

# THE MOST FEARLESS WOMAN IN THE WORLD

LILY BATT

JILL COSSLEY-BATT

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*"Agony Point," north of Tingharia, is one of three railway loops along the route of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway. British Empire and Commonwealth Museum/Bridgeman Images*

# The Most Fearless Woman in the World

*“ a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma”.*

*attributed to Sir Winston Churchill*

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## Preface and Acknowledgements

Writing about my Great Aunt happened by chance. I had been undertaking some research on my family history as a retirement project and was writing a few lines about each relative. When it came to my Great-Aunt Jill, I was stumped, as I knew virtually nothing about her. A YouTube video on a channel known as “Creepy Little Book” kicked things off. This video channel focuses on ancient mysteries, clandestine plots, ominous prophecies, extra-terrestrial and supernatural events. Great-Aunt Jill was exposed as a gigantic fraud! Or was she, and if so, why?

I was contacted by a relative, Suzanne Zankin, in Australia, who had started some research with another relation, Andre Lebel, who had sourced some newspaper and family tree records about Jill. He wondered if any relative could verify Jill’s outrageous claims. I wrote back, stating that they appeared to be “pie in the sky” and without any validity. A little later, I was advised of an article a grandson of Irving Baird had written about an adventure Jill and Irving had made to Sikkim.<sup>1</sup> I was intrigued and decided to see if I could put together a brief biography. I am indebted to Suzanne, Andre and Scott Wallace for the information they have uncovered, inspiring me to undertake this work.

When it came to describing her own life and personal details, Jill mixed fact, fantasy and half-truths and untangling these has inevitably required me to make a judgement call on occasions. However, when other matters were involved, Jill’s reporting seems to have been entirely honest. The resultant story is truly jaw-dropping, worthy of a drama miniseries. This is a story of a woman who lived on her wits, her enthusiasm and her humorous outlook on life. Some people might say this tale is “unbelievable”, so I have inserted footnotes throughout in the text to show sources from which I have derived information. Truth really is stranger than fiction.

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<sup>1</sup> SMITHSONIAN JOURNEYS TRAVEL QUARTERLY: INDIA One Man's Epic Rail Journey to the Darjeeling Himalaya. A grandson retraces adventurer Francis K.I. Baird's mysterious trek to a remote village near the India-Tibet border.

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## Introduction

In 1924, a 33-year-old British woman, the daughter of a bricklayer, settled in Southern California. She claimed that she secretly held a royal title, Lady Mountbatten, had great academic credentials and a wartime honour. Furthermore, she had travelled to practically every country in the world, had lived among cannibals and walked from Lhasa in Tibet to Peking (Beijing), China. The list of achievements also included crossing Australia on horseback and meeting Lawrence of Arabia. She had nearly been killed by a gorilla in Tanganyika and was met by the King of Tonga when she visited those islands.

This lady, my Great-Aunt Jill, was obviously deluded. Finding work as a dental assistant, she claimed that her occupation was “world traveller”. A few years later she announced her dream – she was going to rediscover a small tribe of vegetarian dwarf troglodyte peoples living at a great altitude in the Himalayas, descended from a Biblical tribe mentioned in the Old Testament. These people were remarkable – they lived to over 150 years of age and never had cancer.

The British Embassy had by now received numerous complaints about her claim to titles and her behaviour and decided to act – her passport which was coming up for renewal would not be extended, other than to allow her to travel back to the UK, where she could be kept out of harm’s way.

Her determination to achieve her ambition was to involve the Wild West, *Anastasia* and two Prime Ministers. Refusing to be daunted by a lack of money, she charged ahead to fulfil her dream, becoming a celebrity in both the USA and Canada. The British authorities found that they were dealing with someone who had, perhaps a little tongue-in-cheek by the United States press, been given titles to match those aristocratic ones– “*The most fearless woman in the world*” was one, and “*The greatest woman speaker of the age*” another. In Great Britain, she was known as the “*the woman who talked her way around the world*”.

## 1. End of an Era

What's in a name? A name reflects a forename decided by one's parents and a surname unchanged for five centuries or more. Perhaps a name should be transitory, reflecting who we wish to be at any particular stage of one's life. This was certainly the view adopted by the young lady in question.

Lily Emma Batt was born on 15th June 1891 in the hamlet of Ibworth, Hannington, near Basingstoke, Hampshire, England. Sometimes her name was the more formal Lillian. Lilly (with a double L) became Jilly and finally Jill, who now had the name she desired. She was the daughter of bricklayer Reginald Batt and his wife Maria Batt, née Hiles, who came from a farming family. Maria was already four months pregnant when they married, and they had to live with Reginald's parents, Henry and Sophia and their daughters Rose and Louisa. Hannington, in the north-east corner of Hampshire, then as now, is difficult to find, requiring one to navigate a maze of single-track roads, the high hedgerows and trees on each side obscuring the fields beyond. In every direction, the landscape falls away from the village, emphasizing its isolation. The only nearby settlement of any size is Kingsclere, some three miles away, itself just a large village, dominated by a huge church. This church, St Mary's, had been used by the Batt family in previous decades, recording baptisms, weddings and burials. Jill's parents attended the church in Hannington, so it was odd for Jill to be baptised here, suggesting that her parents did not wish to draw attention to the birth; subsequent children were all baptised initially at All Saints church in Hannington and later at St. Thomas's in Worting. The family register, which was compiled later, recorded her date of birth as 14<sup>th</sup> June. The mysteries around Jill started at a very young age!



*St. Mary's church. Kingsclere (Hampshirehistory.com)*

Hannington had developed as an irregular cluster of buildings around a village green with flint walled All Saints church dating from the 11<sup>th</sup> century as a focal point. In 1891, it consisted of just a manor farmhouse, a smithy, an inn named The Wellington Arms, a manor house, three farms and a small number of cottages and houses for agricultural workers. Not much happened of note in Hannington but in 1897, Queen Victoria had her diamond jubilee and to mark the occasion, a timber-framed well-head with a pyramidal roof,



*Hannington village green with well-head and church*

covered with red clay tiles, was erected on the village green. To get anywhere at all, unless one took a bone-jarring ride on the horse pulled cart, one had to walk. One and a half miles across fields lay neighbouring Balstone Farm in the hamlet of Ibworth, where the Hiles were tenant farmers, whilst three miles to the north was the village of Kingsclere. Life was quiet, enlivened by the cries of the other children who would follow Jill. First came my grandfather, Henry John (Jack) one year later. Then every two years or so, there would be another addition to the family – Jill had ten siblings in all, some of whom were born after she left home. She was closest to Jack, who admired her indomitable spirit.

The men in the Batt family had a tradition of being bricklaying and carpentry journeymen. Jill's grandfather had been a publican, smallholder and bricklayer at various times. Now, approaching retirement, he was given his dream job – clerk of works on the magnificent Tylney Hall at Rotherwick, north of Basingstoke. Today the hall is a luxury hotel and one can go and admire the splendid brickwork, a tribute to the workmanship and his supervision. It was too far away to travel every day, so he left the house to Reginald and his family and relocated to Rotherwick with his wife and daughter Leonie.

Much of the land between Reading and Basingstoke was owned by the Duke of Wellington. The battle of Waterloo had taken place in what is now Belgium. Fought on Sunday, 18 June 1815, a French army under the command of Napoleon was defeated by two of the armies of the Seventh Coalition, a British-led coalition consisting of units from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Hanover, Brunswick, and Nassau, under the command of the Iron Duke. After a hard fought and bloody battle, the arrival of a Prussian army commanded by Field Marshal von Blücher saved the day and resulted in defeat for Napoleon. Nearly 50,000 men were killed or badly wounded and the scene on 22nd June was "too horrible to behold".

The battle was a turning point in European history and a grateful nation showered the Duke with money. He purchased a fine London house, Apsley House, and built a relatively modest mansion at Stratfield Saye, south of Reading. He then gradually bought up much of the land between Reading and Basingstoke, some 16,000 acres, letting out the farms to tenant farmers. By the end of the nineteenth century, the title had passed to the fourth Duke, who rode around the estate on his horse, checking on his tenants. He lived at Ewhurst Park, just north of Balstone Farm, this location being close to many of those tenants. The duke developed a liking for attractive Leonie Batt, a young sister of Reginald and who played the church organ at Rotherwick each Sunday. He was so taken with the young lady that he presented her with a locket of his hair.<sup>2</sup>

Even though Henry and his family had moved to Rotherwick, it soon became apparent to Reginald that the family would need to move as the numbers of children increased. At the turn of the century, Jill's father built a house, *The Firs*, on the Roman Road in Worting, just to the west of Basingstoke and in sight of the bridge carrying the railway line from Basingstoke to Southampton.

But Jack was becoming a handful and still more space was needed for the growing family, so Jack was sent away to stay with a cousin, a railway signalman, who lived in Mortlake, Surrey, now part of west London. Jill had lost her soulmate. When she was 12 years of age, she would be expected to leave formal education and to earn her keep. She may have been sent to help for a time to help with duties at Balstone Farm where the Hiles family lived, for she was proficient at riding and training horses.<sup>3</sup> But it was quite common for the eldest girl to be asked to look after the younger family members, taking care of the toddlers and youngsters. This may not have appealed to Jill who was independent and would soon be ready to leave the family and strike out on her own. Occupations for young women

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<sup>2</sup> As narrated by Ruth Davies (Batt) to me.

<sup>3</sup> As evidenced sometime later which she trained horses for WW1 and rode a horse as a travelling salesperson.

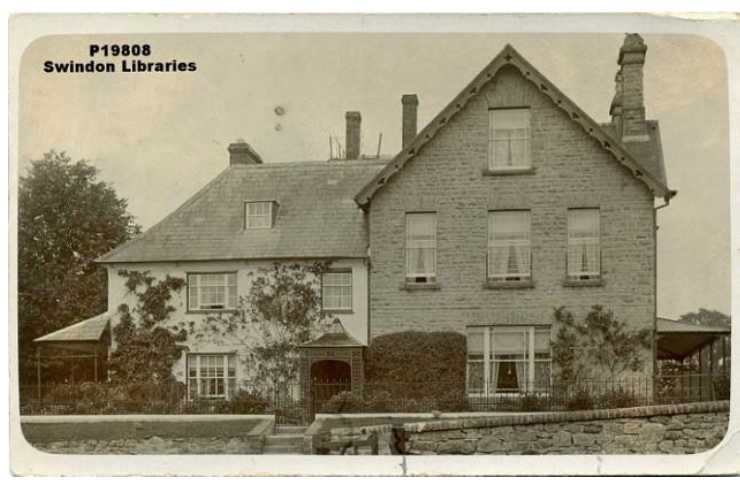


were somewhat limited. Educated ladies might become schoolteachers or nurses but many of those living in farming communities went into service, becoming servants. In fact, at that time, 28% of the working female population were servants.

If servants worked for a wealthy family living in a mansion or stately home, they would be assigned specific duties – butler, cook, waiting and serving guests, laundry maid, cleaning and repairing clothes and curtains, etc. For the less well off, only one or two servants would be employed, and they would have to undertake any duties which the house owner required of them. My maternal grandmother had been fortunate, working for Baron Loder at Wakefield Place, the grounds containing an outstanding collection of plants and trees from around the world. This allowed her to develop an abiding interest in horticulture. She was also well trained, becoming a skilled treadle sewing-machine operator. Servants, particularly girls, were often employed between the ages of sixteen and twenty-two. This was partly because they were willing and could be readily trained to work in a manner to suit the employers' needs but also because women would be expected to resign should they get married. If they didn't find a suitor, perhaps a farm labourer, or if fortunate, an artisan or farmer, they might become a parlourmaid or eventually a head housemaid in charge of other servants. If they were not suitable material for such an elevated position, they might end up as a washerwoman doing the laundry or making beds and assisting the cook.

The Retter family originated from Ottery St Mary in Devon. David and Rosina Retter, with four of their sons, had taken on Overtown Farm at Wroughton, Wiltshire, the estate including a large house, Overtown Manor. Rosina, died in 1910. The eldest son, Ernest, was chosen to stay and take over the farm when his father retired. Ernest now having married, had two young children to look after, as well as the duties of managing the large estate and a number of farm workers. By 1911, this workload required the assistance of two young female servants to help look after the manor, Ernest's wife Edith looking after 5-year-old Lionel and 2-year-old Winifred. One of these positions was taken by Jill.<sup>4</sup>

A typical workload for a servant in a small household would be as follows: *She is to cook, slush and butler: she has to up for the milk in the morning, clean the brasses, wash the steps, light the fires, clean the hall and dining room, lay the table, get the breakfast, have the kitchen clean, answer all the knocks in the meantime, and have herself tidy to serve the breakfasts, and have all boots polished by that time.* Well, those were some of the morning duties. Afterwards: *All day long she is kept going making up bedrooms, brushing down the stairs, answering knocks at the doors and going on messages. In addition to this, she must see to the fires, get meals ready and rush up and down stairs at the beck and call of her mistress and others. Before going to bed, she has to clear out the kitchen range, blackhead and polish it and sometimes stay up late ironing.*<sup>5</sup> At least there were two of them to share these duties.



*Overtown Manor in early 20<sup>th</sup> century*

<sup>4</sup> 1911 census

<sup>5</sup> Headlines from History Jan 19, 2022, by Rose Staveley-Wadham. Extract from a servant's article in Irish Independent, 1906.

