

The Okhrana's Female Agents: Part II: Indigenous Recruits

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Some foreign operations of the Tzar's political police.

PART II: Indigenous Recruits¹**Rita T. Kronenbitter**

From the early stages of its existence the Okhrana adhered to a firm policy of strictly segregating its truly clandestine services. It divided agents into two categories, "external" and "internal," meaning roughly overt and covert respectively. The external agents were investigators. They did open and clandestine surveillance and a variety of detective work, including cooperation with other government security agencies at home and abroad. Whether known to the public as Okhrana employees or not, they were officially recognized within the government and paid overtly by it. The internal service, in contrast, was essentially a system of penetrations and thus by necessity completely secret. Its personnel were unknown not only to the public and other government agencies but for the most part to Okhrana officers themselves. The identity of its agents was masked even in the operational files recording their activities. Each was known personally only to his case officer and, usually, the chief of the unit he worked for; agents did not know of one another's existence.

Similarly no external agent was ever supposed to know an internal one, who would normally be operating under some revolutionary cover. So strictly was this rule enforced that an external agent who learned the identity of an internal agent would be dismissed. Thus it often happened that it was the duty of an external agent to mount surveillance on an internal agent ostensibly working for a subversive group. One obvious advantage of this circumstance was to provide a multiple check on the veracity and dependability of the penetration agents, a number of whom turned out to be playing a double role; but this was just a side benefit from the compartmentation practiced for the sake of the internal agents' security.

The principle of two separate categories of agents lent itself remarkably well to the operating problems of the Okhrana stations abroad. The first chief in Paris, Pëtr Ivanovich Rachkovsky (he held the post from 1884 to 1902), soon realized that external agents of Russian nationality were totally unsuitable for work in western Europe. Not just their language but their very appearance and behavior gave them away immediately. Gradually, therefore, all the Russian investigators were returned home and replaced by French, Italian, German, and British agents. The Okhrana abroad thus reinforced the functional dichotomy of the two agent categories with an ethnic one: foreigners, recruited largely from among host government and private detectives, became

the investigators, while agents from Russia were devoted to penetration operations against the revolutionaries.

In the fall of 1913, however, most of Paris Okhrana's external, investigation agents were exposed by the revolutionaries' counterintelligence. In the ensuing upheaval former investigator Jollivet was suddenly transformed into a penetration agent inside the revolutionary service. Paris Okhrana found it expedient also to be flexible in the use of an array of mistresses of Monsieur Henri Bint.

The Women of Henri Bint

This Alsatian gentleman, hired by Rachkovsky in 1885 after ten years of service with the French Sûreté, remained one of the Paris station's principal investigators until the First World War. (During the war the Okhrana took him off routine investigation work and supplied him with funds to establish a residence in Switzerland, from where he could get agents into Germany and Austria. The Swiss imprisoned him in January 1917.) Apparently he never married, but he was never without mistresses, one at a time after he had learned quite early that it was neither healthy nor economical to have two or more together.

Life on the Riviera

Another thing Bint learned was to avail himself of the help his mistresses could render in connection with his job. In 1912, as leader of a surveillance network on the Riviera, he took along a mistress and loaned her free of charge both to a younger agent of his network named Fontana and to officers of the French and Italian police departments cooperating with him. This generosity led on one occasion to a serious contretemps. The mistress, staying with Fontana at a hotel in La Spezia, stole from his suitcase a batch of photographs and letters and gave them to a cooperating Italian agent, and there ensued a fist fight in one of the city's public squares. The police interfered, the press got interested, and there were provocative stories in French and Italian newspapers. Bint, although it was not entirely his fault, received a stern reprimand from the chief.

Bint had been dismissed from the Okhrana on two occasions, primarily on account of indecorous relations with the fair sex, but both times he was promptly rehired. The chiefs valued his professional skill and realized that he

occasionally got results from his mistresses' peeping into the activities of unreliable Russian aristocrats in Paris. Although a French demoiselle could not understand what the Russians were saying among themselves, she could keep company with individual conspirators, who could all speak some French. By using his girls Bint thus became more than a mere detective; the information they procured was almost in the category of that from internal agents.

Understandably enough, however, the system gradually wore out: the revolutionaries became wary of Parisian female companions. Then in 1911, when Bint's colleague Leroi defected from the Okhrana to join Burtzev's revolutionary counterintelligence, Bint had to cut off all *espionnage* with the females, as the practice was called. Bint and Leroi had worked together for years against the same targets, using the same techniques and often sharing mistresses for whatever job was on hand. No one cursed Leroi so much as Bint for his defection; he knew he would tell Burtzev all about it. He even anticipated that on Leroi's advice Burtzev would sooner or later try the trick on him, hiring some female to work on him, and so he did.

