



70

LA BRETAGNE EN COULEUR

MX 7199 - Côte de granit rose

de Bretagne

Chapelle de Port-Blanc



This little chapel, of which you see both inside & outside on these cards, is quite typical with its chubby cross of granit worn by the wind standing at the gate & its chubby little wooden saints carved in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century which stand at the altar inside.

To contrast with the grayness of the granit and also (alas) with the

pottery & have done a lot of painting, it so easy here. All our love HxR.

Editions d'Art JOS, Le Doaré, Châteaulin  
Fabrication Française - Reproduction interdite

grayness of the sky  
The people turn the villas  
into real flower pots;  
every window and every  
door step is covered with  
bright peraniums and  
running along the houses  
are small rows of "capucines"  
a bright little orange flower.  
The language is still very  
alive, but unfortunately  
the costume is disappearing.  
The weddings though are  
still gay with bagpipes  
or accordion, and the  
bride, groom & all the guests  
dance in the street.



ME  
POUR A

Merci  
St Yves



5827 - EN BRETAGNE

aux environs, Intérieur de la Chapelle de PORT BLANC

"Saint Yves entre le Pauvre et le Riche"

Dear Trude & Dr. Szilard

Invited by my parents  
Howard & myself are discover-  
ing (or rediscovering)  
Brittany. It is really  
an autonomous province  
very different from the rest  
of the country.

Every thing here is squat  
and chubby: from the  
homes anchored to the soil  
to the statuary, it all seems

Editions d'Art RÉMA, 16 Rue du Chapeau Rouge, QUIMPER

Reproduction interdite Fabrication Française

PHOTO  
VÉRITABLE

to have grown to  
strengthen itself  
against the wind.  
The fields too seem  
to lie low from the wind  
behind the high  
hedges of fern and  
the little "sentiers"  
between the fields  
are deliciously cozy  
and protected except  
from the smell of the  
sea mixed with the  
smell of the earth.

27 rue Joubert  
le 28, III, 60

Paris 9

Dear Trude,

Thankyou so much for your two nice long letters, since we were not expecting them they were doubly appreciated.

My "confiseur" of whom I am a dedicated customer since early childhood, was very pleased to hear that Dr. Szilard liked his candies and the next box contains a small selection of his very best "mise au point", for Dr Szilard to chose his own favorite. As for the cassis I see nothing else to do than to sue the company for misrepresentation.

Paris is lovely and spring is bursting out all over, we watch the progress every day; the apple trees, the apricots, then the chestnut trees came out lush from the heavy rain and now the lilacs have little green flowers coming out from under the leaves. It is so good to live in a city where nature has not been abolished, and where the air in spring time has a stillness and lightness, which like some light wines is intoxicating.

I am quite sure that this living more with nature is the cause of the general "gentillesse" I find among the people. In fact when we first arrived I was struck by the air of gaiety of the people I met on the street. Not all the people display this air of "gentillesse" there are the ugly ones too, but somehow you don't see them much they are in the lower depths and seldom come out. As we are living just behind the opera we rushed out the other night with a few friends to see Krouchtchev's exit, the crowds were so dense that we did'nt see anything but we did see a lot of these ugly faces, they were in their glory waving red flags in a defiant way, but they soon dispersed and vanished. In general people are amazingly charming and I particularly enjoy the men-women relationship; one feels again that its lovely to be a member of the weaker sex. The other day I was rolling along on our one and only strip of super highway, I was in the left lane holding up traffic, a big french car behind me started to honk impatiently, I quickly drove into the right lane to let it go by, but the gentleman in the car rolled along side of me long enough to tip his hat and exchange a <sup>flattering</sup> smile before stepping on the accelerator. Vanity? certainly! but it felt so nice I smiled to my self the rest of the trip....

Every day there are such little things, a door held, a seat given in a subway, a high pitched "bonjour M'dame" as one enters a store, all these little joys of life I find most enjoyable.

When it comes to marketing things get rather complicated one goes to the market every day and it takes about an hour, but it is quite a pleasant hour. At our market I know nearly every body and of some their firm political convictions; the butcher is a strong supporter of De Gaulle, and the fish woman has no patience with the lousy communists who let the fish go rotten at each railroad strike. All this of course is told in a tone of deep confidence.

Social life is very active here, and I have very easily slipped into the role of a social butterfly. I go from a delicious lunch to a delicious tea, to a still more delicious supper. I enjoy sitting at beautiful tables, the fine porcelaines, and the occasional white gloved butler in some homes. I enjoy it more now than I used to; I have stopped wondering whether the butler or maid are being exploited or receive decent wages. I used to feel that luxury was immoral but somehow these questions have vanished....

But don't from my description think that these are just well saved orgies, not at all! the table is a place to display wit and sharpness and of that Parisians have a great deal.