In any rare idle moment, 19-year-old Jill would daydream. She had read many books published at that time, extolling the British Empire, with pictures of exotic people and locations. She imagined that she was visiting these places, having exciting adventures.<sup>6</sup>

Wroughton is a small village, then with under 3,000 inhabitants, located a few miles south of the railway town of Swindon. It was mainly populated by farm workers, blacksmiths, beer and coal merchants, and other artisans, with a handful of professional people. The residents mostly lived in small, thatched cottages, prone to catching fire. A twice daily bus service to Swindon station provided the main means of escape for those in the village. Jill was among that number who wanted to escape and the opportunity was provided in 1912 by her 27-year-old cousin, Sarah Batt, who was employed as a domestic servant. Sarah lived in a grocer's house in Grange Road, Ealing, a suburb of West London.

Had Jill stayed in Wroughton, her time with the Retter's would have been short-lived. On 28<sup>th</sup> June 1914, Ernest Retter died in what was an accident: he was just 43 years old. This tragedy was no doubt too much for his elderly father who passed away on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1914, just two months later. The farm had to be sold.

Ealing, at the start of the twentieth century, was called "The Queen of the Suburbs". It was populated by the lower-middle and middle classes who had "aspirations". This was certainly not the case in the 1820's, when large numbers of delinquent boys roamed the area. The delinquent youth came to the notice of Lady Byron, widow of the infamous poet, who had taken a house nearby. Her reaction was to draw up a plan for solving the problem by bringing education, training and guidance to the boys in question. Having established a school, Ealing started to improve and gained a reputation as a place where a person could obtain a good education. She is attributed to "educating Ealing".

Ealing resident, Lady Byron, had one child, a daughter named Ada. Lady Byron was determined that her daughter should not grow up to be like her father, a wayward poet, making her concentrate on studying mathematics. Ada was a precocious, keen and brilliant student, being privately educated in mathematics and science and questioning many of the assumptions of the day. She married the Earl of Lovelace and was introduced to some of the leading mathematicians at that time. She went on to work with Charles Babbage on his "Analytical Engine". In 1953, more than a century after her death, Ada Lovelace's notes on Babbage's Analytical Engine were republished. The engine has now been recognised as an early model for a computer and her notes as a description of a computer and software.

In the twentieth century, Ealing was to gain a reputation for producing distinguished tennis players, musicians, artists, actors, writers, doctors, architects and the inventor of daylight-saving time. Of course, mention must be made of the Ealing film studios, almost opposite the house in Grange Road where Jill was to stay. This studio, opened in 1902, is the oldest continuously working studio facility for film production in the world. And we should not forget a seven-year-old, Charlie Chaplin, who became a pupil at a school for destitute children in Ealing.

Those aspirations of many of the Ealing residents must have rubbed off on Jill, who realised that she needed secondary education to achieve anything in life. Where she studied and who paid is a mystery. She moved from Grange Road to a house in Queens Walk, a road in West Ealing. At the age of 21, she was too old to study at a secondary school. There were a number of private colleges and tutors who taught young men how to become clerks or young women how to play the pianoforte or the violin, or how to sing to a high standard. Further education was provided to secondary pupils wanting to become teachers. This could be provided by a college affiliated to a university or by a religious or

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<sup>6</sup> Malaya Tribune 8<sup>th</sup> October 1930. Jill mentions her daydreaming about adventures.

philanthropic organisation. The *Workers' Educational Association* (WEA) provided free or subsidised evening courses. Jill had probably learnt by now what all politicians know; telling the truth is not always the best course of action. She probably claimed that she had attended a secondary school.

Jill conducted Sunday school lessons at Anglican St. Peters church, North Ealing, which gave her an introduction to public speaking which she must have enjoyed. This task inevitably required her to study the Bible in depth and she was to use this knowledge sometime later. She also had an affinity to the nearby Catholic monastery church of St Barnabas, claiming to have donated the family bible to them.<sup>7</sup> This is very odd, donating a King James bible to a Catholic monastery and the family bible at that. Did one of the monks give her private tuition? One of these two churches may hold the secret to Jill's further education. She was proficient in both religious studies and Latin.



By User:Acy london, CC BY-SA 3.0,  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=>  
*St Peters church, Ealing, one of the most outstanding architectural buildings in Ealing and now Grade 2 listed.*

Jill later claimed she studied chemistry at the University of London, which is most unlikely and probably wishful thinking on her part. She may have studied chemistry, possibly as an evening course, at the City and Guilds institute, associated with Imperial College or a WEA evening class. Girls were not usually taught chemistry. These courses were often taken by those wanting to become teachers. Did Jill have the intention of becoming a chemistry teacher?

For those less academically inclined, the Dominions offered the prospect of starting a new life and two countries in particular appealed to many young men and women: Canada and Australia. Jill's brother, Jack, had headed out to Australia in 1913. The Australian Government wanted British stock to settle there and devised a dictation test, which, in effect, only allowed those whose native language was English to enter. The government moved "squatters" off land and allocated plots to immigrants to farm. When Jack arrived, he expected to be able to start farming right away but he was in for a shock; the plot of land was covered in trees and scrub. He spent the next year cutting down the bush with an axe. It was back-breaking, hand-chafing work. Having finally cleared the land, he invited his two younger sisters to join him, and in the spring of 1914, they embarked for Sydney. Jill may have intended to join them but wanted to complete her studies first. Little did Jill know that the gate for emigration to Australia was about to be firmly closed for four years.

Tensions between opposing European powers had been developing and had now reached a point where it only needed a spark to ignite a conflagration. That spark was to be the shooting by an assassin of Archduke Franz Ferdinand Carl Ludwig Joseph Maria of Austria, along with his wife. Five weeks later on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1914, Britain declared war on Germany. It marked the end of an era.

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<sup>7</sup> The family register at the front of the family bible of both Batt and Hiles families is in the author's possession. She may have donated another bible. *Middlesex County Times*, Dec 27<sup>th</sup>, 1930, p9.

## 2. Goodbye-ee

Jack, having just cleared the plot of land for farming, received a call for “volunteers” to fight in the first world war. In practice, any fit young man who did not volunteer would be called a “coward” or “traitor” and so it was only natural that Jack was enlisted in the infantry on the 9th of September 1914. The ship carrying his two sisters, aged 18 and 16 had arrived in Sydney, Australia in July 1914, shortly before Jack was called up. In fact, half of those Australian volunteers had originally come from the United Kingdom. Jack joined the 13<sup>th</sup> battalion of the Australian Imperial Force. I wonder if he had a bad feeling about being in a battalion numbered thirteen. After some initial training in New South Wales, he then boarded the *H.M.A.T. A38 Ulysses* in Melbourne, departing on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1914 for a barracks near Cairo, Egypt. There he would receive further training and combine with New Zealand forces (the joint forces being known as ANZACs), before being posted to France.

The Gallipoli Campaign was a military campaign, so called because it took place on the Gallipoli peninsula in Turkey. It commenced on 17th February 1915, the purpose being to weaken the Ottoman Empire, one of the Central Powers, by taking control of the Turkish Dardanelles straits. The Ottoman capital of Constantinople could then be bombarded by Allied battleships, cutting it off from



*H.M.A.T. A38 Ulysses in Sydney Harbour, photo taken during the Great War.*

the Asian part of the empire. With Turkey defeated, the Suez Canal would be safe, and a year-round Allied supply route could be opened through the Black Sea to warm water ports in Russia. The initial assault in March on the Turkish forts, which were shelled from the sea, was a failure and it was then decided to send the ANZAC troops from Egypt to mount a beach assault at Gallipoli. Unfortunately, the British military commanders grossly underestimated the effectiveness of the Turks who were well fortified and dug in.

The Mediterranean Expeditionary Force was formed to engage the Turks. On 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1915, Jack, led by his commanding officer, who had by now become a good friend, waded ashore to meet intense fire, which decimated the battalion. He watched in horror as they were mown down or blown to pieces. Sustaining a bullet through his hip and a shrapnel wound to his forearm, he lay on the beach amongst his dead and dying comrades. Sometime later, he was discovered by a recovery party, and evacuated back to Egypt. There he nearly died a second time. A wisdom tooth had become infected with an abscess forming. So bad was the pain that he had an out-of-body experience, looking down on himself lying in a hospital bed. He was operated on just in time, part of his jaw being amputated. Later, all he wished to recall about Egypt was the flies. They were insufferable and made life miserable he told me. He was sent to Manchester for treatment and after a brief spell recuperating in Weymouth, onwards to Wandsworth barracks for further training.

Meanwhile, Jill's second brother Charles was called up and became a gunner. Jill would have naturally been keen to do her bit for the war effort. The use of horses in the first World War marked a transitional period in the evolution of armed conflict. At the start of the war, there were many cavalry

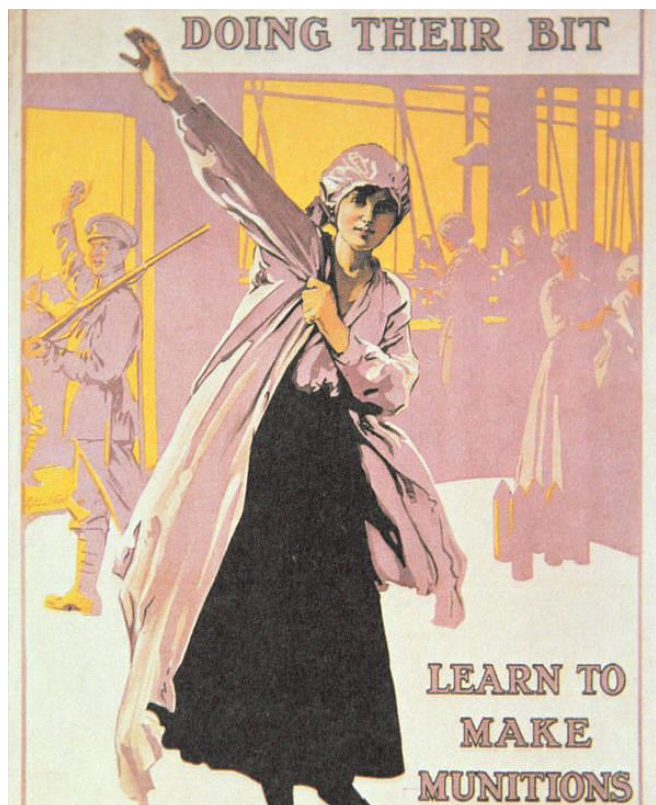
brigades which quickly proved vulnerable to modern weaponry. The military then used horses mainly for logistical support; they were better than mechanized vehicles at traveling through deep mud and over rough terrain. Horses faced terrible conditions and were used for reconnaissance and for carrying messengers as well as for pulling artillery, ambulances, and supply wagons. Later in the war, there was an acute shortage of horses, the horses being regarded as more valuable than men!

Over the course of the war, some 470,000 horses were purchased in the UK, with the large haulage companies and the railways among the major suppliers. Around 422,000 horses and 275,000 mules came from North America, 6,000 horses and 1,500 mules from South America and 3,700 mules from Spain and Portugal. These horses were trained and despatched to the front at “remount” camps, also known as depots. The smaller camps just handled locally bred horses and during her studies, Jill spent some time at one of these small camps called *Temple*.<sup>8</sup> This may have been at a place called Temple, between Marlow in Buckinghamshire and Henley-on-Thames, which could be reached quite easily by train from Ealing.

Another wartime job which Jill had towards the end of her studies was to work as a dispatch van driver for the Y.M.C.A. (Young Men’s Christian Association).<sup>9</sup> The Y.M.C.A. was one of the largest providers of civilian support to soldiers, munitions workers and families during the First World War. An unbelievable £158 million was spent on cups of tea and other refreshments, £55 million on relief stations at home and in France, £7 million on notepaper for over 200 million letters home, £1m on sports, concerts, etc., and £850k on putting up families of terminally ill soldiers who would otherwise not get a chance to say goodbye.

By the spring of 1915, it had become apparent that the war would not be over quickly. There were insufficient shells and bullets to supply the Allied forces and Woolwich Arsenal, near Greenwich, was struggling to manufacture sufficient weaponry, partly because of capacity and partly because many of its male workforce had been called up to serve overseas. Desperate times required desperate measures and women were recruited to man the production lines, initially at Woolwich and then at other factories which were converted for that purpose. Once Jill finished her studies, she would become a “munitionette”, also known as a “canary girl”.

The work could be hazardous for several reasons. Women, who were not used to the dangers of working in a factory, could be injured or maimed by machinery or lifting heavy casings. The slightest spark could set off an explosion and indeed some factories did blow up, killing scores of workers. Anyone caught with anything metallic, or a match on their person, would be disciplined, sometimes with imprisonment. Milling machines would send iron filings into the air, often blinding



Recruitment poster for “munitionettes”

<sup>8</sup> San Francisco Examiner, 9<sup>th</sup> October 1927 p57.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

those working nearby. Ventilation in the factories was frequently poor. The TNT and chemicals which they had to handle could cause skin problems and terrible adverse permanent health issues, even death, and the TNT stained the skin yellow. The yellow tone, caused by sulphuric acid in the TNT, was more than skin deep; women had babies who were born with yellow skin, the colour gradually fading in time, hence the name “canary girls”. One girl was to recall,



*Munitions factory. Copyright Imperial War Museum IWM SR 9356*

‘Everything that that powder touches goes yellow. All the girls’ faces were yellow, all round their mouths. They had their own canteen, in which everything was yellow that they touched... Everything they touched went yellow – chairs, tables, everything.’ In Jill’s own words, they “looked like (gold) sovereigns”. About 400 girls died from exposure to TNT alone.

Moreover, the factories were the targets for zeppelins and aircraft which would drop bombs on them. The working hours were long, up to 12 hours, both day- and nightshifts, and with the gruelling work, tired workers would make mistakes and have accidents. The factory environment was extremely noisy with drills, hammers and other machinery constantly on the go. Some of the workers had to stand all day long, with a ten-minute break to go to the toilets. For lunch, they had to stand and eat sandwiches at the machine where they worked.