Tables Turned

Liubov Julia was a Parisian whose first name suggested Russian origin. The use of Julia as a surname was most likely her own invention. When Bint first saw her, in a public cafe, she was with a group of revolutionaries, but she seemed much too frivolous and gay to be concerned with politics or conspiracies. She acted like any ordinary Parisian *démimondaine* of the period. He made her acquaintance and found that she was just as jolly in his company as she had seemed among the Russian intellectuals. At the moment he was not particularly tied to any mistress, so he took her home with him, and there she stayed.

This was early 1913. He reported in full to his Okhrana superiors. His case officer thought that Julia might prove useful in work among the revolutionaries, cables and dispatches were exchanged with Petersburg headquarters, and Julia was hired under the code name "Jourdain." She was to receive 100 francs a month for reporting to Bint on several groups of conspirators in Paris.

Thus there happened to Bint what he was afraid would happen: he had a mistress spy on him just as he had used mistresses to spy on others. Julia was Burtzev's plant. She would regularly bring Bint quantities of attractive information, all written in her own hand, which always turned out to be of little or no value to the Okhrana. Bint's case officer, who had reports about Julia's

activities from other sources, soon decided that she ought to be able to produce much better intelligence. Gradually it was possible to check the sources of the information she delivered, and it was discovered that all of it was prepared by Burtzev's counterintelligence people.

Just about this time Julia suddenly came forth with a demand for 500 francs in cash, threatening to sue Bint and expose him in the French press. She was dismissed at once. In the lengthy explanations dispatched to headquarters toward the end of 1913, the Paris station maintained that Julia could not possibly have gained access to any information about the Okhrana and could not even have supplied Burtzev with any knowledge about Bint except the fact of his physical association with her.

A Woman Scorned

Burtzev and Leroi had had even less success in an earlier, somewhat dissimilar attempt. In 1908 Henri Bint made the acquaintance of Lea Chauvin, and she stayed in his apartment, on and off, collaborating in his professional work, for some three years until in 1911, shortly after Leroi's defection, Bint was called to Petersburg. It was not customary to bring non-Russian external agents to headquarters, but he, as the most important sleuth of three decades and chief manager of the network of detectives, was made an exception. The consultation with him was to include some training, which would entail his absence from Paris for many weeks, possibly two or three months.

By age, Bint could have been Lea's grandfather. Although he always preferred young girls, this affair had lasted much longer than usual and his leaving for Petersburg seemed a good occasion to close it off. He told the girl that it would be sensible for her to find someone more suitable to her age. But she did not want to be sensible. She refused to leave; she would stay in the apartment and wait for his return. Bint would not have it. There were several rough scenes, and when she still refused to go he had to call the police to make her get out.

Lea was in a fighting, vengeful mood. She would never have obeyed Bint's order to leave; the ingrate had to call the police to throw her out. That was what she told Leroi, who somehow learned of her distress and promptly called on her to offer consolation. Leroi of course knew all about Lea's life with Bint. He himself had always had a soft spot for her, but now she might have information about Bint's recent activities and the purpose of his trip to Petersburg. In this emotional state she even seemed a good prospect for agent work -- well motivated and familiar with Bint's contacts and

operations.

After much talk about his friendship and understanding for her feelings, Leroi persuaded Lea to visit Burtzev's office. She was ready for anything as long as it meant hurting Bint, and Burtzev and Leroi found it easy to recruit her for intelligence work against Bint and against the Okhrana that had taken him away from her. Leroi's enthusiasm for the prospective operation was probably enhanced by his fondness for Lea, but Burtzev trusted his judgment. He had made him chief investigator in all operations against the Okhrana's non-Russian networks.

For a short time Lea became as much devoted to Leroi as she had been to Bint, but soon she seemed to have developed some second thoughts. Who can tell what was really in her mind? Maybe she thought she could reawaken the affections of her dear old Bint when he returned, or perhaps she developed an aversion to the rather uncouth and frequently drunk Leroi. Whatever the reason, after everything was agreed and she was to become an agent of the revolutionary counterintelligence, she secretly went to see the chief of Paris Okhrana, Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Krassilnikov. Yet this was just a probing action; all she did was complain about how Bint had thrown her out on the street. In relaying her story to headquarters, Krassilnikov wrote that he had given her 500 francs to keep her quiet and recover from her a packet of Bint's personal letters which she had appropriated to use just in case.

Lea was astonished by the 500 francs. She had never had that much money in her hand before. She became bemused with the possibilities of earning more; she had already observed that the revolutionary intelligence office was short of funds. So she made a second visit to Krassilnikov, and this time she told him all about how Burtzev and Leroi had recruited her to work for them and assured her of a steady income. She said she did not trust Leroi, he had deserted his friend Bint, and he would desert her the same way. Finally she offered her services to Krassilnikov, saying that she knew from living with Bint and helping him just what she would have to do to be useful.