Howard and I particularly enjoy the "boite" or the "chansonnières" where for two to three hours wit is pored out at such a rate that you come out somewhat dizzy.

Howard enjoys Paris very much too, he is most impressed by the lab. and the group of people he found there. But the town also suits him rather well, of course he suffers more than I do of the tightness, and conventionality of Parisian life. Having been raised here I know the conventions and find it easier to live by conventions than without, but to him it sometimes seems rather small and burdensome but in general he withstands it rather well.

We found a very nice studio apartment with a terrasse (\$130) from which one can see the grey roofs of Paris dotted by little red chimneys as far as the eye can stretch and here and there a church spire jots out from the monotonous disorder of the roof tops. The neighbourhood is a rather special one, up to a few years ago the most elegant and expensive "bordels" were in our street and the adjacent one. The famous "one two two" (122 rue de Provence) is just in back of our apt.. Now since a lady deputy had these places closed they call themselves hotels and the girls promenade in the street. At first I found it rather sordid, especially at night when the women tend to be the old and fat ones and at about the density of 1/ m<sup>2</sup>. But somehow I am getting used to it especially during the day when the girls are of quite a different crop. There is a boys college down the street and they come out for lunch at 12, at that time the street is teeming with young and pretty ones dressed in gay colored dresses. The boys pass, laugh a bit, there is a general gaiety and good humor about it all, The french are definitely lacking the sense of sin.

Howard of course was noticed the first day, the girls on this side walk know him by sight and when he returns home they exchange "hallos". Honi soit qui mal y pense!

Stores are out of this world and temptations are great, I succumbed to a grey suit (at Frank et Fils, tell this to Sally, it will recall fond memories for her) and a few sweaters, but the prices are high and alas the \$ low. But in all my shopping around I never was able to find the Hat nothing even approaching it in the good dozen stores I went to.

We are preparing to go to Tel Aviv, the route is still undecided but Greece will be a main stopping point. Bethsabée has sent us to see her travel agent and we are going to have a conference with him this p.m.

You must be getting awfully tired of hotel living at the Rockefeller and I feel so bad when I know that Leo can step out of the hospital that you can't come to 29 Wash. Sq. Dr. Szilard is such a good customer of mine that without him I have lost all the joy and incentive to cook. Having both of you in N.Y. will make it a lot easier to return to that wretched city.

All our love to you both, and also our best to the Fox.

Resine

Ps The result of this afternoon's conference is that we must go by train. We plan the following itinerary:

Paris → Vienna → Zagreb → Belgrade →  
Sophia → Istanbul → Aleppo → Damascus  
Amman → Jerusalem - this trip should take two weeks - and Greece will be on the way back.

We are very excited and quite pleased after all that we can't afford the plane -

Resine

Dear Trude and Dr. Szilard,

Baruj Benaceraf arrived with your request for a 2nd letter, but I must confess that your compliments on the first one so overwhelmed me, that I am scared to write again and spoil my reputation, since I really can't write at all.

Actually I have been wanting to write to you ever since our return but there are so many things to write about that I have just been putting it off as too big a job. But I do think of you everyday, in fact, I have a small clipping, sent from a Canadian newspaper, of Dr. Szilard frowning down from behind his glasses beyond a telephone on his bed and it seems on to me. I have stuck this clipping in the frame of my mirror and every morning, as I put my lipstick on he seems to say "well that is quite enough where is that letter?" This morning the frown seemed deeper than usual, so here it is !

I won't write any more about Paris for somehow the little joys I described the last time ( human nature is ungrateful ) are now taken for granted, or at least they don't cause quite the chuckle that they used to. We are now thoroughly established in the neighbourhood and as I go by all the little shop keepers say " B'jour M'dame Grine " and now it seems quite natural. Howard too is part of the neighbourhood , when we first moved here the ladies would say as he passed "Tu viens Cheri ? ". Then one day he got all dressed up (for a party we were giving) in his best double breasted suit ( a suit I forced him to buy and in which he looks like " un vrai bourgeois" ). That day the ladies said "Vous venez, Monsieur?". Now there are no such uncertainties and variations, he just gets the not too hopeful smile for married men. So you see we are both well established citizens of the 9<sup>e</sup>me.

When I last wrote we were just about to leave on our trip and now the trip is far behind and the impressions somewhat blurred. It was the most exhausting trip I ever took, we crossed Europe too fast for my taste, I felt exhausted physically and psychologically. Only in Israel did we stay long enough to feel we knew the country well.

As we started this trip, the first strong and definitely foreign impression we got was when we crossed into Bulgaria. There it was total "dépaysment". We thought we had been prepared by Jugoslavia, but Jugoslavia is still the west and a bastard regime ( it is funny how one feels all these things instinctively the minute one enters a country ) Bulgaria, on the other hand is definitely the East and quite an other regime.

