already a week since I came to this little stinking village, all drowned in beastly moskitoes. How long I am going to remain here before I set out into this expedition on horse back for 2 or 3 weeks where hardly a living soul can be found I do not know. But I am truly sick of sticking here. Any where, but I can not remain here any longer. Expecting horses to come from the fields to day, I hope so. Fancy for 6 days not being able to leave the room for fear of moskitoes.

July 10<sup>th</sup> At last we are going into the woods on horse-back. Six people altogether myself included. The horses are small & clumsy, laden with all sorts of things. They look a sight worth looking at, and on top of all we climb. We look like riding on camels.

At first it seemed strange and a bit risky, but gradually I get used to this outfit & take it quite philosophically. The day is a wet one. It rains slowly, but riding through thick woods one has enough to do to look in front so as not to lose part of the face or an arm etc. As we go slowly over hills, dales & lakes, I am getting tired, we stop for a bout of space & light a camp fire make tea, have a rest, & proceed further on.

Oh! the mosquitoes, terrible, impossible to stand it!! it is maddening, I can not keep pencil in my hand.

11<sup>th</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> The only rest we get is when we put up our tent and climb in, drive out all the nasty beasts & make our beds, cover over head & go to sleep.

After a whole days continuous fighting with mosquitoes, the night comes as a great relief. I sleep well, & awake when some of the mischievous creatures find their way into our tent & begin their daily pray.

The tent is of white water proof linen. It seems dreadfull to look through the linen how herds of mosquito hover all around as though defying you to come out. But out we must come, as its time to start on our way.

14<sup>th</sup> July after 4 days in the woods we returned again to this small village. The same old nasty creatures, even more than in the woods. There at least when on the move it does not seem so bad. However we are going out again the day after tomorrow thank heaven.

Of course I play the fiddle time as I am at the head of it.

July 11<sup>th</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> we travel on horse back in the woods.

It is very hot. we stop now and again, light a camp fire,

Make tea, have a rest for an hour or so and then proceed on. I have not had a proper rest for weeks, though we pass many rivers. The reason is this - You can not uncover part of the body. My face & hands are already more or less used to the stings, but any other part of the body can not stand it. I shall have to wait a bit longer, perhaps in a few days we will reach a village or possibly have a bath....

15<sup>th</sup> July we came to a place where there is one miserable old house & a man lives there. It is one of our so-called stores of goods for the populations of the neighbouring villages a few miles around. There are more mosquitoes here than leaves on the trees in the woods. & the poor individual who lives here keeps on fighting bravely. But he is ~~now~~ already tired & is leaving here as soon as another man comes to take his place. The filth in this place is an example of how a human being can exist when circumstances force him to exist in unbearable conditions. He has a cow & gets milk, but the milk becomes a mixture of water & sugar with mosquitoes as many as to make a "brandy porridge". He himself does not mind. I made coffee & drank but was sick afterwards. Here we stayed 2 days and again on horse back proceed on further into woods. Among the many various bushes in the woods there are a sort of "black currents" rather tasty. They are called "Jimelisk". People here gather them in great quantities & make jam. But as many as one gathers, about twice as many mosquito stings are got.

19. Now after 3 days in the woods on horse back one feels a great relief to come to a village, and be let into a house where one can have a hot meal in peace & sit for a while without being attacked all the time. Here I am going to stay a few days. I do so feel tired & need a real rest. I can only stay 2 or 3 days

6  
here. A clean little house of only 2 small  
Rooms, but with a "vapour bath" attached. The family  
Consist of 2 people man & wife, Russians, They are already  
old. They live here for about 20 years, came from  
~~Ukraine~~ Ukraine, Peasants. They have a garden, Chickens,  
a Cow, a horse, a small boat near the river which  
is at the back of the house, & so live quite in peace here.  
But Complain though, that at times they feel a lone-  
liness & would wish to return back to Ukraine, but  
are afraid they will not get on so well there, as  
they receive letters from relatives out there, that  
life is very hard over there in Ukraine. So they  
prefer to stay where they are, as they have practically  
all they need. They catch fish when they want.  
Especially for about 4 months in the summer one only  
needs to go out of the house into the back yard  
there is the river full of "Salmon fish" here you  
can see them jumping. They tell me that they  
truly Sick of fish, always fish, as meat is rather  
dear here. However if not for "moskitos" for about the  
whole of <sup>the</sup> Summer, life would not be bad here.