Redoubled Hero

A case officer was assigned, and soon thereafter Lea's reports were being dispatched to headquarters under the code name "L'héros." The Okhrana instructed her to stay on the job in Burtzev's office and report on every assignment she received. At first it was just debriefings: one lengthy report on a luncheon with Burtzev and Leroi told of pressing questions on the current whereabouts of Harting, former Paris Okhrana chief, and hundreds of questions on the orders received by Bint, the times and places he would meet

with Okhrana officers, his non-Russian affiliates, and his methods for receiving pay and instructions and submitting reports. As a double agent working in Burtzev's office with the position of assistant to Leroi, she was paid 200 francs a month by the Okhrana.

Mme. Chauvin, as she was introduced to visiting revolutionaries in Burtzev's office, delighted her chiefs there by her willingness to be of use, though she was disappointingly ill acquainted with the operational information they wanted. Burtzev decided to use her in other operations. Once Leroi took her to Place Bouveau, in front of the Ministry of the Interior and the Sûreté Générale, gave her a camera, and told her to take pictures of a man he would point out leaving the building. This project of Leroi's was soon brought to the attention of the Okhrana liaison officer in the Sûreté, M. Moreau, chief of the political police who, it happened, was the man whose picture Leroi wanted.

Another time Leroi took her to a lawyer named Tomasini, who she found out later was a naturalized Frenchman of Russian origin. The two wanted a statement from her to the effect that Bint had been receiving from the Monyjeux District post office a number of letters addressed to Russian revolutionaries. (Burtzev repeatedly tried to prove that Paris postal officials were selling revolutionary correspondence to the Okhrana.) Lea replied that she knew nothing of any such mail being given to Bint. They pleaded with her for a long time to write and sign such a deposition. Though they offered her 1,000 francs cash and the assurance of 200 francs a month for the rest of her life, according to her report forwarded in a dispatch to Petersburg, she answered only that she could not affirm what she did not know.

Dispatches to Petersburg in the Paris Okhrana files show that L'héros continued as a double agent until the outbreak of the war. Her pay was increased to 275 francs a month, delivered to her regularly by Bint, who on his return became her case officer, nothing more this time.

Jane

Marcel Bittard-Monin, supervisor of most of Paris Okhrana's non-Russian agents, made Mme. G. Richard Le Davadie sign five papers relating to the termination of her service. She was furious. The smooth talk with which the goaty Lothario tried to cheer her in her misery only enraged her more; he was taking the side of the Russian bosses. She didn't give a damn, she said, what new twists they were taking in their policy. She could not care less whether they conformed to the attitude of the French government. What she wanted and needed was the job they were taking away.

She felt cheated by this sudden deprivation not only of income but, of everything she had enjoyed for a half dozen interesting years of spying -- first for Bittard personally and then for the Okhrana behind him. She had had tours at the best times of year to the Côte d'Azur and the Italian Riviera, all expenses paid. In the endless variety of tasks that she performed she had earned much praise, which always made her feel happy, useful, and young again. The job had become part of her; she truly believed that the Russian service could never find anyone more willing to work and to sacrifice herself when necessary. She knew, and the Okhrana bosses must know, that no male detective could replace her. They could tail the conspirators to the gates of their residences; she could follow them, if need be, into their bedrooms.

Paris Okhrana "Dissolved"

When these arguments proved of no avail, Mme. Le Davadie turned to Bittard-Monin with personal reproaches. No other agent he was dismissing had ever meant anything to him, while she had been his favorite before either of them had ever heard of the Okhrana. She recalled how she had shared with him her apartment and all in those young and idealistic years when he was struggling along as a poorly paid sub-inspector for the Sûreté. The ingrate would hear none of it; his heart had turned to stone. Aside from the change of policy, he reminded her coldly, the agents had to be dismissed for the obvious reason that they had all been blown by Burtzev and their names published in all the press of Europe, so they would be entirely useless.

"Why aren't you fired, then?" she came back. "Your name was not only in the newspapers, but proclaimed in parliament."

He said he would be, reiterating that the Okhrana was discontinuing operations and making a public announcement to that effect. He declared that part of the reason for this was to insure the safety of the agents whose names and addresses were now known to the terrorists. But he did not convince her. The argument degenerated into repetition and name-calling.

Finally Mme. Le Davadie saw that it was no use and signed the five papers. First was a receipt for 200 francs, her salary for the last month, and one for expense money and a termination bonus. Then there was the notarized resignation:

The undersigned Madame Richard Le Davadie, residing at 52 rue Jacob, employed by the intelligence service organized and directed by

Monsieur Marcel Bittard-Monin, am hereby resigning from said service as a result of its complete dissolution as of 31 October 1913.