Jill worked in two different factories (the first may have been at Woolwich or Enfield), the second being in Queensferry, Flintshire, Wales, not far from the English border and the city of Chester.<sup>10</sup> A disused boiler factory in Queensferry that had briefly been a detention centre for German civilians was converted and expanded to produce munitions. Seventy percent of the 7,000 workers were women. Owing to the dangerous nature of the work, the site had its own hospital and between 1916 and 1917, it was called upon 19,000 times to provide treatment. By 1917, quite a few of the young women had died of the effects of handling TNT with many more suffering permanent ill-health. Jill was promoted to the position of inspector, so she no longer had to directly handle chemicals and explosives; Jill must have shown a natural tendency to take charge. The workers were poorly paid, and many wanted to leave for better pay and conditions, something which the country could ill afford. The problem was solved by introducing a law requiring formal permission to leave employment at munitions factories, and if not given, being unable to work for a period of six weeks, something few could afford. The workers were therefore trapped at Queensferry unless discharged through ill-health.

The German Army was, by the Spring of 1915, using chlorine gas as a chemical weapon with deadly effect against the Allied forces. The United Kingdom had established the Ministry of Munitions in July 1915 to manage the production of munitions, and this same ministry was also responsible for chemical weapons. The British Army decided that unless they too had such weapons, they would be at a disadvantage. An establishment in London was formed to research these and test different gas masks.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

However, a remote place was needed to trial new chemical weaponry and in March 1916, a facility in a remote part of Wiltshire was designated, at a location known as Porton Down, some 30 miles to the south of the area where Jill once worked as a servant. This facility was initially very rudimentary with just a few wooden huts and some hand-dug trenches. Jill must have heard via the grapevine or perhaps seen a vacancy notice in a factory that a recorder was required to document the various trials being undertaken. She was later to claim that she got the job because of her chemistry degree. She must have been desperate to get away from Queensferry.

The chemical weapons establishment was run by Dr. Arthur W. Crossley who was secretary of the Chemical Warfare Committee of the Ministry of Munitions. After 1916, he became commandant, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel, of the experimental station of the Royal Engineers at Porton, Salisbury. However, until that time, work was based in London with field trials at Porton and frequent trips to France. We can only guess at the work Jill undertook – over 100 years later, the sensitivities around the subject of chemical weapons remain and some files are withheld from public view.

As a recorder, Jill would have seen reports on the tests and developments for poisonous gases and gas masks. Based on a report of Major JP Garner who was at Porton in the autumn of 1917, we can get some idea of the sort of experiments undertaken. In Jill's time working for the establishment, just two gases were in existence, chlorine and phosgene; mustard gas followed later. At Porton, trenches were dug, equipped with vacuum sampling bottles and on some occasions, tethered goats. Guns were sited 2000



*Jill in 1916 (in possession of J Hoekstra)*

yards away, manned by gunners recovering from their war wounds. Gas shells would then be fired, and the results reported. Back in London, there was accommodation for monkeys, dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs and rats. A whole range of animals were exposed to various concentrations of gases for various times, noting the mortality rate. Graphs were then plotted, comparing the relative killing power of different substances. However, when it came to how human tear ducts and skin would react, there was no means other than to expose men to non-fatal doses of gas.

There were other laboratory tests which involved looking at slides of lungs exposed to gas and the effectiveness of antidotes. The development of effective gas masks and helmets was essential, not

only for humans but also for war animals such as horses and dogs. Jill left the Chemical Warfare division after working there for less than a year, probably in the spring of 1917. The reason she gave much later in several newspaper reports was that she suffered ill health because she had been sent to France and exposed to gas whilst over there.<sup>11</sup> This is possible as Crossley made many visits to France to obtain samples of the gas used by the Germans, and he could have taken Jill with him. There are other equally probable reasons for her ill health and Jill may have been covering up the real reason. She may have found the work being undertaken distressing, although there is no indication that this was the case. The London operations were moving to Porton during the first half of 1917. Jill knew all too well how isolated Salisbury Plain in Wiltshire was; this was no place for a young lady. If she worked for Crossley, he was going to re-locate there and this probably worried her. She must have been given a good reference by Crossley as she was able to secure a position as an inspector at another weapons establishment known as the Optical Munitions and Glassware Branch.

At this time, Jill's younger brother, Charles, had been gassed in the trenches and was suffering a long, cruel, lingering death, slowly dying at home in *The Firs* at Worting, choking and coughing with fluid-filled lungs. Her oldest brother, Jack, was sent for further training and given time to recover. He was no model soldier, being stubborn and disliking being told what to do. He went AWOL on several occasions, sometimes losing his kit and having to serve a punishment and fines on each occasion. He no doubt visited Jill at such times when he was based at Wandsworth, south-west London. The army, running out of men to fight in the trenches, desperately tried to ensure he and others like him were fit enough to return to the front. In the autumn of 1917, he was dispatched to the *Montevideo* camp in Weymouth where Australian soldiers injured at Gallipoli recuperated when almost ready to return to service. He was then told his fate – he was to go back to join the 13<sup>th</sup> East Surrey battalion and serve in Flanders.

Still affected by his previous experience of war and having seen large numbers of badly wounded, mutilated and gassed soldiers, including his brother Charles, he was inevitably reluctant to engage in trench warfare. He boarded the train at Weymouth on 8<sup>th</sup> January 1918, the destination being Waterloo station in London. As the train neared Basingstoke station, it slowed down and Jack looked out of the window, seeing his home at Worting as it passed over a bridge. He made a spur of the moment decision, jumping out of the moving train. On arriving home, he was dispatched to the attic, where he was to spend the next two years of his life. Once the village policeman called to check on his whereabouts. He probably knew Jack was at home but did not search the property, knowing the implications for Jack and his family, who would be found guilty of assisting a deserter. In those days, if you were not a gibbering wreck suffering from shell shock, you were deemed fit for duty if able to run and were not certified with a communicable disease. There was no knowledge of PTSD or other similar nervous illnesses. Desertion was a crime, punishable by death. The deserter would be blindfolded, tied to a wooden post and shot by firing squad. This happened to over 300 soldiers who fought in the trenches when abroad, but the mandatory death sentence was normally commuted at the last minute for deserters at home, with a 12-year prison sentence imposed instead. Disgrace and possible imprisonment faced his parents and possibly Jill, if they were convicted of assisting a deserter.

Had he gone to the front, he would have been involved in the Battle of the Lys, also known as the Fourth Battle of Ypres, which was fought from 7 to 29 April 1918 and was part of the German spring offensive in Flanders. The East Surrey battalion was decimated in the subsequent fighting, hardly any remaining and the number of British casualties during that brief period may have been as

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid and several other newspapers.



high as 160,000 (estimates vary).<sup>12</sup> Jack's case was finally closed in July 1920 when he was formally dishonourably discharged, stripped of all medals and denied repatriation to Australia.

British industry needed to adapt to make precision lenses which were largely made by Zeiss in Germany prior to the war. Jill learned all about the latest ideas and inventions for binoculars, telescopic rifle sights, rangefinders, artillery telescopes and lenses for cameras and scientific instruments. The rapidly expanded workforce needed their output checked for quality and Jill's work required extensive travel to the optical factories in Britain and France. What is amazing is that until quite recently, so little has been researched and written about the vital work undertaken by this establishment. Before the war, less than ten percent of optical glass used in the UK was manufactured locally, the balance coming from Austria and Germany. Britain now had to suddenly make up the shortfall, almost starting from scratch. A good account of the valuable work undertaken by this department is that written by Jill in which she gives the history and work of the Optical Munitions and Glassware branch and the state of the British glass industry at that time.<sup>13</sup> The British made several technological breakthroughs, making improvements to existing German patents, and by 1916 had almost made good on their supply deficit. Self-sufficiency was never quite achieved but by the war's end a top-quality and high-volume optical industry had been created.

At this time, Jill was living just to the north of central London, at 14 Queen Alexandra Mansions in St. Pancras, sharing accommodation with another girl, Annie Dixon.<sup>14</sup> By now, many women were becoming politically active. Jill was no exception, canvassing for her local MP, a Conservative politician by the name of Sir James Remnant who represented the constituency of Holborn. He was on various select committees but never held ministerial office. Apparently a rather dull character, he was fortunate to have a street named after him in 1935.

After the war, the British glass industry suddenly found itself with few orders and many glass firms did not survive. There was no way that Jill was prepared to go back to working as a servant. This view was shared by many others like her, who demanded better opportunities for women, but the returning war veterans wanted their jobs back. Some women sought refuge in marriage, but there was a desperate shortage of suitable young men. Many had been killed, badly mutilated, gassed or psychologically damaged by the war. Quite a few of those that did return succumbed to Spanish Flu. The economy was in a desperate state with war debt to the United States mounting up. Jill wanted to get away from Britain and see the world, but how could she do this? Some girls who Jill knew had achieved this by marrying one of the many Aussie or New Zealand soldiers who were stuck in the UK, waiting for a ship to transport them home. Jill seemed resigned to returning to work as a servant, albeit with better terms and conditions. A letter to the editor was published in *The Daily News* of 13<sup>th</sup> January 1919 under the name of Miss J.L. Crossley Batt. The letter stated "... the (munitions) girl must not forget that householders have also had remarkable wartime experiences and are prepared to consider the happiness and comfort of those who return to domestic service...her hours will be

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<sup>12</sup> After the offensive, the battalion was reduced to a cadre, i.e., a small group of officers and recruits.

<sup>13</sup> Wiley Online Library. Article in *The Australasian Journal of Optometry*, vol 1, issue 6, p2-4. *The Eye and Lenses* by J. L. Crossley-Batt O.B.E. B.A., B.Sc. 1<sup>st</sup> August 1919

<sup>14</sup> London, Electoral Register, 1832-1965. The election was called on 14 November 1918 and was held on 14 December 1918. Jill was 27 years old and it is uncertain if she could vote as that was restricted to women over 30 who were householders, the wives of householders, occupiers of property with an annual rent of £5, and graduates of British universities. So, depending on the rent she was paying and if she claimed to have graduated, she may have voted. Most men over the age of 21 could vote.

shorter, opportunities for more outdoor recreation will be given her, in addition to more food and more money. Therefore, I appeal to discharged factory hands to enter domestic service, and not to live on state money longer than is really necessary.” It was interesting that she was already proclaiming her opinions to the general public, opinions which at that time were shared by many.<sup>15</sup>

It was then that Jill had a stroke of luck which she pounced upon. *The Times* newspaper is regarded as the definitive publication for reliable news. The newspaper produced many supplements, aimed at particular audiences, these being paid for separately and not included with the main newspaper. One of these, *The Times Trade Supplement*, started as a monthly publication in 1916, as a means to promote trade between Britain and the colonies and also the United States. With shipping disrupted until late 1918, this publication was of limited value. Now in the spring of 1919, Britain desperately needed to boost trade and escape from its parlous financial situation. Britain relied heavily on exports, which included minerals such as coal as well as machinery and manufactured goods. It was a national imperative to boost trade. *The Times* responded, now issuing its trade supplement on a weekly basis. This, of course, required more journalists to file reports of trade opportunities abroad.

Jill probably applied as *Dr. Jill Crossley-Batt O.B.E., BSc (later DSc London), BA (Oxford)* (exactly when she embellished her qualifications or hyphenated her name is unknown, but as she wrote to a newspaper in January of 1919 using the title Miss J.L. Crossley Batt, it must have been at about this time), and was selected as the first woman trade correspondent for that supplement. Her qualifications and honour were fabricated, but such was her enthusiasm that it seems that these were never queried. Many of those Royal Engineers and scientists who worked at Porton were in fact awarded OBEs and Jill would have felt that she also deserved recognition. Women could not be awarded degrees at Oxford prior to 1920, a fact which Jill knew, but she must have maintained she had attended Oxford as a guest, as had a number of women, without acknowledgment of a degree, hence the absence of any certificate.<sup>16</sup>



<sup>15</sup> Waites, B. A. (1976). The Effect of the First World War on Class and Status in England, 1910-20. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 11(1), 27-48. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/260002> pp40-41.

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/article/a-short-history-of-womens-education-at-the-university-of-oxford>

As for her surname, double-barrelled names were often used by the upper classes. Crossley, of course, was the surname of the head of the committee for chemical research. There was also an eminent soldier, Reginald Cossley Batt who was made a CBE in 1919.<sup>17</sup> Strangely, he seemed later in life to prefer being Reginald Crossley Batt and like Jill, was sometimes Crossley and sometimes Cossley. He did not, however, hyphenate his surname.

The job was hers, subject to the terms and conditions. *The Times* would obtain work visas for her. They would only pay her once a report submitted by her was accepted for publication and she needed to choose a destination where money orders for payment would be sent. She chose Montreal, Canada, which suggests that this was her intended destination. Many ships had been sunk during the war and priority was given to cargo ships and troops returning to the colonies. Perhaps there were no ships to Canada (travel across the Atlantic was dangerous and restricted in the winter months because of icebergs and fog and closure of the ports of Quebec and Montreal) or perhaps she changed her mind, wanting to see her sisters in Australia. She would now have to survive without a salary until she reached Montreal via Australia. Jill would also need to quickly learn about a wide range of topics – shipping, agricultural products, clothing and material such as wool and cotton, industrial goods, minerals and commodities (e.g., coal, gold and ores), exchange rates, and the supply and demand of all these products and goods. This would be a daunting prospect for anyone, especially those unused to this type of work.