We boarded the train for Bulgaria in Belgrade and chose a 2nd class compartment where a man and his small daughter had obviously just spent the night stretched out on the "banquettes". The man had a most attractive face and it was good to see how kind he was to his little girl. We tried unsuccessfully to speak to him but there seemed to be no common language; he offered French, German, Yugoslav, so we settled in the belief he belonged to one of these nationalities, and fell back into silence. But somehow we could 'nt give up, we both felt too strongly attracted. I knew I liked him immensely as if I had known him already. As I sat across from him I remarked to myself that I knew I trusted him, and I could'nt quite understand that feeling. To this day I remember him, with his broad face laughing to his little girl, with the sharpness that memory has only for dearly loved ones. Or rather I should say, for those we admire, for memory is not always so accurate



for loved ones. It is the essence of a person which memory catches, and for this our instinct has to sense something different which memory fixes; that is why we usually remember a definite expression or a particular gesture of a person. Only once ~~before~~ did such a thing happen to me before; I was an interpreter at a conference, I was in a glass booth rather nervous in front of the apparatus when a Buddhist monk came in the conference room, he looked at me through the glass, I shall never forget his eyes, the calmness and reassuring feeling they gave me. The deep certainties that man had towards life were immediately communicated. I never talked to him but I never forgot his eyes. Well in this case we just could't give up there was something compelling in this man's face, so we tried again and we nearly fell off our seats when we found out he was a Bulgarian. The next question was to find out if he spoke Russian. I shall never forget the roar of contentment that burst out of all of us, including the little girl, as he said "well of course!" So we talked and talked, Howard interpreting as we went along. It was the gayest and most charming ride of the trip, we picked up in the compartment, a Yugoslav steward diligently kept us in soft drinks and in between errands would come and chat (through our interpreter our friend Draganov who first put it into Russian, then Howard would put it into English for my benefit). Little Marianna and I played games and the compartment was the jolliest place you ever saw. It so contrasted with the dark, muddy and barren Kolkoz land we were rolling across. Draganov told us how despite its barren ugliness he was sentimental about that land, how he fought for it and spent long months in prison. He talked of the new pride of the <sup>new</sup> dignity. Draganov is one of these rare communists, one who is a communist out of true generosity of soul.

We arrived in Sofia late that night, we took one of the 3 or 4 taxis in existence in that town and went to the best and most modern hotel: "The Balkan"; on red square facing party head quarters and under the red neon star.

The hotel was incredibly old fashioned (at best 1930 style) despite the enormous and obvious effort to be the latest thing. The dining room was sparkling with crystal chandeliers and white damask, an orchestra was accompanying a "chanteuse" who tried to sing French cabaret songs. Waiters were dressed in rather worn and shabby (definitely "ancien régime") tuxedos. The clients were "Proletariats" with no ties, usually no collars and always black finger nails. The food was good (the pastries amazingly so) and the atmosphere gay. It had the gaiety of a house where the boss is away and the domestics can throw a party in his absence in the rooms where they usually have to serve him. The same atmosphere prevailed in the streets where it looked like a carnival so many people were out walking, and in THE department store open till 10 p.m.. Crowds were milling around the counters in admiration (as loudspeakers played American popular music) where plastics and nylon stockings are still unknown.

During the day we sat on park benches talked to old men, visited the local rabbi (who spoke excellent French) talked here and there, everywhere people were curious to meet us and anxious to tell us that they were pleased and proud of their regime. I believe it was sincere. The pride of the people is very strong and I was shamed by some old cleaning women: I wanted to take a picture of these bobby-socked old women in the court yard of the Balkan, raising a cloud of dust while beating with a stick (for lack of a vacuum cleaner) the most elegant chairs of our hotel. They saw me, ran imploringly towards me, and begged me not to take the photo, they told me in sign language to come back in two years when they will have vacuum cleaners to do their work.

They were so upset , I went away ashamed of myself, my camera back in its leather case.

Draganov took us around Sofia, and to the outskirts to see a Byzantine chapel He showed us the new buildings, the new (quite nice) housing projects, the University (of which he is a prof. of slavic languages and Litt,) We ran into a group of students practicing local dances for the May day parade . The teacher hearing we were Americans ran out of the room and went to fetch the local party man, an ugly, uncouth and unpleasnat face who seemed out of place with university people . One other such experience was when our breakfast was brought to our room by a waiter who spoke very good English , we inquired about it, he said he had lived 14 years in the U.S.; then he too darted out of the room. The following day he would have no further conversation with us either.

When we left Sofia Draganow took us to the station; as the train started and I saw his figure diminish on the quai my throat was slightly pinched. In this God forsaken land we had found a friend, and we were rolling on towards Turkey, never to see him again, maybe.