I have received as indemnity the sum of 200 francs, the equivalent of one month's salary.

I declare that I am entirely satisfied with the payment of said sum as my final compensation.

Paris, 31 October 1913

Le Davadie G. Richard

Another paper acknowledged that she had been returned her birth certificate and a court document concerning herself. By her fifth subscription Mme. Le Davadie declared that she no longer had in her possession any notes, letters, ciphers, or photographs belonging to the service.

With the termination money in her purse and all the anger in her heart, Mme. Le Davadie went to the nearest bistro. She was a temperate woman and despised excessive drinking, but this time she had to have an outlet. Not from worry about her future but for her wrath toward Monin. She couldn't take her anger out on the faceless Okhrana. If she knew any of its officers, it would be different; but going to the Russian embassy without knowing anyone, as ex-agent Fontana once had done, would be futile and ridiculous. They would say they'd never heard of her or of Bittard-Monin or anyone like that.

Two other agents Monin had dismissed that day were in the bistro -- Mme. Drouchot, whom Mme. Le Davadie knew well but disliked, and Auguste Pouchot, with whom she had once served on 'a surveillance team in Montreux. As an agent she would have never approached them publicly, but now, savoring her new freedom, she joined them at the table. No explanations were necessary; she saw at once that they both had been canned too. The three joined in cursing Bittard-Monin.

"The bastard should not have thrown you out," said Mme. Drouchot, meaningfully. Le Davadie felt like grabbing her hair for twisting this one in; then she realized that Mme. Drouchot had already taken more cognac than was needed to drown her bitterness. Pouchot too was nearly drunk. She determined at once not to follow their example. She had only one absinthe and sipped it slowly, thinking. Not really listening to the other two, she heard them naming Burtzev again and again, just as Monin had, it seemed a hundred times. Burtzev's revolutionary intelligence had busted Paris Okhrana. He was powerful, the Sherlock Holmes of the revolution. All the press of Paris was praising him, and the leading politicians were fighting his battles in parliament.

On the Victor's Bandwagon

Mme. Le Davadie made up her mind. Without even finishing her drink, she left her companions and went straight to the rue de La Glacière. She knew Burtzev's office well from having done surveillance on it. She would get even with Monin. She would join the revolutionary service; and Burtzev, now so strong and successful, would pay her just as he was paying Leroi, who had defected as Okhrana agent at about the time she had formally signed on in 1911. She would even be paid for her revenge.

The office at 53 rue de la Glacière was a noisier place than Monin's bureau. It was not large, but some half dozen people were engaged in heated discussions. Burtzev was not there; his assistant Leroi received her. This was well. She knew how much influence he had with Burtzev, and she thought he would help her. Back in 1908 he had been one of her more persistent admirers among the investigation agents. True that his awkwardly long figure, frequently unstable because of too much alcohol, had not attracted her even to the point of the camaraderie usual among fellow agents; but when he was sober and alone with her, he used to flatter her with attentions. Now he showed his surprise and joy at seeing her. He moved as though to kiss her in front of everyone but settled for kissing her hand. He took her to Burtzev's private office.

When the pleasantries were over, she described how she had quit Monin and the Okhrana, and much of what she said was quite untrue. They wanted her to stay, she said, but she was fed up with them all and wanted to get even, particularly with Monin and his net. She finally recognized, she said, that Burtzev was doing the right thing, and she would be glad to join him even at a small salary, just enough to keep her alive. She would help to the best of her ability to fight and expose the entire Russian service. Leroi was pleased, and they worked out a preliminary plan of employment that he thought would be acceptable to Burtzev. She also was pleased, and she forgot all her past antipathy for Leroi. He took her to dinner and she took him to her apartment.

The following day, on 1 November 1913, Mme. Richard Le Davadie was hired as agent of the revolutionary intelligence service. Leroi spoke enthusiastically to Burtzev about her exceptional qualities and vast knowledge of the personnel and activities of the Okhrana's non-Russian networks in France, Switzerland, and Italy, as well as her excellent current motivation. Burtzev was not opposed; but, seasoned as he was in the game and not sharing Leroi's personal reasons for enthusiasm, he wanted first to determine how much she knew and to make sure she was not a plant of some kind. She had to be

interrogated in detail, be kept under surveillance for several days, and in the meantime be given no chance to learn anything about his service.

The first interrogation satisfied Burtzev about her knowledge, and the many questions about Okhrana targets, methods of surveillance, timing and location of operations, reporting procedures in clear and in code, and cooperation with local security organs convinced LeDavadie that she was dealing with just as professional a service as the one she had left. She knew enough to fill a book, and since it would take forever to get this in debriefings, Burtzev told her to put in writing a full account of every surveillance job she had done since February 1911, when she formally became a salaried Okhrana agent. She could write this in the quiet of her own apartment.