Jill withdrew her life savings (£60) and set out for a new life. On board the ship which departed on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1919, she noted some of the newly married workers she had once supervised with their antipodean soldier husbands. It was time to say goodbye to Britain and the family who remained there.

*Good-bye-ee! good-bye-ee!*  
*Wipe the tear, baby dear, from your eye-ee.*  
*Tho' it's hard to part I know,*  
*I'll be tickled to death to go.*  
*Don't cry-ee! don't sigh-ee!*  
*There's a silver lining in the sky-ee.*  
*Bonsoir old thing, cheerio! chin!*  
*Nah-poo! Toodle-oo!*  
*Good-bye-ee!*<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) is the highest-ranking Order of the British Empire award, followed by OBE and then MBE. King George V created the Orders of the British Empire awards (O.B.E.) during World War I to reward services to the war effort by people helping back in the UK (i.e., not on the front line).

<sup>18</sup> First world war song.

### 3. Imaginary Places

On arriving in Sydney, in the Australian autumn of 1919, Jill started to file numerous trade reports. To provide an income and using her equestrian skills, she rode across New South Wales on a horse, as a travelling salesperson. She soon discovered a new side-line, giving lectures about her travels and war experiences. In July she wrote an article in *The Commonwealth Optometrist* entitled *The Eye and Lenses* which was really about lens making in the UK's glass factories. Jill followed this up in October 1919 with a paper entitled *Optical Munitions* for the *Australian Journal of Optometry*, having previously given lectures on optometry and the weaponry used in the Great War. Also in October, she gave what was called by a journalist "a very interesting address" on the subjects of guns, ammunition, shells, and glass. She had discovered that these public lectures could be very lucrative, keeping her afloat until she could get hold of her, as yet unobtainable, income from *The Times* newspaper.

Jill left Sydney that November on the *Makura*, which was bound for Victoria and then Vancouver, Canada, stopping off in Hawaii. Before she set off on her travels, *The Times* had arranged for her passport to be endorsed with work visas for Australia, Japan, Canada and the USA, and she could, of course, visit many countries in the British Empire with a valid passport. She arrived in Vancouver via Hawaii on 13<sup>th</sup> December 1919 and immediately made sure she was mentioned in the Vancouver newspaper, *The Daily Colonist*, which noted her "numerous degrees". It was then announced by the *Vancouver Sun* newspaper on 17<sup>th</sup> December that she had joined their editorial staff to write a series of articles about trade. She set off shortly afterwards for Seattle, Washington State, U.S.A., and then travelled across the northern US states and Canada. She found work in factories, some of which produced carpets, speaking when she could to women's Canadian clubs and Rotary clubs about trade possibilities.<sup>19</sup> She also gave lectures comparing US carpet factories to those in Canada, noting that the Canadian ones needed to up their game. By mid-May 1920, she was a guest at the Ottawa Kiwanis Club at the Chateau Laurier, where she gave a talk about improving Canadian trade with Australia. Her speech was mentioned by an MP, Onésiphore Turgeon, in the Canadian Parliament.

Having now finally reached Montreal, she was to discover a sheaf of money orders waiting for her arrival, her payment for all the dispatches she had made. She was now quite wealthy, having managed to reach Montreal on spending just \$160 (or £60, but the sums she was to quote were inconsistent). The subject of her talks varied – sometimes about "The people's conditions in England and France", or possibly about trade opportunities, factories in Canada and USA, women's organisations, and Australia. She made further lucrative talks on how to circumnavigate the world on very little money! She was to claim that she made £2,000 (£90,000 in today's money) by public speaking but as accuracy and accountancy were not her strong points, we need to take this figure with a pinch of salt.

In one of her talks to St Andrews College, Toronto, a review described her talk thus: *She began and continued to speak with that ease which marks an experienced speaker. Her manner was forceful, displaying a thorough knowledge of her subject. After listening to her for some little time it was easy to understand why she had been chosen by the "London Times" to be their special representative in Canada.*<sup>20</sup>

It was time to return home, and she arrived on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1920 in London on *The Scotian* belonging to the Canadian Pacific Line. She listed her address as "6 Grange Road, Ealing", where her cousin Sarah lived. Jill was now famous back in the UK, her exploits being given equal billing in a newspaper (see

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<sup>19</sup> Houlton Times, Maine, June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1920, p4.

<sup>20</sup> St Andrews College Review Midsummer 1920, p34.

article) to those of the first lady to become a magistrate, in October 1920. Mrs Summers had also achieved other notable firsts as a woman, becoming the first woman mayor. Jill had started to make waves in August of that year, writing articles about the wretched lot of mothers and how “quite a number of businessmen leave their offices early and visit the picture theatres for an hour or so”.<sup>21</sup>

This was Jill’s last opportunity to see her brother, Charles, who died at home in Worting in January 1922. Having taken a break from travel and work, Jill set off once again for

Montreal, Canada, leaving from Liverpool in early October and arriving on 25<sup>th</sup> October on board the *SS Corsican*. Using Montreal as her base whilst travelling, she was interviewed there on 8<sup>th</sup> January 1921, where she mentioned that she was “touring the Empire to study the industrial situation”.<sup>22</sup> Jill seemed to be over-egging things a little as this article illustrates.

*“Miss Cossley-Batt speaks seven modern languages with grace and facility and has Just travelled 75,000 miles in less than a year, observing economic and industrial conditions throughout—for Miss Cossley-Batt Is a keen and far-sighted Imperialist— the entire British Empire. This tremendous pilgrimage was executed as a Special Correspondent to the greatest of all newspapers, The London “Times”—and demonstrates the many-sided character of the young woman, who is a journalist with an easy flowing style. Her expert advice is much sought after by chemical manufacturers, who have, however, never succeeded in capturing her services permanently, much to their chagrin. As a matter of fact, Miss Cossley-Batt’s heroic devotion to a most difficult and dangerous task caused her to receive painful and dangerous injuries, which have so affected her health that laboratory work is no longer possible to her, and she has been forced reluctantly to abandon a career of research work”.*

Later that Spring, Jill left for Yokohama, Japan. As usual, Jill would try to save money and stayed with a Japanese family – she was probably befriended by one of the passengers on board the ship. She left Yokohama at the beginning of June, the voyage to Vancouver taking under 9 days on the fastest ship, the record-breaking *Empress of Canada*. She was listed on the ship’s manifest as “a notable passenger – a world traveller”. She had arrived in the nick of time, for two years later, Yokohama was razed to the ground by an earthquake and then consumed by fire, just as had happened in San Francisco some years earlier. The next record of her travels is in British Columbia in September 1921.<sup>23</sup> But at this point, the trail goes cold. She had at this time, taken on the duties of editor of an export and shipping journal and this must have taken up much of her time.<sup>24</sup> However, in early March 1922, she wrote a letter to the *Victoria Times* advising that the Canadians should follow the British educational system which was superior. She then immediately left for Portland, Oregon. On 7<sup>th</sup> March 1922, at the



<sup>21</sup> Sheffield Weekly Telegraph, Sat 21 August 1920 p4

<sup>22</sup> Article in the Montreal McGill Daily Vol. 10 No. 070: January 8, 1921, p1

<sup>23</sup> Nanaimo Daily News, Canada p1

<sup>24</sup> The Advertiser, Adelaide 14 Feb 1931. Article by Lady Drummund-Hay

chamber of commerce in Portland, Oregon, USA, Jill announced she would remain there for three weeks and hoped to regain her health, damaged by chemical gas.<sup>25</sup> She actually remained there for the rest of the year and became Executive of the Cinema Art Club, Portland.

She was later to claim that she spent the latter part of 1921 “vagabonding”. In those few months, she achieved an incredible amount. If we include all the places she would at some point or the other claim to have visited, it reads like something out of a *Boy's Own Paper*.<sup>26</sup>

**South-West Africa:** “hobnobbing” with cannibals in the Kalahari Desert, traveling miles with natives in a government lorry drawn by a bullock team. She was the first white woman to visit that part of the country.

**Lake Tanganyika,** having an adventure with a six-foot high gorilla which suddenly attacked her party. The gorilla was speared and the boys in her party carried its skin around triumphantly for weeks.

**Australia,** where she studied the aboriginals and their customs, finding their marriage ceremonies especially interesting. She also claimed to have crossed Australia alone on horseback.

**The South Sea Islands,** where she was royally received by the King of Tonga, entertained with a feast and special dances in her honour.

Possibly on a separate trip, she also claimed at various times to have visited the following places: **Afghanistan** (via Khyber Pass); **India** (meeting Gandhi and various Maharajas); **Tibet and Sikkim**, walking to Peking, China and back and meeting a strange tribe. In Peking, she visited the Buddhist Museum where she learnt about this tribe; **Arabia and the Sahara Desert** (meeting Lawrence of Arabia); **New Zealand; South Africa;** The harems of **Turkey; Cuba and South America.**

Some years later, Jill dressed up in the outfit she said she wore travelling through India, claiming that she undertook this disguise in order to access places where only men were allowed. Her “dress” in the photograph (taken in San Francisco) looks in remarkably good condition for a woman who had travelled around India and into the Himalayas.



<sup>25</sup> Article published in the “Morning Oregonian”, March 08, 1922, Page 10, Image 10

<sup>26</sup> Mentioned in many newspapers between 1923 and 1930 (see appendix). A particularly full coverage of places visited is in the Malaya Tribune, 8<sup>th</sup> October 1930.

After Jill had undertaken such incredible adventures, it was somewhat surprising that her first talk in Portland on April 3<sup>rd</sup> was about her experiences in – Australia, followed by one on Japan!

Jill devoured books; much later, a relative found her room with little furniture and piled high with books. She would read extensively about any subject which interested her, becoming an instant expert in her eyes. As for travel to distant lands, she would imagine herself being there in the books she read, sometimes meeting famous people and having exciting adventures. She freely admitted in 1930 to the *Daily Express* that her childhood dreams had somehow become a reality! Her adventures were mostly in her imagination, based on adventure books and magazines she had read in her childhood and adolescence. In some ways it was a remarkable gift – she could genuinely believe she had been to all these places without ever having set foot in them. This will be examined further in the next chapter.

In the early twentieth century, travel to distant lands was impossible and unaffordable for most people. Just as now, we might read books about exploration or see documentaries about wildlife or distant lands. The public's appetite to gain knowledge and be entertained at the same time was fulfilled by attending lectures given by a select band of travellers who were gifted with good presentation skills and a fertile imagination to embellish their talks. Jill was to join that select band which included such names as Lowell Thomas, later known as "the voice of America". He too initially exaggerated his talks about Alaska which he had only briefly visited, with grand tales of exploration and adventure. Such presentations were often accompanied by photographic slides, sometimes hand coloured.<sup>27</sup> Jill no doubt interspersed slides of distant lands with her posing in "native" garb. The whereabouts of the many photographs or slides of her adventures, or if any survived, is unknown. Years later, in the 24 April 1928, issue of *Chicago American*, an afternoon newspaper published in that city, "startling pictures of her in some of her thrilling adventures" were shown. This newspaper was equivalent of the tabloid newspapers of today, possibly not a source of reliable information and Jill may have posed in Indian, Arab and other exotic costumes.<sup>28</sup>

In early June 1922, Jill posted an advertisement resigning as secretary of the Cinema Arts Club, stating poor health (on account of exposure to chemical gas during the war) and a summons to Vancouver. The "summons to Vancouver" was presumably related to her lack of reports for the *Vancouver Sun* newspaper. However, it seems that she delayed her departure until the end of the year. She had found some new projects to work on. One was as editor of the *Portland Export and Shipping Journal*. The other is about to be revealed. In November 1922, shortly before she did finally leave, Jill issued a single page pamphlet entitled *Soul's warning*.<sup>29</sup> Perhaps that warning should have been heeded by anyone who took Jill's stories of travel and adventure too seriously.

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<sup>27</sup> *The Voice of America: Lowell Thomas and the invention of 20<sup>th</sup> century journalism* by Mitchell Stephens, 2017. p72. St Martin's Press.