The view all around here is amazingly pretty. Only  
but a few miles away (it seems a few yards away)  
These high mountains -- covered with snow, glittering  
in the sun, & yet here below it is hot as an august  
day in the city of London... Glorious sun & sky &...  
oh! moskitos...

27<sup>th</sup> July After a weeks stay in this little village  
we are starting out again on the river in a small boat.  
To day it rains so we decide to start to morrow.

In a few days from now we shall reach the point  
from where on a steamer bound for Potisparovsk  
we are to traverse a couple of days & nights, - than  
I think I am going to Vladivostok, and if  
true (I hope so) I am being sent abroad...

This letter was received 6<sup>th</sup> October 1928

I wonder how you all fare? I have had a very hard time here. Nearly a fortnight on horseback and life of a vagabond... all my body is aching. I can hardly sit down on my behind... and bitten all over by beastly mosquitoes. It was interesting in a way but oh! how hard age is beginning to tell its tale. Shall we meet this year?!! I hope so!! However I am feeling quite fit and well. You must be wondering at why I haven't written such a long time. Of course as I said in my last two letters that I shall be away for 2 or 3 months from where there is no chance of writing. I dare say you will be going away for a holiday, I hope you will, & will have a good time.

14<sup>th</sup> August. I am getting tired of waiting for the steamer which is due here in 3, or 4, days time. I have now been away from Petropavlovsk for 2 months. all the time on the move, staying in villages for 1-2 or 3 days & some days in the woods of forests. All seems so interesting when you read about these things. It is however a different matter when you come face to face with reality...

20<sup>th</sup> Now at last I am back at Petropavlovsk. Everything seems quite the same here. The weather is quite nice. The high mountains all around have cleared off their winter dress of snow with the exception of one, which seems afraid to undress altogether as it stands so high - nearly reaches the sky; and so keeps still a layer of snow on its back.

26<sup>th</sup> Today I received a telegram from Katsarova asking me to travel on a steamer bound from Kamchatka for Zmorn... but return immediately to Vladivostok via Odessa... What can I do? What will a few days stay in London give me? It will probably make things worse - How can I go home now?!!

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What shall I say? It is however best  
to go if only for one day & see you all -  
& then — oh hang... let come what will  
I will go!!!



July 5th, 1928

Adventure after adventure. Again I am in a small village far away from civilisation ... Two days I travelled by steamer and then 6. days on a small launch-boat by the river Kamchatka, which runs right in the middle of this half island.

My mission is a "forest expedition" finding out the possibility of exploitng the forests of Kamchatka.

The climate here is quite good. It is indeed warm. The sun shines as bright as anywhere in Central Europe, but ... Oh! A plague of "Moskitos" making you curse the very day you set out for this place. My face, kneck & hands are one mass of red blisters, smarting all over, & yet, this only the beginning ... our party is to stay about here for at least 2 months.

How can one stand this? - heaven only knows. I have a veil for my face, gloves & a suit of clothes to answer the purpose, but the missarable, ghastly creators penetrate through any thing and poisen your very flesh.

The misery one experiences when compeled to expose part of the naked body to administer natural functions - it is hell!!

It is indeed a nightmare! And yet, people live here, true not very many, but still human life exists. They work, & seem more or less satisfied. In winter time the atmosphere reaches 40 - 50 degrees below zero, and summer brings a plague of moskitoes and poisen the air ....

I wander how you are now? I am held up here for a couple of days, as the rivers run fast & we can not get across to the place where we have to begin our work, & will have to hire horses & go on horse back for a few days through marshes.