Burtzev gave her 40 francs and the promise of a better monthly salary than that. All she had to do for the time being was write this report and keep in daily touch with Leroi or with Burtzev if Leroi was away. Leroi accompanied her home. Pleased as Punch, he wanted to celebrate right away, and on her 40 francs. But she was not in the mood. She was disturbed by his assurances of how they would have a secure job together and he would look after her, and especially by his remark that he personally would take care of the surveillance Burtzev wanted her kept under. She talked him out of coming up to her apartment this time.

Second Thoughts

Alone, it took her but little thinking to decide that she could never serve Leroi; that was about what this job would mean. And although Burtzev made a pleasant impression on her -- the kindly, soft-spoken, bearded, scholarly gentleman knew how to treat a lady -- those 40 francs of salary advance perturbed her. The appearance of the people in Burtzev's office, too, like Leroi's shabbiness, gave her shivers. They looked intellectual all right, but all haggard and undernourished. She understood no Russian, and their speaking it made her feel strange. No, she couldn't bring herself to associate with Leroi and those sallow-faced conspirators, even if the prospects of remuneration had been brighter than they were.

Late the same evening, after she had made up her mind not to go through with it, she had a visitor. Thinking it might be Leroi, she was not going to answer the door, but the knocking persisted and the caller spoke her last name. She opened to find Henri Bint there. She had met Bint on two occasions, but he had never been in her apartment. She liked the old reprobate. "Henri!" she called him by his first name as in the days when he organized her surveillance team. "I'm so pleased to see you. What a surprise!"

The call was not a social one. Bint said he was sorry about her dismissal from the Okhrana service but it was unavoidable for everyone, even for him after 35 years of service. She started talking about the ingrates and was going to indulge in some more scolding, but Bint stopped her:

"You shouldn't feel bad. You got yourself another job."

"What job?" She looked puzzled.

"With Burtzev's service. I know it all."

How could Bint, a mortal enemy of Leroi, know? He knew just when she had made the two visits to Burtzev's office, what she had said to Leroi and Burtzev, what they said to her, and what was decided. He even knew about the 40 francs and her assignment to write about the Okhrana. He did not tell her that Jollivet, another "dismissed" Okhrana agent whom Mme. Le Davadie had never known, had recently been employed by Burtzev and had been in the office both times.

Mme. Le Davadie was not at all embarrassed. She told Bint she had just decided not to work for Burtzev after all. But Bint had a different idea, and that was the reason for his visit. He had a simple plan: she should not only go ahead with Burtzev but perform so well as to make herself indispensable in the office on the rue de la Glacière. She needed persuading. They talked until after midnight. She warned him that Leroi might come around, for she was to be under his surveillance for some time. Bint knew all that; he had disposed of Leroi by seeing to it that he had a drinking partner at a cabaret.

Le Davadie insisted that under no circumstances would she ever work again with Bittard-Monin.

"Of course not," Bint said. "Your position will be completely changed. You will no longer be a detective conducting surveillance and investigating through local security offices. That is a thing of the past for you. You will no longer be an overt agent for anyone. Your position will be that of a secret agent reporting to the Okhrana the inside story of revolutionary espionage and propaganda." She liked the secrecy and the adventurousness of the proposal. "But it would be dangerous! To whom would I be reporting? You?"

"Maybe to me at times, but the Russians prefer to handle the secret agents themselves. All important dealings would be with them." "How much will they pay?"

Bint did not know exactly, but he was sure that as secret agent she would be

getting much higher pay than ever before, depending partly upon herself. As for the dangers, he said that the Okhrana people knew how to play it safe; she would only have to follow their instructions. He told her he would visit her once more and then arrange a meeting with a Russian for further instructions. He promised to help her write the long story of her agent career that Burtzev required.

Leroi, showing the signs of his night of drinking, called in the middle of the afternoon. He found her at the table, in cheerful spirits, writing her report. He went on to the office to tell Burtzev that he had had the new recruit under surveillance and that she was now at home doing the required writing.

On 4 November Le Davadie went to Burtzev's office again. She brought a sheaf of papers in her own handwriting, done hastily and without much concern for tidiness. They listed in simple chronological order, from 15 February 1911 to 29 October 1913, her singleton and team assignments -- dates, locations, targets, where and how picked up, whom with, where followed. In several instances the assistance of local security organs was noted. The story was impressive in the quantity of data recalled but not so elaborate as to suggest reference to contemporary records. It had of course been prepared by Bint, from the records in Bittard-Monin's office. Before giving it to Le Davadie to copy he had also consulted Sushkov, assistant to Krassilnikov.