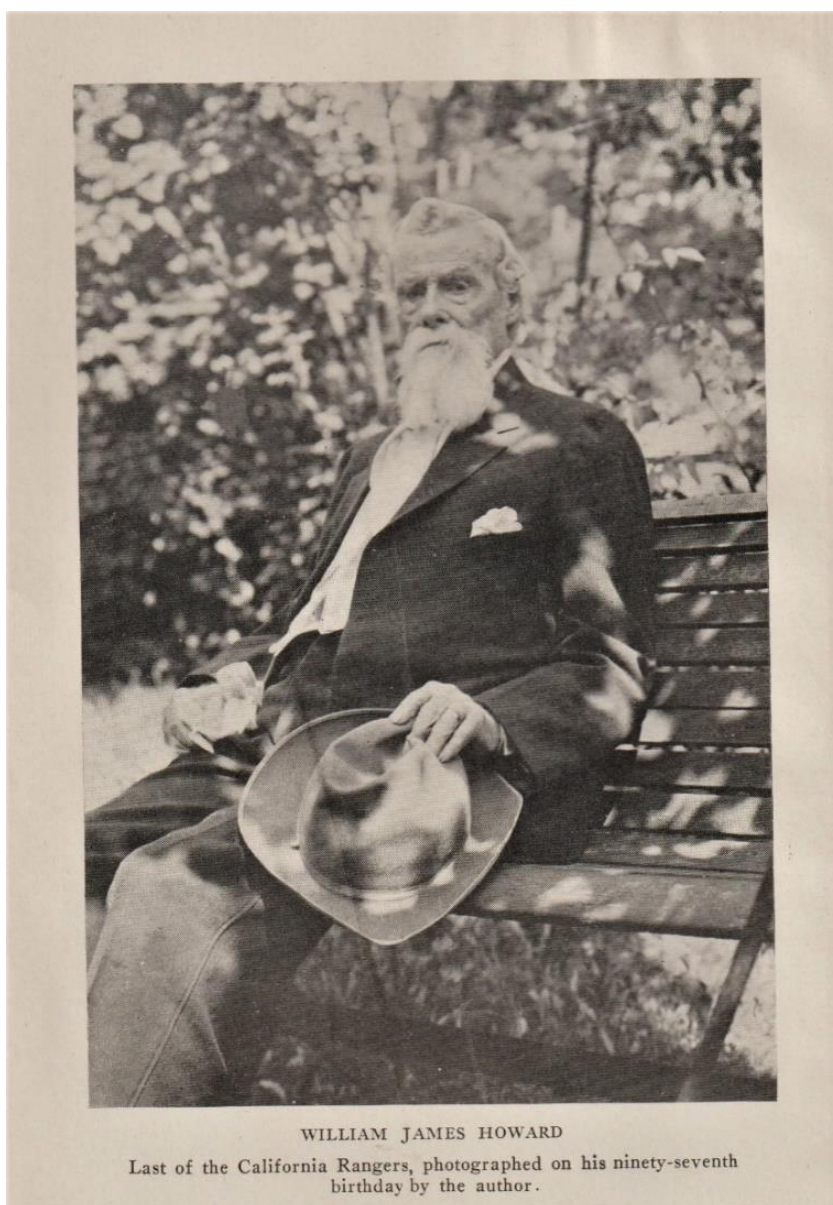
<sup>28</sup> Unfortunately, the only copy of this newspaper is thought to be that on microfilm at the Harold Washington Library Centre in Chicago.

<sup>29</sup> *Catalog of Copyright Entries, 1923 Pamphlets, Dramas Maps*, Library of Congress. Copyright Office.

## 4. Wild West Hero

We return to the time Jill was in Portland at the beginning of June 1922, at which point she was invited to have tea in an old-fashioned house at 466 Market St. near Portland Heights. She had been invited by Mrs Ida Tinsley Desmond, the eldest daughter of a 95-year-old white-haired soldier of fortune by the name of Captain William James Howard, who regaled her with tales of his life, culminating in the Wild West, many of which he had written down. His first draft had been destroyed by fire sixteen years earlier and he had almost finished rewriting it.<sup>30</sup> However, it was far from complete and was not in a form which could be published. Jill was asked if she could help get it ready for publication. There were so many gaps in the story that Jill asked him to narrate the many stories he had, taking notes. The story which interested most people then, and continues to do so today, concerns Captain Howard's time with the California Rangers. As he was the only member still alive, this was the last chance to get the story first-hand without relying on sometimes contradictory accounts by other less well-informed sources.

The time of the Californian gold rush of 1849 was very lawless, as portrayed in the many "Western" films made about that period. There were numerous bandits who were a menace to the pioneers. Some of the so-called bandits (who were frequently of Mexican extraction) felt that they and their women had in turn been mistreated by the pioneers, resulting in many deaths and injuries between the two groups. The governor of California appointed Harry Love to captain a group of rangers to round up some of the most notorious bandits. Captain Howard, a Texan who fought in the Mexico war was one of a group of twenty men selected by Love. One of the bandits who led a ruthless gang was called Joaquin Murrieta (upon which the character of "Zorro" was based). He was what might be called a "Robin Hood" character. He was regarded by many as evil, but he has his



<sup>30</sup> Mariposa Gazette, Volume LXVII, Number 40, 4 March 1922.



supporters and there is even some doubt as to whether he was a single person, or that name was given to a group of men with the name Joaquin. He had an accomplice called "Three-fingered Jack" who was also a particular target, and a bounty was to be paid if the gang could be brought to justice or eliminated. However, proof was required. A man called Joaquin was finally captured alive after a fierce gun battle but accidentally killed in the confusion. The rangers now had to confirm that they had indeed killed this bandit together with Three-fingered Jack. The rangers cut off the head of Joaquin and the hand of the other bandit so as to claim their bounty. The head and hand were preserved in alcohol and taken to Fresno where their identity was confirmed by witnesses who knew both men. Like so many stories about the demise of famous people, there are those who say the head was not that of Joaquin Murrieta. Some people really love a good conspiracy theory! The head ended up in San Francisco, being destroyed along with most other relics of that time in the fire following the 1906 earthquake there.

Jill stayed in Portland until the end of December 1922, no doubt outstaying her welcome at 466 Market St, suddenly announcing that she had a health problem, needing to leave for Vancouver. Perhaps she had fallen out with Mrs Ida Tinsley Desmond, or she may have wished to see a physician in Vancouver who she trusted with her medical condition, either physical or mental or both.

In July 1923, she was back in Portland, getting a signature from Captain Howard to verify that her first draft was substantially true. He was to die in January 1924.

Anyone who has never written a book may not realise the amount of research and editing necessary to get the manuscript from a first draft to the

final version. By 1926, Jill had found the task too demanding and had given up, but a little later was contacted by the California Historical Society who advised her that a Mr Charles Camp from the University of California was searching for her. He bought Jill lunch at the campus, which was a good ploy, for she was freshly enthused to finish the project. She completed her book *The Last of the California Rangers* on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1928, and it was published by Funk and Wagnalls in November of that year. The book reviews were generally favourable: there were minor criticisms about inconsistencies in spelling names and places and the vernacular of some of the dialogue, but even today, it remains one of the best sources of information about the history of the Wild West during that period. In fact, it is better researched and more accurate than some of the other supposed historical narratives about that time. It was so well received that a second printing was arranged by the publisher, just one month after the first edition. The respected Washington Sunday Star review on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1929, said, "It will stand as one of the legitimate "thrillers" of current literature". High praise indeed - Jill had proved her literary credentials. One can visualise many of the Western movies when reading some of the stories in this book. It also makes one realise that some of the stories as told in those movies were based on true events.

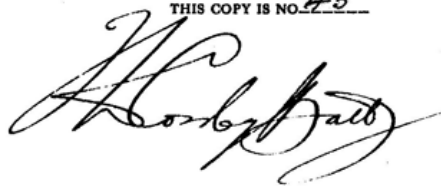
### Preface

*On account of information previously published in various books and certain historical records on file, there is no doubt that many readers will be ready to question some of the statements made about Savage, Murrieta and the Indians. However, I am anxious that people should know the truth about things pertaining to the early days. Under the circumstances I beg to state that it is a true statement of affairs as I found them when there in my young days.*

*W. J. Howard.  
July 17 1923*

There is a burning question which needs to be addressed. Jill's memory was obviously defective and "imaginative". How could anyone have any confidence in what was in her book? The answer may lie in the condition she had, possibly a condition now known as a "defective autobiographical memory". Some sufferers of certain mental and memory disorders have confabulation and research is still ongoing, the cause of the symptoms not being fully understood. This is sometimes related to schizophrenia but other researchers in Canada point to this condition in perfectly healthy high functioning people.<sup>31</sup> Whilst Jill's recollection of anything autobiographical could be fanciful, in other respects her memory was normal. She appears to have been living life in the "third person". Her munitions factory experience was narrated to journalists as if she was an interested observer. Stories in books and magazines about explorers and travellers became *her* experiences. Arguments, disappointments, criticisms and failures disappeared from her memory, making her fearless. Past associations were extracted and combined in a curious way, creating her belief that she was important, titled and famous. There was nothing untoward in her trade reports or the paper she wrote on wartime optics. Any inconsistencies or errors of place or sequence in her book are likely to be the result of elderly Captain Howard's failing memory.

Today, an internet search for Jill's name will yield articles related to this book. Interest in Joaquin Murrieta never seems to wane. After his adventures as a ranger, William Howard was to spend ten summers in the Yosemite Valley with his family, enjoying the magnificent scenery and having a few scary experiences before moving to Portland.<sup>32</sup>

THIS COPY IS NO. 45  


Jill signed 200 copies of the first edition.

## **THE LAST of the CALIFORNIA RANGERS**



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**JILL L. COSSLEY-BATT**  
 Famous Explorer, Lecturer and Writer  
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*The Last of the California Rangers*, Captain William J. Howard, is rich in records of adventure, dangers, and fearless exploits, and will serve to make clearer than ever some of the most interesting features of the development of the West and of the times of western pioneers.

Unusual incidents connected with the lives of General Sam Houston, Senator Broderick, Judge David Terry, General U. S. Grant, General Connor, Colonel Edward Baker, Joaquin Murrieta and others, are brought to light for the first time; they had for political reasons heretofore been suppressed.

<sup>31</sup> "Some perfectly healthy people can't remember their own lives - Big Think", and "Involuntary Autobiographical Memories in Schizophrenia: Characteristics and Conditions of Elicitation - PMC (nih.gov)".

<sup>32</sup> Dan Anderson, a leading authority on what is now called Yosemite National Park, has transcribed Jill's book, so it is available for all to read on the Yosemite website (Yosemite.ca.us).

## 5. California Dreamin'

On October 29<sup>th</sup>, 1923, there was a major article in the financial pages of the *San Francisco Chronicle*. It was headed *The Antipodes and outlet for our fruits*. Jill explained in some detail why Californian fruit had a ready market in Australia and New Zealand. She further stated that she planned to make San Francisco her home but this city was not to remain Jill's home for long. She had been interested in films, or movies as they are often called. In August 1924, it was time to visit the homes of the stars. Jill quickly realised that whilst she may have been a minor celebrity in places such as Portland, in Hollywood she was a nobody. She decided that she needed to enhance her identity once again. She was fleeing from England to escape a state marriage arranged with a European prince. She was, in reality, Lady Lillian Huntington Wellesley Mountbatten, first cousin of the Prince of Wales and daughter of the Duke of Albany. Jill Cossley-Batt was just a pen name she used to avoid unwanted attention! She poached the name "Wellesley" from the surname of the Duke of Wellington who owned the farm where her grandmother lived.

Exhausted after a long war and a terrible flu epidemic, it was now time in both America and Britain to forget about past troubles and party. Young actresses promoted the "flapper" style, viewed at that time by many as outrageous, immoral and dangerous. Flappers pushed boundaries in all directions, just as occurred in the "swinging sixties". Women had become used to working and now wanted the right to vote, drive, smoke in public, drink (illegally during prohibition), enjoy and dance to jazz music and have access to contraception, practicing sexual freedom. Flappers wore what were then considered to be short skirts, which were straight and slim with low necklines. Corsets were out and many flappers looked like boys with their short hairstyles, except that they wore enormous amounts of rouge and makeup. With a post-war shortage of marriageable men, there was no point in waiting around to find a suitable husband. Life was for living, before middle-age caught up and took the fun away.

There were, of course, many conservative towns and cities in which these emancipated attitudes were frowned upon. Just as in the sixties, when those wanting to adopt a hippy lifestyle moved to San Francisco in large numbers, there was a similar trend in the 1920's to move to Los Angeles, and particularly Hollywood. At that time, the place to be seen and possibly be chosen as an actor or actress was Hollywood Boulevard. And to be seen, one needed to be young and beautiful which meant having those crooked teeth fixed and stained teeth polished.

Jill was now to make Los Angeles her base. After ceasing to work for *The Times Trade Supplement*, she had briefly worked as the editor of an export and shipping journal.<sup>33</sup> Needing some additional income to supplement her lectures, she now worked as a dental assistant to James D Park who had a dental practice in Hollywood Boulevard.<sup>34</sup> She no doubt hoped this would enable her to meet some of the Hollywood stars. Although claiming to be royalty or at the very least nobility, her appearance was a bit of a giveaway. So, she in turn cut her hair and always wore a tight oriental headscarf, wearing bohemian style clothes of a type she thought royal European aristocrats would wear, at other times dressing in exotic costumes for a photoshoot.

It was time to meet with the Hollywood elite. Thirty-three-year-old Jill had some limited success in integrating with the starlets of the age. One person who she sought out in particular was a former flame-headed beauty, 60-year-old Elinor Glyn. Like Jill, Elinor gave talks about various subjects including Hollywood and beauty. There was one big difference. Whereas Jill's talks involved a certain

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<sup>33</sup> The Advertiser (Adelaide) Sat 14 Feb 1931, p15.

<sup>34</sup> Santa Ana Register, Saturday September 6, 1924.

amount of fantasy, Elinor's did not. She did not need to fantasize about her life because it was beyond fantasy, it was surreal. Born in the Channel Islands, moving to Canada before returning to Jersey, she became a world traveller, staying at Ritz Hotels throughout the world. She had genuinely seen the royal courts of Russia, Spain, Britain and Egypt, circulating in high society in France and throughout the USA. During the Great War, she stayed at the Ritz in Paris, visiting the trenches, and filing war correspondent reports back at the hotel. She had an unsuccessful marriage, then having public liaisons with aristocrats whilst still married, including a long affair with Lord Curzon, once a Viceroy of India. Elinor was a novelist and scriptwriter who specialised in romantic fiction, regarded at that time as scandalous. She signed a contract with the International Magazine Company in 1919. The contract included a clause for motion picture rights, and she was brought over to the United States to write screenplays and write articles on beauty tips for *Cosmopolitan*. With 28 story or screenwriting credits as well as those for producing and directing films, combined with her racy novels, she was instrumental in the success of Hollywood throughout the 1920's. The most successful screen flapper was named Clara Bow, who became known as the *It Girl* which referred to her 1927 film *It* based on Elinor's novel *It*. This came to mean self-confidence and indifference as to whether you are pleasing or not, often in a mysterious and sexually provocative way.