We took a sleeper and woke up the next morning on Turkish soil. We passed mud house farms, and women would cover their faces to watch the spectacle of the train go by. I must tell you immediately that I am quite allergic to that country and that the antipathy was immediate. Only one thing was worse : the Americans in Turkey.

The word Istanbul always had for me a certain magic, just to say it gave me a feeling of excitement, a feeling which was only heightened by the 3 hours delay we had in getting in. As we approached the outskirts we rolled through the most dismal slums I have ever seen, I kept telling myself that it was going to stop soon but it went on and on. Later I found out that the town was one enormous slum, a city of misery and decay, a city of kurds who are human beasts of burden, a city where starving dogs fight for a dying cat. I was unable to appreciate the Blue Mosque or St Sophia, edifices that smell of mustiness and decay and along which refuse piles up.

The people are amazingly proud and despite the extreme misery there is little begging. Besides the misery and the mud ( it is also the muddiest city in the world) the other strong and immediate impression one gets is of oppression. The army, a bedraggled lot, is everywhere, it seems that more than 1/2 of the country must be in military clothes. The police too is every where and has brutal ways, they push crowds around like cattle, and speed them up with more than a gesture, particularly the poor half veiled peasant woman.

On top of all this decay and misery there is powerful Uncle Sam who has built huge highways which cut across not only the slums but sometimes cuts a house in two leaving it like a slice of cake to symbolize his power and indifference. And then there is the HILTON HOTEL! Palace of piped music muted by heavy wool carpets , mosaic-harem-style-powder-rooms with pastel flush toilets, The Serail room of satin and silk where one can order a hamburger brought on copper trays by a mysteriously veiled woman who speaks English. There, self-satisfied, cigar smoking men slip discreet tips to obsequious door men (who look like Harem keepers in more ways than one) before their cadillac rolls up to the door. As I watched the door man of the Hilton, I remembered the head waiter of the Balkan Hotel with some regrets, I remembered his gesture to open the door for us ( an ancien regime reflex) and then simply standing there till we did it ourselves..As I looked up again to the Hilton door man the thought occurred to me that at the court of Louis XIV, there were valets who fought for

the privilege of wiping the behind of the King and of the princes. Somehow that's how incongruous he looked. More than once did I regret Sofia in Istambul and particularly while at the Hilton.

We sat down to eat near a huge "picture" window over looking the Bosphorus which was so blue and mysterious, but it was cold and foggy out and I couldn't get out of my mind the town bellow. There again I thought of Sofia and our diner at the Balkan that first evening. The thought had occurred to me then that any one in Bulgaria that night who wanted to could afford to be there, and I had really appreciated my warm soup.

I conceived against the Hilton such a hatred I would have like to see it catch on fire or explode (although it is a beautiful place) This brought me to realize the most pitiful thing about the Turks: they don't hate us! They have completely lost their identity. I think that when Attaturk forbade them to wear the fez he took away more than a hat, he left them bare headed and bewildered. This feeling was confirmed to me by a young Turk, who "en passant" told me that mosques were being restored and painted "because the tourists like them better that way". Also when I noticed an old Kurd broken under the weight of his load, the same young man told me that a law was being passed forcing them to buy wheel-barrows, <sup>since</sup> they also were not a pleasing sight for the Tourists, he himself was 'nt a bit troubled, but he did add that since the Kurds did 'nt always have enough to eat he did 'nt see how they would purchase a wheel-barrow.

I was truly happy when we sat at the airport waiting for our El Al plane. When later in Israel we read of the trouble in Turkey I was not surprised I was only surprised that it stopped at that.

The El Al crew had some coffee with us, the pilot looked like a Viennese intellectual, the crew was gaily speaking Hebrew, it was strange to think they were all Jews. We woke up at daybreak (we were forced into ~~an~~ unpleasant middle of the night schedule because no planes were allowed to fly till sundown on Pesha) <sup>middle of the night</sup>  
~~but~~ we arrived at a charming little air port filled with roses, the sun was already bright, people were bustling around gaily, with rolled up sleeves over swarthy skins. There was something gay and healthy in the air. Since it was too early to wake up Bethsabée we walked around Tel Aviv, white and bright. We sat at the terrasse of a little coffee shop and drank tea in a glass lulled by the soft noise of water sprinklers on the lawns I realized then that we were already sentimental about that little country and it felt a bit like coming home.

But that is such a big chapter; I shall leave it for some other time. I must pack, for tomorrow we are off again for a week at the sea shore in Brittany.

Baruj mentioned something about you two going to Denver, a cold chill ran down my back at the idea that you might not be in N.Y. when we return Really that would be awful. I know I am being selfish for I know how you would both enjoy getting away from the hospital, and into the fresh mountain air of Denver. So do enjoy <sup>it</sup> for you know we shall miss you.

All our love to you both and our best to the Fox.

*Rosie*

P.S. We were peaved at missing all those T.V. programs, although we have received numerous clippings..