New Jane at Work

It is not known what code name Burtzev gave Le Davadie, who now became an operative in the revolutionary service. Krassilnikov and all the Okhrana office thenceforth referred to her as Jane. A great pile of reports from December 1913 to late summer 1914, when Burtzev folded up his office and returned to Russia, attests that she knew and reported every move made by the revolutionaries. The records indicate that all her reports were in writing, urgent ones in the convenient envelopes pneumatics which were handled like telegrams, others in ordinary registered mail, often addressed to Bint's cover firm. At no time, it appears, did she arouse suspicion in Burtzev or his staff.

She reported first on several French and Italian agents Monin had dismissed who came to Burtzev in search of employment. In an effort to ingratiate themselves, these would all disparage Le Davadie's reputation as a person or an agent. A Mme. Tiercelin, in particular, made vitriolic attacks on her as Monin's and other agents' mistress; but Burtzev and Leroi did not care. Le Davadie did not hide anything -- like that -- from them, and she proved to be a good agent. They never suspected that all her reporting to them actually

came from 79 rue de la Grenelle or was at least approved there.

Thanks to Jane, the Okhrana was able to forstall a number of terrorist attempts during this period. It was she who led Krassilnikov onto the trail of a certain Bessel as he left Brindisi for Macedonia to pick up a load of bombs for assassins in Russia. He was arrested in Belgrade and his shipment confiscated on a train in Serbia. By a curious coincidence, Jane was also assigned to help Burtzev prepare evidence of Bessel's innocence for the revolutionary press to use in showing that the charges for the arrest in Belgrade had been trumped up by the Okhrana.

Jane reported on the speeches Burtzev prepared for Jaurez to deliver in the French parliament attacking the Okhrana. In some instances the Okhrana thus had Jaurez's speeches before he himself had seen them. During the first half of 1914, when Burtzev exposed a considerable bag of Okhrana agents, both Russian and non-Russian, Jane could at least warn when and how they would be exposed. She became so important to Burtzev that he wanted to take her with him early in 1914 on a campaign to expose the activities of the Russian secret service in the Italian parliament. She consulted Krassilnikov, who actually approved the trip, but she preferred to develop an acute migrane: she was afraid that it might bring to light discrepancies in her first report to Burtzev with respect to cooperation with Italian security personnel.

It is evident from Okhrana records that Jane ceased to be an agent after Burtzev's departure and the closing of his service. She apparently located some war-related employment; in August and September 1914 at least half the personnel of the Okhrana abroad were drafted into military services.

Soon after the outbreak of the revolution a number of writers began competing in their efforts to expose all Okhrana secret agents. Jane's role was somehow never exposed, even by writer Agafonov, who as a member of the commission investigating the Okhrana had full access to her papers. It is possible that he was unable to detect her identity behind the cover name. Several writers named Le Davadie among the non-Russian investigation agents belonging to the Bittard-Monin network, but all ignore not only her services for Burtzev but her double role for the Okhrana.

La Petite

Three intelligence services used "the little one" -- the revolutionaries when she was a child, the Austrians against Russia, and the Russians against Austria. The files of Paris Okhrana contained only 3 x 5 cards on the activities of her parents, but Pavel Zavarzin, Warsaw Okhrana chief at the time of the

childhood episode, has told her story.

Living Doll

The Warsaw Okhrana office was located in the Hôtel de Ville, a large building which also provided living quarters for Zavarzin and his subordinates with their families. Beginning in 1904, milk was delivered in a large can to the Zavarzin apartment by an eleven-year-old girl. It came from a dairy where her mother was also employed. The girl was diminutive and charming. She had light, fluffy blond hair and brilliant blue eyes, like a doll. Everybody called her La Petite. Pleased by her promptness and friendliness, the occupants of the Hôtel de Ville spoiled her with gifts of all sorts. A particular attachment was formed between her and the children of Yan, Zavarzin's coachman.

This pleasant association flourished for two years. Then one day a surveillance team was tailing a female terrorist named Rotte. She was accompanied by a young girl carrying a milk can, apparently full. They both went into a house in the Warsaw suburb Praga; within five minutes the girl came out alone and without the can. The detectives now recognized her as La Petite. One of them followed to see where she would go next. Surveilling a child proved to be a difficult game: she often stopped and played at corners or wandered down side streets looking in the windows. After two hours she was back at home.

A penetration of a terrorist group reported at about this time that groups preparing assassinations and robberies were using children to deliver arms, one piece at a time, to the perpetrators. A child carrying a package or container with a small gun or bomb inside would be followed by a terrorist at some distance, then overtaken at the place of action. The investigation of a number of terrorist acts confirmed that this was indeed the practice. Penetrations reported also that the conspirators maintained surveillance of the Okhrana premises in a way that would never be detected. The conspirators knew the tag numbers of Okhrana carriages and the names of officers and surveillance agents. Still another report said that the subversives had possession of some important documents stolen from the Okhrana office.