As a fellow Briton, Jill naturally courted Elinor's attention, staying with her for a time, almost certainly at Elinor's five-room suite at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles. Elinor must have made a big impression on Jill, who would have asked many questions about the movie industry as well as aristocratic life and in particular the Russian aristocracy, knowledge which she was to use to her advantage. Elinor wrote a memoir, *A Romantic Adventure* in which she claimed to be "a member of the band of pioneers in the cause of feminine emancipation who laboured so earnestly to free the souls and bodies of women from the heavy age-old trammels of custom and convention". She spoke on the radio about fashion and glamour and lectured on women's issues.<sup>35</sup> Her attitude and provocative stance on women's issues undoubtedly rubbed off on Jill. Jill managed to get a part as an extra in *The Scarlet Letter* which starred Lillian Gish. Ms Gish was known as "the First Lady of American Cinema", such was her popularity. When sound was introduced to the movies at the end of the 1920's,



*Crowd scene of Puritans in The Scarlet Letter. Jill may be in there somewhere!*

<sup>35</sup> *A Romantic Adventure* by Elinor Glyn 1936, p131

she took to acting on stage, before later returning to having roles in movies once more. At that time, shooting films often took rather less time than is the case today, but scenes in *The Scarlet Letter* with Ms Gish were shot in an incredible three days in 1926 and the film produced in two months, so Jill cannot have been at the studio for more than half a day to film her crowd scene. The reason for the remarkably short shooting time was that Gish's mother had a stroke and Gish needed to complete the filming quickly so she could visit her.

Jill continued to try to mix with the rich and famous, still pretending to be an aristocrat and giving lectures about her travels and acting experience. Most people saw through this façade after a while and some complaints were made to the British consul in San Francisco about her bogus titles and fanciful adventures. When warned not to use the title *Lady Mountbatten*, she was later to change this to the dowager *Countess Huntingdon (or Huttingdon)*.

The new invention of radio was taking hold, and Jill promoted her meetings in radio interviews as well as contacting the local and national press. In May 1927, Jill visited Anaheim, giving a talk in the Roof Garden. She evidently felt the need to enhance her already illustrious curriculum vitae. She had now also hobnobbed with Egyptian seers and Arabian sheiks, crossing the Sahara Desert. As for her time in Hollywood, she had worked her way from being an extra to heading up a "scenario" department in 1926, being involved with 12 one-reel "comedics" and five-reel westerns. She had also proved herself a capable character actress, playing such parts as the duchess in *The Wedding March*, directed by Eric Von Stroheim and which had just been released. When in England she had played the lead in *The Rest Cure* and for a while *The Stork* at Her Majesty's Theatre, London. This however was not enough. She was a recognised authority on world affairs and deemed herself to be a good linguist and great observer. Those last two qualities may have been true, unlike the other claims. In her talks, not only did she discuss her travels (real and imagined) but also travel events, motion pictures and her movie experiences, present day literature, the war debt, international journalism, world economics, world peace, philosophies and religions, and the high cost of living. It gets better, as a journalist wrote: "She is full of vivacity, possesses great magnetism, is a fluent platform speaker and is referred to by many critics as *the greatest woman speaker of the age*".<sup>36</sup> Jill's talks would often form part of an evening of entertainment and others on the bill would include violinists, opera singers, music hall acts and exotic dancers. She realised that she was an entertainer and added humour to her talks, the audience roaring with laughter at her dramatic adventure stories. Jill's activities prompted the Consul General in San Francisco to write to the British Embassy in Washington, warning them about her conduct.

*October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1927.*

*from British Consulate General, San Francisco to R.I. Campbell, Esq.,*

*British Embassy, Washington.*

*A queer Englishwoman by the name of Jill Cossley-Batt, has been haunting the Pacific Coast for the past four years, and it was with a sigh of relief that I heard her tell me over the phone that she intended to leave San Francisco last night and make her way slowly to Washington and New York, where she will sail late this year or early next for the United Kingdom.*

*She came here originally from Portland, and, wherever she has been since that time, enquiries have come to me concerning her sanity and honesty. I never had reason to believe her dishonest but cannot be so sure about her sanity - in fact, the kindest words to apply to her would be "abnormally eccentric".*

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<sup>36</sup> Anaheim Gazette, May 5<sup>th</sup> 1927, p8

*She gives a long pedigree, as will be seen from the enclosed extract from a Santa Barbara paper while she also claims to have been a Government Inspector during the War and to have received an O.B.E. for distinguished service in the "Chemical Warfare Department" of the British Government".*

*At Los Angeles she was taken up by Elinor Glyn and various other celebrities and then dropped with a bump. While in San Diego in 1925 her conduct rendered her unpopular amongst the Officers of H.M.S. "CAPETOWN" when visiting this Coast. In Santa Barbara she abused the hospitality of Mrs. F. Peabody who complained to me that Miss Cossley-Batt, who was giving a lecture at Santa Barbara, spent her time ringing up Mrs. Peabody's friends with the following message: "This is Mrs. Peabody's Secretary speaking. Mrs. Peabody wishes you to attend the lecture at Recreation centre on Wednesday evening."*

*The last few weeks she has been up here and gave a lecture at the leading book seller's gallery, which was described by all who heard it as "a scream"! She also had her picture in the papers with a short life history and the sight of this caused a prominent Presbyterian minister at Pasadena to write and ask me to stop her lecturing, as he had been prevailed upon to take the chair at one of her lectures and had never been so furious in all his life; he describes her as a dud, a false alarm and a scullery maid.*

*I could go on indefinitely, but the foregoing will doubtless be enough to put you on your guard, should she carry out her intention of visiting Washington. Her passport required renewal and she wanted to get this done here but did not have time, and I told her that she could get it done elsewhere provided that everything is in order. The sooner she leaves the Country, the better for us.*

*Miss Cossley-Batt remarked "en passant" that she is Lady Lillian Wellesley Huntingdon-Mountbatten, the daughter of Prince Henry Reginald Rudolph of Battenberg, and Marie de Lille, a famous operatic singer of Brittany (sic), who made her debut in Paris and Milan and died while very young, and who had one child, a son, the late Lord Henry John Battenburg, and that she and her brother are third cousins by marriage of the Prince of Wales and the other children of the present King and Queen of England, and second cousins of Lord Louis and Lady Louise Mountbatten. She also stated that by Act of Parliament her family name was changed from Battenberg to Mountbatten.*

*I am sending a copy of this letter to Armstrong at New York.*

*Yours sincerely,  
(S d.) GERALD CAMPBELL.*

Certain names seem somewhat familiar. *Wellesley* was the family name of the Duke of Wellington. *Lady Huntingdon (1707-1791)* was an English religious leader. Jill's birth name was Lily, which in due course became *Lillian*. Her father was *Reginald Henry Batt*. Her eldest brother was *Henry John Batt*. *Batt* and *Battenburg* have a certain resonance. The *Opera de Lille* was an opera house, opened in 1913 and *la mairie de Lille* translates as "Lille town hall" but perhaps *Lille* refers to *Lilly*. In 1917 most members of the *Battenburg* family of German/Polish ancestry, who had been residing in the British Empire, renounced their Hessian titles, due to rising anti-German sentiment among the British during the First World War. They changed the name to *Mountbatten*, an anglicised version of *Battenberg*.

By 1927, Jill was giving talks on any subject which took her interest. She had become a noted speaker, not only in California but throughout North America, and made giving lectures her main occupation.

A newspaper in Allentown, Pennsylvania, called her a “Road Pounder” such was her coverage of the United States. In 1928, when Jill was 37 years old, she gave lectures criticising what was called “Companionate Marriage”.<sup>37</sup> In 1927, Judge Ben Lindsey wrote a book about companionate marriage, condemning current religious views of marriage. This form of marriage is a legal marriage (not by a church minister) with legalised birth control, and with the right to divorce by mutual consent for childless couples, without payment of any alimony. In particular this allowed younger people to have sexual intimacy at an earlier age and delay childbearing. However, Jill normally appeared to hold liberal views and was described by a friend as “democratic”.

Jill’s views on life were inevitably shaped by those with whom she mixed. If one mentions the word “eugenics” today, one may receive a blank look from the younger generations or a shudder from those old enough to remember the atrocities committed by Germany in the second world war. The word “eugenics” was used by Sir Francis Galton in the 1880’s to describe the concept of biological improvement of genes in the human race. Just as breeding can produce desirable traits in dogs and horses, so could breeding impact on the human race, and in particular the Nordic, Germanic and Anglo-Saxon races could be bred to make them superior, or so the proponents claimed. This could be achieved by having strict immigration laws, and forcible sterilization of the poor, disabled, “immoral” and mentally ill. The American eugenics movement was funded by the Carnegie Institute, the Rockefeller Foundation and people such as cereal magnate, JH Kellogg. Other supporters of the eugenics movement included Alexander Graham Bell, Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Herbert Hoover, and two presidents of Stanford University. In the UK, George Bernard Shaw and Winston Churchill were supporters, and in Germany, a certain Adolph Hitler. The Women’s Christian Temperance Union, the National League of Women Voters and many other state and local feminist organisations lobbied for eugenic reforms, including the leader of the birth control and planned parenthood movements in America, Margaret Sanger. At that time, eugenic sterilization was undertaken on prisoners and patients in mental hospitals, later being targeted at poor people and minorities. As far as can be ascertained, Jill didn’t specifically have eugenics as a subject for any of her talks, but Jill was to promulgate her views, which seemed to mirror those of Margaret Sanger, some years later in a book she was to co-write.<sup>38</sup>

There were two aspects of the Bible which appear to have particularly intrigued Jill, based on her later writing. The first concerned the Old Testament and the longevity of some of the characters featured within it. Apart from well-known Methuselah (who died when 969), there is Noah (950), Adam (930), Abraham (175), Jacob (147), Moses (120), Joshua (120) and about thirty others whose ages are listed which are beyond normal life expectancy. There are various theories for these, not shared by those who believe that everything written in the holy book is “gospel”. One theory is that the higher numbers represent months which would seem to make sense (i.e., Methuselah was 78 years, quite old for that time). Others believe in something called numerology which is the attribution of significant meanings to numbers. Many of the ages mentioned end with 0, 5 or 7. Is this more than a coincidence - what is the explanation for the age of Moses and Abraham? Could it be that this was based on a nine-month year, which would still make them extremely old, but a more believable age if they had particular longevity genes? If there was a tribe with these genes, which tribe was it? If we go back to the Christian Old Testament (and the Hebrew Bible), Abraham came from Ur Kasdim, translated as Ur of the Chaldeans. In *Genesis* 11:28 mention is made of Abraham’s father Terah, who lived in “Ur of the Chaldeans,” home to the specific tribe or people known as the Chaldeans. The book of *Daniel* covers the Chaldeans and that of *Isaiah* chapter 47 makes considerable mention of them, including the phrase “they will be scattered”. They were banished by King Nebuchadnezzar, so where did they flee to?

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<sup>37</sup> Kenosha Evening News (Wisconsin) Sat March 17, 1928, p4.

<sup>38</sup> The Elixir of Life – extracts included in chapter 8.

Chaldea is widely thought to be Upper Mesopotamia, although some authorities think it could be south-east Turkey or even Syria. During The Great War, a man called Bernard Woolley was working for British Naval intelligence, alongside the soon-to-be famous T.E. Lawrence, monitoring the construction of Germany's Berlin-to-Baghdad railway. Posted to Cairo, he met the also soon-to-be famous Gertrude Bell. He then moved to Alexandria, where he was assigned to work on naval espionage. Turkey captured a ship he was on and held him for two years in a relatively comfortable prisoner-of-war camp. Woolley led a joint expedition of the British Museum and the University of Pennsylvania to Ur in 1922. Agatha Christie's novel, *Murder in Mesopotamia*, was inspired by the discovery of the royal tombs there. Agatha Christie later married Woolley's young assistant, Max Mallowan. Ur and the Chaldeans were therefore in the news at that time.

The Chaldeans were a nomadic tribe of mathematicians and astrologers who had their own language. After the fall of Babylon, they were assimilated into the Persians over a period (about 539BC). They used numerology and that same system could be found in India. Jill reasoned that this indicated that some of the Chaldean tribe had escaped the conquering Persians or migrated of their own accord to India and thence found unoccupied territory high in the Himalayas. In the 1920's one of the few unexplored areas of the



Map of area around where the Chaldeans lived. (Wikipedia).

world (other than the Amazon and polar regions) was the remote country of Tibet which was off-limits to foreigners. Little was known about the people who lived there and there was some speculation about the inhabitants. Travellers to the Himalayas had reported that some of the tribal people lived to extreme ages based on tales from the local population, who had no birth records. Putting these mysteries together, Jill came up with the hypothesis that a tribe of vegetarian Chaldeans lived in Sikkim or Tibet, reaching a great age of over 150 years (using the Chaldean calendar of 9 months to the year), with cancer and modern disease virtually unknown. Furthermore, these people were troglodytes – latest discoveries show that some ancient civilisations there did construct cave tombs and hermits still lived in caves.<sup>39</sup> Such stories captured the imagination of the public at that time, when explorers were fêted as heroes and adventure books filled the newsstands.

This hypothesis may sound far-fetched but was not totally preposterous. There have long been theories, now largely (but not completely) debunked, that the people living in the Himalayas do not suffer cancer and live to 150 years or so.<sup>40</sup> Turmeric and cardamom, spices widely used in India, are thought to fight cancer cells. We now know that the primitive medical facilities were not good at detecting cancer (thus few people suffered from it) and in the absence of birth certificates, age was exaggerated. Cancer rates are indeed lower than those in the Western World in those people living in the Himalayas, the most common form of cancer which was then detected in men being stomach

<sup>39</sup> New Death Ritual Found in Himalaya—27 De-fleshed Humans (nationalgeographic.com) NGS news Published March 1, 2011.