(5.7.'28)

2

True capital adventures in front indeed ..... —

However all this will pass & I shall have had the experience denied to most. This will remain in my memory for the rest of my life. But how difficult it seems at times, almost impossible to bear it any longer. And yet I have all that is only possible to obtain here. How I would love to see you all! How peacefull it must be where you are. The garden must be looking beautifull, flowers, fruit &c. To sit in the garden under the tent in the garden chair --- Here it is here! These things wont give one a rest even at night time. They seem to work 24 hours a day. How tiresome & beastly ....!

moskito  
(smudge)

July 6th

Today for 8 hours I experienced hell. Exploring the forests of Kamchatka seemed a very interesting adventure at the beginning. Oh! but I never imagined any thing of the kind... It is quite true that for a few days it seemed quite a nice trip on a motor launch on the wide river Kamchatka under a bright shining sun with nothing else to do but read a book and look on the clear sky & woods on either side of the river. But now in the woods with bullions of these beastly, ghastly maddening moskitoes who give you no chance to breath ... Oh! I would give anything in the world for one hours rest in a place where there are no moskitos. And yet another 6 - 8 weeks of this life is in front of me. How will I stand it?? While I am writing this, I am being attaked, and am forced to show fight. Some results of the general slaughter are

visible here on this paper. Thousands of lifes fell on one side and on the other - a swollen face, hands full of blisters, legs bitten to the bones ...

Thats how we live here. How much I have seen & lived through is all written down and it will make a very interesting tale ... I am beginning to feel though as I have had enough of this and would like to live again. But how can I do it? My pay here is just double to what it is in the centre, and that gives me an opportunity to let my kiddies continue school etc. I should not be able to do it otherwise. So I must stick it a little bit longer .....

Sunday morning. 8th. July,

It is impossible to lie abed, abed? No such dreams of luxury. One room, where man & wife sleep in one corner, I and my learned friend on forest questions in another corner & our assistant in the middle of the room. All nicely on a wooden floor. The room is full of moskitoes. Their music sounds like the music of a "Zulu war dance" and the question arises "To be or not to be? I would not dream of touching them, if only they would leave me alone. But they wont do that. They attack you everywhere: face, neck, arms, legs and laugh at you. If you exterminate a few hundred it makes no difference at all ....

How nice it would be to get up & have a nice warm bath, breakfast, go out into the garden & sit down on the green lawn & read a newspaper. "What mad dreams"!!!! But here I am going into woods on horse back with a rifle on my shoulder in case I meet a bear on the path. Is it not interesting?".....  
Oh! but the moskitoes, I havent a part of my body free of bites.

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July 10th. At last we are going into the world on horse-back. Six people altogether myself included. The horses are small & clumsy, laden with all sorts of things, they look a sight worth looking at, and on top of all we climb we look like riding on camels.

At first it seemed strange and a bit risky, but gradually I got used to this outfit & take it quite Philosophically. The day is a wet one. It rains slowly, and riding through thick woods one has enough to do to look in front so as not to loose part of the face or an arm etc... On we go slowly over hills, dales & lakes. I am getting tired, we stop for a breath of space & light a camp fire make tea, have a rest, & proceed further on . . . . Oh! the moskitose, terrible, impossible to stand it !!! it is maddening, I can not keep pencil in my hand -----

11th. 12th. The only rest we get is when we put up our tent and limb in, driveout all the nasty beasts & make our beds, cover over head & go to sleep.

After a whole days continues fighting with moskitose, the night comes as a great blessing. I sleep well, & awake when some of the misserable creators find their way into our tent & begin their daily prey . . . . .

The tent is of white water proof linen. It seems dredfull to look through the linen how herds of moskitose hover all around as though defieing you to come out. But out we must come, as its time to start on our way.

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July 11th, 12th & 13th We travell on horse back in the woods. It is very hot. We stop now and again, light a camp fire, make tea, have a rest for an hour or so and then proceed on. I have not had a proper wash for weeks, though we pass many rivers. The reason is this - you can not uncover part of the body. My face & hands are already more or less used to the stings, but any other part of the body can not stand it. I shall have to wait a bit longer, perhaps in a few days we will reach a village & possibly have a bath . . . . .