Elaborate security precautions had always been taken to keep unauthorized personnel off the Okhrana premises. La Petite was the only outsider ever admitted to the official quarters, and now she had been seen with the terrorist Rotte. A few forgotten incidents of the past two years were now recalled. One morning, Zavarzin himself remembered, he had found Yan's wife and daughter Handzhia cleaning his office, and La Petite was with them. When he asked what she was doing there, "After I delivered the milk I came to

see Handzhia," she had said.

She spoke perfect Russian. Her explanation was that her father, although a Pole from Austria, spoke only Russian at home, having learned it during years of employment in a Moscow brewery. After his death three years earlier her mother had come to work in Warsaw.

Zavarzin recalled also that one morning his administrative assistant was unable to find a batch of papers which he thought he had -- carelessly -- left on a table the night before. A thorough search was made without success. Moreover, La Petite was often seen in the carriage shed and the dressing room where agents changed into coachman's uniform for surveillance assignments.

La Petite and her mother were both placed under surveillance. It was soon learned that the woman lived with Mishas, an influential member of the Polish Socialist Party, and that this man had been accompanied by La Petite on walks through the city. It was decided that the mother, being an Austrian subject, should be expelled from Warsaw and should be induced to take La Petite with her.

Zavarzin had them both brought to his office. The mother, named Kusitska, was cooperative but evasive when it came to giving information. When she realized he knew about her daughter's activity, she admitted through tears that she had been unable to counteract the corrupting pressure of the revolutionaries upon her child. She would therefore be glad to leave Warsaw for any place where she could get the girl away from their vicious influence and enroll her in some school.

"One would not give her ten years," she said, "and she's already thirteen. She did spy on your office at first, but after being treated so kindly by you all she was ashamed and stopped. Didn't you?"

The girl was all red in the face, too embarrassed to answer, or more likely unwilling to confirm a patent lie.

Reunion

Nine years later, when Russia and Austria were at war and Zavarzin was in charge of the Okhrana office in Odessa, he received a telephone call late in the evening. A woman's voice: "Hello, Colonel Zavarzin, Chief of Section." No one ever addressed him thus by title. Whose was this strange, attractive voice?

"I must see you urgently, but not in your office. I'm calling from the railroad station. Tell me a good hotel where we can meet." "But who are you?"

"La Petite from Warsaw. Do you remember me?"

She stayed in the Hotel London, but the meeting took place in a safe house. Zavarzin instructed Budakov, his chief of surveillance, to arrange for complete coverage after the meeting. He did not share Budakov's fears for the meeting itself -- that La Petite might come with a pistol in her muff.

She came in, still small for a grown woman, scintillating with pleasure: "You remember me! That's so wonderful! But I'm no longer the subversive La Petite of Warsaw. I have become your ally. Before coming in I asked this man [Budakov] to inspect my bag. One could of course expect anything from La Petite of the past." Zavarzin soon realized that she had become a professional intelligence agent. But whose?

"You have no doubt taken measures to keep me under surveillance," she plunged in. "That's important, because at one after midnight tonight I am to meet at the Variété a man I don't know. I'm to be introduced to him by a woman who is appearing in the show as a famous sharpshooter. The man is in touch with the Austrian general staff, and it will be important for you to keep him under close watch. He is one of the top Austrian agents here. Then tomorrow I am going to Petersburg to see Okhrana chief Bielezky, who will probably take me to the imperial general staff. It may be that on the road to Petersburg I shall be met by persons in whom you may be interested, so you will probably want to have me covered all the way through."

Having disposed of this urgent matter on her mind, the attractive visitor proposed dinner. She was tired and hungry; the wartime trip from Vienna to Odessa was by no means without hardships. After the meal she was ready to talk about her past. But first she wanted to thank Zavarzin as the great benefactor who had played an important role in her life. Instead of putting her mother and her in prison he had given them good advice and sent them to safety. Her mother, La Petite said, had been a weak woman; for a little love she had become a slave to Mishas. His every word came to be an order for both mother and child. La Petite delivered dynamite and bombs for the Rotte woman and other terrorists. It was Mishas' plan to blow up the Warsaw Okhrana office and kill Zavarzin. As a child she had been fascinated by the plan, and Mishas became a hero in her eyes. Three years after leaving Warsaw, when she read in the newspapers about the apprehension of the Warsaw terrorists, including Mishas, and their trial and execution, she realized how criminal her activities had been.