<sup>40</sup> Hunza - The Truth, Myths, and Lies About the Health and Diet of the "Long-Lived" People of Hunza, Pakistan, Hunza Bread and Pie Recipes. (biblelife.org)



cancer with bowel cancer almost unknown.<sup>41</sup> Tribes of dwarves are also not unknown in the region.<sup>42</sup> Then, as is the case today, there are many nomadic tribes with their own languages and many of the languages have never been properly studied. In fact, there are still over thirty languages which have never been fully documented and are in danger of extinction.<sup>43</sup> Unknown tribes were not just a possibility, they were a reality.

The second Biblical mystery which fascinated Jill concerned the New Testament. In fact, it is a mystery which has given rise to some interesting and highly improbable theories. We are not given any information in the Gospels of Jesus' life between the age of 12 and when he started his ministry when he was about 30 years old. When he was 12 (according to Luke's gospel only), he went missing for three days and his worried parents went to Jerusalem looking for him. He was found in the temple, engaged in discussions with the elders. When his mother told him off, Jesus replied: "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?". There is nothing in any of the Gospels about his life from that point onwards until the start of his ministry.

There were various far-fetched theories in circulation. One was that Jesus went to Glastonbury in England (also known as Avalon), possibly with Joseph of Arimathea, although other legends state that Joseph was a Christian missionary who went after Jesus' death. Another theory is that Jesus went to Tibet, staying with Buddhists. The English romantic poet, William Blake was certainly convinced that Jesus visited England in some form, either physically or spiritually, writing in his famous poem, *Jerusalem*, in 1804 (published 1808):

*And did those feet in ancient time,  
Walk upon Englands (sic) mountains green:*

The magnificent and stirring music by Hubert Parry, written much later in 1916, has made the "hymn" an unofficial national anthem of England.

The claim that Jesus spent his missing years in India originated with Nicholas Notovitch's *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ* in 1894. Notovitch, a Russian journalist, claimed he had found documents in a Tibetan Buddhist monastery which described Jesus' life. In these scrolls Jesus was known as St Issa. At the age of 12 he left Jerusalem for India where he studied the Vedas. He was welcomed by the outcasts for his wisdom and miracles, but the Brahman priests grew jealous and sent St Issa away. He journeyed to Kashmir and Tibet. In Tibet he mastered the Buddhist Scriptures and then returned to Palestine to preach. Today, there remain those who believe this to be true although any corroborating documentation has been elusive. Most religious scholars believe that Jesus remained in Palestine during this period. Jill must have had her own theory, probably more aligned with Tibet than England and started to write a book about the subject. The book was never published, so Jill's theory remains a mystery.<sup>44</sup>

Jill decided to leave California in the Spring of 1928 and on arriving in Chicago met a female journalist, Rosemary M Lewis, who wrote a regular women's gossip column and who suggested that she employ her husband. Lewis M Lewis became her agent, who would promote her lectures. By now she was a great granddaughter of the Duke of Wellington, descended on her mother's side from one of the ducal houses of medieval Brittany<sup>45</sup>. Her dress sense was a little bizarre; on a visit to Akron, Ohio, she was reported as wearing a red, green, blue and tan mixture coat given to her by Prince Carol of Rumania.

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<sup>41</sup> ICMR – Profile of Cancer and Related Health Indicators in the Northeast Region of India – chapter 8: Cancer and health status profile of Sikkim.

<sup>42</sup> Taron people - Wikipedia

<sup>43</sup> Saving the Himalayan Languages 2007j\_ger.pdf (unibe.ch)

<sup>44</sup> There is no record of such a book ever being published. However, Jill mentioned that she was in the process of writing this book when she met "Anastasia". From "A Romanov Fantasy" by Frances Welch published in 2007. See pages 182-191 for details of Jill's involvement.

<sup>45</sup> Battle Creek Enquirer (Michigan) 30 April, 1928 page 2.

On her head she wore a paisley scarf head-dress belonging to the late Empress Josephine, an ancestor of her mother. Under the coat she wore a tan kasha tailored dress of straight lines and a tight fitting dark blue silk hat. All this cost less than \$5 according to her agent!

At this time, she started to revive her “discovery of the long-sought tribe of Hindu Yogis” and made known her intention to visit India.<sup>46</sup> When visiting Washington D.C., Jill now claimed to have visited the Himalayas in 1926, accompanied by a “Hindoo” prince whom she had known since her student days at Oxford. Travelling without maps and being met along the route by parties of guides who spoke an unknown language, “they came at last to a region of desolate, icy hills, with hundreds of caves in which the strange people dwelt; on the caves were Chaldean inscriptions, giving rise to the theory that these people were a wandering Semitic tribe which had emigrated from Asia Minor at the very dawn of history, finally settling down in these bleak valleys”. She goes on to say that they lacked disease, and old grandmothers could hardly be distinguished from the young matrons. The secret of their semi-perpetual youth is a mysterious brew made from mountain herbs which adds great vitality to the body. This is their only drink, besides water. These people had telepathic abilities and had completely mastered the art of keeping their lives in time with nature. Jill dressed as a man to enable her to penetrate places where women would be barred.<sup>47</sup>

The India Office was alarmed to hear this news. Indo-British relations were deteriorating and there were many expressions of discontent with British rule and the growth of a movement calling for independence. The last thing the British wanted was a loose cannon touring India, possibly proclaiming her superiority and quoting her “friendship” with the Maharajas and senior figures. Jill had previously claimed to have crossed India, meeting Gandhi who British politicians regarded as a dangerous man who stirred up anti-British feeling. She had to be stopped; even better if she could be confined to the UK. The British Embassy sent a letter to the Foreign Office, a copy of which went directly to the Foreign Secretary, Sir Joseph Austen Chamberlain KG, the son of Joseph Chamberlain and older half-brother of future Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain.<sup>48</sup>

*British Embassy, Washington, D.C.  
May 24th, 1928,*

*Sir,*

*I have the honour to inform you that a British subject, Miss Jill Cossley-Batt, recently called at the Embassy in Washington. This lady has been known to the Embassy for a number of years, and I annex a copy of a letter from His Majesty's Consul-General in San Francisco dated October 28th, 1927, regarding her activities on the Pacific Coast. She has on several occasions described herself or allowed herself to be described as Lady Lillian W. Huntington Mountbatten. Miss Cossley-Batt was seriously warned by His Majesty's Consul in Los Angeles in 1925 of the penalties for assuming titles to which she has no right, but the warning does not appear to have had much effect.*

*Miss Cossley-Batt is always successful in obtaining considerable publicity, but apart from her use of spurious titles, she appears to be entirely honest. She informed a member of my staff that she intended to sail for England in July or August, and to return to the United States to give some further lectures in September. She added that in January, she planned to visit India.*

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<sup>46</sup> A Yogi is a practitioner of Yoga, including a sannyasin or practitioner of meditation in Indian religions.

<sup>47</sup> The Evening Star, Washington DC, May 11, 1928 page 7.

<sup>48</sup> From correspondence in India Office archives.

*The activities of this lady in foreign countries cannot do any good, and may result in some harm. Thus, although her lectures on India do not appear to be open to any objection, it is not possible to foretell what she will say or do. Further, she is a source of considerable trouble and annoyance to His Majesty's representatives abroad. I accordingly venture to suggest that it would be preferable, if possible, to prevent her return to the United States after her visit to England this summer, and further that His Majesty's India Office should be warned of her projected visit to the East. I have instructed His Majesty's Consuls-General in Chicago and New York to endeavour to ascertain the date and port of her arrival in England and the name of the ship in which she is to sail, and I shall not fail to inform you in due course.*

*(For the Ambassador, Signed.) Ronald Campbell.  
cc The Rt. Hon. Sir A. Chamberlain, KG., MP., etc.,*

Jill did not go to India that year as she had insufficient funds, but she had not given up on the idea. By July 1928, many newspaper reports were referring to her as “The most fearless woman in the world”, an accolade she no doubt enjoyed.<sup>49</sup> When interviewed in Omaha, she is reported as saying “I’m not afraid of anything”.<sup>50</sup>

Jill’s travels took her right across the USA – mention is made of her in newspapers published in such states as Utah, Texas, Illinois, Missouri, Nebraska, Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Massachusetts and New Jersey. In those times, every small town had its own newspaper and apart from local news, editors needed to fill up the column inches towards the back pages. The larger newspapers such as the Boston Globe would write syndicated articles which the local newspapers would sometimes include. Many readers in provincial USA with the time and tenacity to wade through their local newspaper would read about Jill and her theory about the Chaldeans.

Radio broadcasts were starting to take off by now. In fact, 40% of the population had access to radio broadcasts by the end of the 1920’s, the primary listeners being women. However, the broadcasting technology of the time was more suited to male voices than female ones, limiting the opportunities for women to broadcast. In 1921, a station given the code “WBZ” was the first station licensed as a commercial radio station, located in East Springfield, Massachusetts. By 1925, sister station WBZA was allowed to broadcast in Boston and a year later became one of the first affiliates of the first network, NBC. Some of the broadcasts were transmitted to a New York radio station, increasing the audience. Regular scheduled daytime broadcasting was to start in 1927, mainly with news and concerts. A few women were given 10- or 15- minute slots to talk about subjects such as shopping, cooking, housework and beauty treatment, usually in the morning.

Jill was now so famous as an interesting speaker that she was given her own prestigious slots on the radio. As an example, in 1929 she was given the 4pm to 4:30pm slot on Boston/Springfield radio, being billed as a writer. Whether

**WBZA—Boston; WBZ—Springfield—**  
**(302.8 m.) 990 k.**

9:45 A M—Musical.  
10 A M—Time.  
10:01 A M—Shopping talk.  
10:11 A M—Musical.  
10:20 A M—Beauty tips.  
10:30 A M—Musical.  
10:43 A M—Financial news.  
10:45 A M—Mary Hale Martin's Household.  
11 A M—Forecast School of Cookery.  
11:30 A M—Organ, Manuel de Haan: Valse Lente, from Copefitá (Delibes); Among My Souvenirs; Love Me; Serenata (Moszkowski); Now, Dear, That I Have You (De Haan-Race); Chanson Algerian, from Beau Geste (Coquette) (Berlin); The Flippety Flop; Con Amore (Beaumont).  
12 M—Chimes; weather.  
12:03 P M—News bulletins.  
12:08 P M—Luncheon Threesome.  
12:38 P M—Financial news.  
12:40 P M—Agriculture market reports; the Farm Bureau Service.  
1 P M—Farm and home hour.  
3 P M—Musical.  
3:05 P M—Garden Gossip by Herbert Wallace Headle.  
3:20 P M—News bulletins.  
3:28 P M—Financial news.  
3:30 P M—Forum Cooking School.  
4 P M—Jill Crossley-Batt, writer.  
4:30 P M—Music Lovers, Amphion Trio.  
5 P M—Stock markets.  
5:25 P M—Government bulletins.  
5:45 P M—Safety Crusaders.  
5:59 P M—Temperature; time; weather.  
6:02 P M—Agriculture market reports.  
6:15 P M—Dinner music.  
6:30 P M—Eskimo time.  
6:59 P M—Chimes.  
7 P M—Amos 'n' Andy.  
7:15 P M—Criminal Law, Dean Gleason L. Archer.  
7:30 P M—Westinghouse Solitaire, the

4pm-4:30pm slot. *The Boston Globe*, Boston, 4<sup>th</sup> Dec 1929 p40

<sup>49</sup> Reported in the New Castle News, Penn.24 Jul 1928, Tue, Page 6. and in the Asbury Park Press, N.J. 26 July 1928, Thu, Page 16. Syndicated report, repeated in many other newspapers.

<sup>50</sup> The Weekly Register – Omaha Central High School, Friday December 16, 1927, p2.

she was interviewed or given free rein is not known. This was far from being a one-off. When in New York in 1928, she had an argument with a taxi driver and inadvertently left her purse behind. It was returned with the \$500 inside she had received for making talks on the radio.<sup>51</sup> She must have been a popular speaker as that sum is the equivalent of \$8,000 today. Carrying that amount of money around in her purse was a rather risky affair.

Jill had long been interested in cosmetics as demonstrated by a product review in a 1922 advertisement. Jill now started experimenting with exotic herbs and spices, seeking the perfect beauty treatment. The female film stars she had encountered knew that they had a limited life in the spotlight, and many were now past their prime as far as beauty was concerned. They were desperate to preserve their looks for as long as possible and Jill had picked up on this. The well-known cosmetic brands thrived, or came into existence, at this time. Max Factor, Helena Rubinstein, Elizabeth Arden and Revlon were some of the companies which produced lipstick, eye shadow, eye liner, mascara, rouge, hair dye and nail varnish in the 1920's.

Many, if not most celebrities, have a condition known as NPD (narcissistic personality disorder), which makes them crave fame and attention, a condition which may have afflicted Jill.<sup>52</sup> Such people, tend to have fantasies of extraordinary success, heightened feelings of entitlement and view themselves as immensely superior to others.<sup>53</sup> Every attempt is made to maintain one's youthful looks for as long as possible. In 1930 and approaching the age of 40, Jill attended a beauty convention in New York City under the name of the dowager Countess of Huttindgon (sic).<sup>54</sup> A little later she ventured into a neighbouring New England state, as will become apparent.