15th July. We came to a place where there is one miserable old house & a man lives there. It is one of our so-called

stores of goods for the populations of the neighbouring villages a few miles around. There are more moskitose here than leaves on the trees in the woods & the poor individual who lives here keeps on fighting bravely. But he is already tired & is leaving here as soon, as another man comes to take his place. The filth in this place is an example of how a human being can exist when circumstances force him to exist in unbearable conditions. He has a cow & gets milk but the milk becomes a mixture of white soup with moskitose as many as make a "meaty porridge" . . . He himself does not mind. I make coffe & drank but was sick afterwards. Here we stayd 2 days and again on horse back proceed on further into woods.

Among the many various bushes in the woods there are a sort of "black currents" rather tasty. They are called "jimelist" People here gather them in great quantities & make jam. But as many as one gathers, about twice as many moskito stings are got.

19. Now after 2 days in the woods on horse back one feels a great relief to come to a village, and be let into a house where one can have a hot meal in peace & sit for a while without being attacked all the time. Here I am going to stay a few days. I do so feel tired & need a real rest . . . I can only stay 2 or 3 days here. A clean little house of only 2 small rooms, but with a "vapour bath" attached. The family consist of 2 people man & wife, Russians. They are already old. They live here for about 20 years, came from Ukraine, Peasants. They have a garden, chickens, a cow, a horse, a small boat near the river which is at the back of the house, & so live quite in peace here.

But complain though, that at times they feel a loneliness & would wish to return back to Ukraine, but are afraid they will not get on so well there, as they receive letters from relatives out there, that life is very hard over there in Ukraine. So they prepare to stay where they are, as they have practically all they need. They catch fish when they want. Especialy for about 4 months in the summer one only needs to go out of the house into the back yard there is the river full of "Salmon fish" have your pick & cook your dinner. They tell me that they are truly sick of fish. Allways fish, as meat is rather dear here. However if not for "moskitos" for about the whole of the summer, life would not be bad here. The view all around here is amasingly pretty. Only but a few miles away (it seems a few yards away) these high mountains covered with snow, glittering in the sun, & yet here below it is hot as an August day in the city of London .... Glorious sun & sky & ... Oh! Moskitos - - -

27th July. After a weeks stay in this little village we are starting out again on the river in a small boat. Today it rains so we decided to start tomorrow.

In a few days from now, we shall reach the point from where on a steamer bound for Petropovlovsk we are to travell a couple of days & nights; - then I think I am going to Vladivostock, and if true (I hope so) I am being sent abroad . . . —

I wonder how you all fare? I have had a very hard time here. Nearly a fortnight on horseback and life of a vagabound ....

All my body is aching. I can hardly sit down on my behind ... and bitten all over by beastly mosquitos. It was interesting in a way but oh! how hard. Age is beginning to tell its tale. Shall we meet this year?!! I hope so!! However I am feeling quite fit and well. You must be wondering at why I havent written such a long time. Of course as I said in my last two letters that I shall be away for 2 or 3 months from where there is no chance of writing. I dare say you will be going away for a holiday. I hope you will, & will have a good time.

14th August. I am getting tired of waiting for the Steamer which is due here in 3, or 4, days time. I have now been away from Petropovlovsk for 2 months. All the time on the move, staying in villages for 1 - 2, or 3 days & some days in the woods-forests. All seems so interesting when you read about these things. It is however a different matter when you come face to face with reality . . .

20th. Now at last I am back in Petropovlovsk. Everything seems quite the same here. The weather is quite nice. The high mountains all around here cleared off their winter dress of snow with the exception of one, which seems afraid to undress altogether as it stands so high - nearly reaches the sky; and so keeps still a layer of snow on its back.

26th. Today I received a telegram from Natzaranus asking me to travel on a steamer bound Kamchalka for London - - - but return immediately to Vladivostok via Odess - - - what can I do? What will a few days stay in London give me? It will probably



(5.7.'28)

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make things worse — How can I go & come back?!. What  
shall I say? It is however best to go if only for one day  
& see you all - & then - oh hang . . . let come what will.  
I will go!!!

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