Zavarzin probably did not swallow whole the story of her remorse, for he changed the conversation with a question about the color of her hair. As a child it was light blond, now nearly jet black. How come? She said she dyed it

in order to look older. Then she went back to what had happened since she last saw him at thirteen.

Tale of Two Services

Upon arrival in Lvov her mother sent her to a convent for schooling and to learn dressmaking. It was a harsh life, with constant work or kneeling in prayer and frequent cruel punishment as she grew rebellious. More often than not she was hungry, and after her mother's death she had no affection from anyone. One day the mother superior found her crying in the cold chapel, took pity on her, and promised thereafter to be a mother to her. Life remained hard, but under the old abbess' protection Seraphine, as she was named in the convent, became an obedient pupil.

After six years of convent life she was employed in the household of a wealthy Galician merchant. A romance soon developed with the merchant's nephew and they were married. He was a panslavist employed by the Russian services, and thus both newly-weds were soon working for the Russians in Austrian Galicia.

When the war broke out the Austrians drafted her husband, and soon thereafter he was taken prisoner by the Russians. La Petite, after giving birth to a child, made up her mind to get to Russia at all costs. She thought of the possibility of being taken into the Austrian espionage service and sent there. Leaving the baby with her mother-in-law, she set up as a dressmaker catering to various families of army officers. In time she found an officer of the general staff who was interested in more than her dressmaking.

Her frequent night meetings with this man gave her a chance to let him see her, incidentally, as an Austrian patriot who knew Warsaw extremely well, spoke Russian perfectly, and was intelligent and resourceful. She did not need to prompt him to the proposal that she would do well in Austrian intelligence. With all the modesty Seraphine had learned in the convent, she replied that she had no experience to fit her for such work, but he insisted that she should at least give it a try. After a few days of thinking it over, she decided that there would be nothing wrong in tentative acceptance.

They tried all sorts of tests on her. Questions were shot at her in the least expected forms. She would be left alone in an office with documents marked secret scattered on the desks and watched through a peephole to see whether she showed undue interest in the papers. She was followed on city streets to determine whether she had assimilated the psychological training they had given her in operational conduct and patriotism. After two months'

training the Austrians set up an interview with a German officer. He interrogated her in German and Russian and found her Russian more fluent than her German. When he learned that the convent had given her considerable training in caring for the sick, he named her on the spot chief nurse in a hospital for seriously wounded Russian prisoners. It was he who insisted that she dye her hair black so as to look old enough to be a chief nurse. Her job was to attend the wounded and report anything they might say, perhaps in delirium, of interest to the German forces.

After three months of this service, she was summoned before a captain and told she had been assigned an important mission on which much would be expected of her.

"From now on your name shall be Anna Yakovlevna Lyubova, with Tyumen in Siberia as your place of origin. Here is your passport. It is a genuine document: the real Lyubova is here in Austria. She is married and has no desire to return to Russia. You will take her place among a large group of Russians who are being repatriated in exchange for Austrians from Russia. In this assignment you will have to exercise much prudence, and if there are difficulties you will have to be guided by your patriotism. We all put our country first ... "

The entire operational program, with many alternative courses of action, was outlined for "Lyubova." She was to contact Austrian agents and deliver them instructions all along the way, as far as Vladivostok. From there she was to go on to Harbin and then proceed to Shanghai, where she should report to the German consulate.

L'Autrichienne

From Odessa Zavarzin promptly wired to Petersburg headquarters the whole long story. Surveilling La Petite and her German contacts the same night, Budakov found that the introduction and meeting took place as she had told. The sharpshooter woman and the German man, named Gross, were both exiled to Siberia for the duration; there was not enough proof to hang them.

La Petite revealed also that the German dreadnoughts "Goeben" and "Breslau" were heading for the Black Sea to bombard Russian ports. This information was confirmed within a few days. Although Zavarzin had reported the intelligence promptly, the defense command was in no position to take counter action, and the attack caused havoc in several harbors.

"Lyubova" was carefully watched on her way to Petersburg, where she went directly to the Okhrana chief as scheduled. He had her case transferred to military intelligence, and there was no trace in Okhrana files of her subsequent whereabouts and activities. Years after his exile, Zavarzin

speculated that a dashing young lady of her description who lived in Monte Carlo and was known as "l'Autrichienne," speaking perfect Russian and Polish, of angelic beauty, and wildly spending her Brazilian husband's wealth, could be La Petite.

1 For Part I, Russian Women, see Studies IX 2, p. 25 ff. These articles are based primarily on the Hoover Institution's collection Zagranichnaya Okhrana, consisting chiefly of the Okhrana files from Paris, the main center of Russian revolutionary and anti-revolutionary activity abroad before World War I. These files, presented after the revolution to Herbert Hoover by the Kerenski government, have only recently been opened to the public.

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