Jill's passport had been issued in the spring of 1919 and ten years on had now expired. The British authorities, aware that she would shortly need to renew it, devised a cunning plan. In 1929, all the consulates in the USA were instructed that should Jill turn up requesting that her passport be renewed, she should only be issued one with six months validity and which only covered entry to the United Kingdom. If she applied for a further passport in the UK, this would only be issued after further deliberations, in effect, barring her from leaving the UK once she returned. The British Embassy now waited for her arrival in Washington or at any British consulate in the States.<sup>55</sup> Jill did try to renew her passport in San Francisco but ran out of time as she had an engagement elsewhere and could not wait. Jill was never to know that by missing that appointment and a further one in Washington, she would open up a new chapter in her life.

Towards the end of 1929, Jill's passport was no longer valid, and she was in danger of being deported if any authorities checked her documentation. Something else also happened at this time. There is a law of nature that states, "what goes up must come down". The massive rise of the stock market throughout the 1920's was unsustainable. When the crash came in October 1929, the resultant great depression was to impact on not only the USA but many countries of the world, including Canada and the UK. By the end of 1931, nearly 2,300 banks had gone under, businesses were failing at the rate of 133 every day and the Great Depression had started, with massive unemployment and widespread poverty.

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<sup>51</sup> Wisconsin State Journal, Madison, Wisconsin 28 Jul 1928 p3

<sup>52</sup> Social Psychological and Personality Science. December 19 2014. Actor Ben Affleck has described narcissism as the one quality that unites everyone in the film industry.

<sup>53</sup> Admiration and rivalry: Study examines narcissistic tendencies among actors by Eric W Dolan, December 28, 2014, in Mental health magazine.

<sup>54</sup> The Pittsburgh Press, Mar 12<sup>th</sup>, 1930, page 27. Possibly incorrectly transcribed as should be Huntingdon.

<sup>55</sup> From correspondence in India Office archives. Letter from Foreign Office dated 24<sup>th</sup> October 1930, confirming this action was authorised in November 1929.

The public were now less willing to spend their money on frivolous activities, such as attending lectures given by an eccentric lady. The exuberant period of the 1920's quickly vanished as the sobering realities of a depression took hold. Finding funds or sponsors to finance an expedition to the Himalayas with somewhat nebulous and dubious objectives seemed out of reach. But Jill had overcome adversity many times in her past. This was just another obstacle, to be overcome by hook or by crook. And if crookery was required, so be it.



*Crowd gathering on Wall Street after the 1929 crash.  
By US-gov - From an SSA poster: <http://www.ssa.gov/history/wallst.html>, Public Domain.*

## 6. Anastasia

At about this time, a new “manager” appeared on the scene, a Mr Irvin (or Irvine or Irving) Baird. Little is known about Baird who was born in 1900 in Edinburgh, Scotland.<sup>56</sup> He enlisted in the Black Watch as a drummer boy in World War I and served with the regiment on the continent. He arrived in America in about 1922, using the name Francis Kennedy Irvin Baird, and married Emma Muller in West Hoboken, New Jersey, USA, on August 28, 1924. In 1925, a daughter, Flora Emily Baird, was born in San Diego, California. Batt and Baird may have met in California but more probably in New York. She was a dentist’s assistant for a time whilst in Los Angeles and Baird who had not completed his medical degree may have also undertaken work in California as a dental assistant. Presumably, to enable him to live in the USA, Baird seems to have obtained Canadian nationality, with his Canadian residence given as Montreal. He studied medicine but dropped out to go exploring Inca ruins and the jungle in South America, where he had just returned from an expedition.

Jill sensed an opportunity to raise some funds for her trip to India, one that would make use of her “royal” connections. The Imperial Russian family had been murdered just eleven years previously and the public still found this horrific event hard to comprehend.<sup>57</sup> After the Russian revolution in 1917, the Russian Royal family were seen as a threat, providing a focal point to rally any opposition to the Bolsheviks. The Tsar, Tsarina, and their five children were taken to a “House of Special Purpose” in Ekaterinburg, together with some of their retainers. On the night of 17<sup>th</sup> July 1918, they were taken down to the basement and shot. Ten gunmen, fuelled with alcohol to give them courage, entered, each one given a separate target to shoot. The room erupted in pandemonium, the gunmen firing randomly at moving shadows and legs. Initially, only four people were dead, and the leader of the firing squad was reduced to shooting those who appeared to have been missed.

But a few remained alive, at which point they were repeatedly bayoneted. One of the last to die was pretty 17-year-old Anastasia. One of the executioners, Ermakov, tried to bayonet her, but the bayonet failed to pierce her bodice, and he claimed that he then shot her in the head, although there were no witnesses. The bodies were loaded onto a cart, and it then became apparent that some were still alive – notably Anastasia and her sister. Ermakov used his rifle butt to finish off those who were still breathing but mortally wounded.

The whole operation was botched from start to finish. The burial party had intended to put the corpses into a mine shaft but initially the horses pulling the cart fell into the shaft. They stripped the bodies of jewellery, then dumping them in the shaft which was too shallow. The bodies were retrieved, two were burnt and the remainder buried nearby in an unmarked location in a wood. So ended the grisly fate of the Russian Royal Family. Ever since then, and until very recently, there have been conflicting accounts of what really happened and where the bodies are buried. Stories which centred upon the possible survival of the attractive youngest daughter, Anastasia, proved to be particularly appealing. Two of the execution party were to claim that Anastasia might have survived. A close friend of Anastasia was named Gleb Botkin, whose father was the physician to the Imperial family. The doctor had been murdered with the Imperial family, but his son escaped from Russia and held on to the belief that Anastasia may have survived. As might be expected, a series of Anastasia imposters appeared, all their claims being quickly debunked. The Western world held their breath – would the real Anastasia turn up, reviving the Russian Imperial Family? In fact, imposters for all the Tsar’s children continued to appear for the next 50 years!

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<sup>56</sup> His grandson Scott Wallace says he was born in Uddingston (near Glasgow). *Journey to Shangri-La: The Magic of China's Secret Kingdom* by Scott Wallace published January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014, in National Geographic Traveller. Baird himself always listed Edinburgh on any documentation.

<sup>57</sup> Much of the following description of the death of the Tsars and discovery of Ana comes from “A Romanov Fantasy” by Frances Welch published in 2007. The book covers the “Life at the Court of Anna Anderson”.

On 18<sup>th</sup> February 1920, a police sergeant in Berlin, Germany, saw a female figure fall into the Landwehr canal. He rescued her but found her coat and dress pockets were completely empty. There were no labels on her clothing, and she had no handbag. For six weeks, she refused to speak and was sent to an asylum. When shown a copy of a newspaper by another inmate which had a headline about the murder of the Tsar, the mysterious lady with no name confessed that she knew the Imperial Family. After further questioning, it became apparent that this strange woman knew far more about that family than could be expected and then she finally cracked – she really was Anastasia. Gleb came to visit her and confirmed that this was indeed the case. The lady with no name was given the name Anna Anderson sometime later when she visited the US. Many people were convinced of her authenticity although she was frequently rather vague about certain events in her past life (this was attributed to her trauma when seeing her family murdered). Most monarchists and even some members of related European Royal Families were to support Anna in her claim. A mentally ill Polish peasant, who is now thought to have been called Franziska Schanzkowska, had deceived a great many people (including herself it seems), who desperately wanted to believe that Anastasia had survived.

Anna had many supporters who were to finance her travels and put her up. One such supporter was a wealthy daughter of a Standard Oil magnate, a Miss Jennings, who lived on a large estate in Connecticut, USA. In 1929, Anna was invited to the USA, passage paid from Germany by a cousin, a Russian princess, to visit Miss Jennings' apartment and then to her estate in Connecticut called "Sunnie Holme". Anna was expected to attend an unending series of parties and impart "a highly spiced flavour to the fashionable chatter". In return, Anna was showered with gifts and stylish clothes. She had expensive tastes which extended to her lingerie. Anna's public profile was further raised by a silent film of her story called *Clothes make the woman*. She had become a worldwide sensation. Anna agreed to dictate her memoirs to her lawyer, a man named Fallows. Miss Jennings' brother, Oliver, assured Anna that she would make millions of dollars. However, Fallows had some difficulty making any sense of her vague ramblings. After two months of daily interviews, her disjointed ramblings were denounced as useless. Anna appointed another lawyer, Wilton Lloyd-Smith who did not fare much better and was regularly fired and reinstated. The relationship between Anna and Fallows continued to be volatile and was becoming strained by the spring of 1930, when two characters turned up at Miss Jennings' estate.

The new arrivals on the scene were Lady Huntingdon (aka Jill Cossley-Batt) who owned several estates in England and her companion and manager, a Mr Irvine Baird, who was a Duke's son. Jill stated that she was working on a book called *The Adolescent Life of Christ* and insisted that she had known the Grand Duchess Anastasia before the Revolution. Jill told the story that she was the Dowager Countess of Huntington, her husband having been killed five weeks after their marriage. Jill was on assignment for *The Times* of London and planned to write a sympathetic piece about the Anastasia dispute. She said she had known Anastasia in Russia and was an intimate friend of the Queen of England and the Prince of Wales. Initially, Anna who was bemused by these unexpected intruders, believed Jill and they met two or three times a day over a period of two months, forging plans for Anna's "rehabilitation" in England. Jill and Irvine rifled through Miss Jennings' correspondence and raided the drinks cabinet during their visits. Jill managed to convince Anna that Miss Jennings intended to commit her for life in an asylum and should be viewed as the enemy.

In May 1930, at Jill's instigation, Anna dictated a letter to Fallows, dispensing with his services. Irvine and Jill collaborated with Anna, who gave them all her photographs and material together with a contract for the publication of her life story. She reneged on the deal Anna said Fallows had forced her to sign, demanding that he return the documents she had given him so she could pass these on to Jill. Then Baird had a plan: Anastasia should marry him, thereby solving all of her legal problems. And if the notion of marriage didn't appeal to her, maybe they could arrange something else. Did she get the idea? Baird obviously never mentioned that he already had a wife and young daughter.

Mr Lloyd-Smith, who Anna had briefly employed before firing him (on more than one occasion), checked up on Jill's credentials, contacted *The Times* newspaper and reported back to Anna who was becoming increasingly paranoid. *The Times* advised that Jill had briefly been employed as a journalist for their trade supplement, did not work for the newspaper and had no knowledge of her titles which they believed to be bogus. They also mentioned in a cable "If action possible, will support and share expenses as have had several previous complaints". Jill and Irvine, realising that their cover was blown, quickly disappeared after calling in to see Miss Jennings's brothers to demand payment of one thousand dollars for services rendered to Mrs. Anderson. They were shown the door. "You realize I spent hours talking to that awful woman," said Baird during a meeting with Lloyd-Smith. "That is worth something", to which Lloyd-Smith replied that it probably wasn't worth arrest for extortion.<sup>58</sup>

Anna became so incensed at being deceived by Jill that she killed one of her pet birds (reported variously as a cockatoo or parrot) in a fit of rage and became uncontrollable. She was declared insane and consigned to an expensive sanatorium, paid for by the unfortunate Miss Jennings.<sup>59</sup> The prediction Jill had given Anna about being confined by Miss Jennings had become true! A little later, Anna was sent back to Germany where she calmed down and was declared to be sane after all!

Anna maintained that she was Anastasia until her death, in 1984. She refused to give up her legal battle for recognition and claim to the overseas Imperial Family bank accounts, which turned out to be the "longest-running German court case of the 20th century". Only the recent advent of DNA science has settled the argument for good. Jill would not have known that Anna was an imposter, although she may have suspected as much. It takes one to know one!



*Anastasia (left) and Anna Anderson (right)*

India continued to fascinate Jill and by September 1930, she declared once again to the public that she was going to return there, without mentioning any companion. Jill claimed to have visited the area in 1921 (on another occasion she stated that the year was 1926) and wanted to mount a proper

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<sup>58</sup> From "Anastasia: The Riddle of Anna Anderson" by Peter Furth published in 1983.p465.

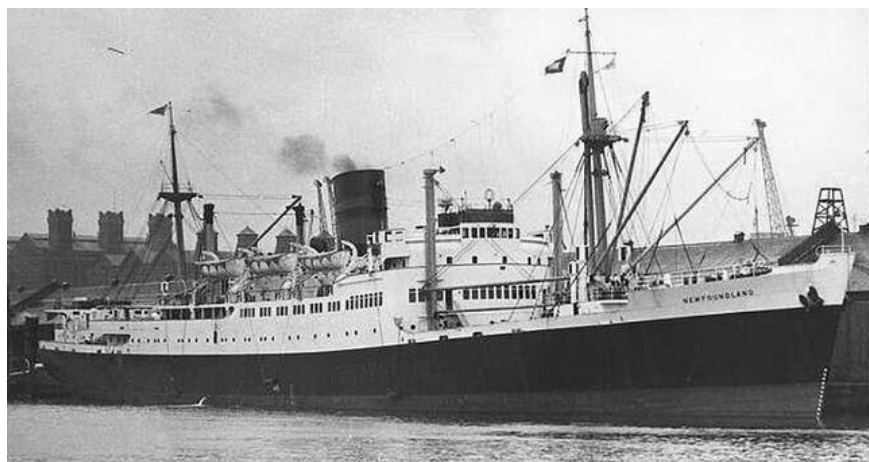
<sup>59</sup> From "A Romanov Fantasy" by Frances Welch published in 2007. The book covers the "Life at the Court of Anna Anderson". See pages 182-191 for details of Jill's involvement.



expedition. By early 1931, Irvine Baird was on board. Jill claimed to speak 13 languages and had now added the language of the mysterious tribe she was seeking to her list. She also mentioned that these people were of average height, having previously stated that they were dwarves. She would follow an old trail traversed by a Chinese monk on an elephant and suggested using an aircraft as part of her equipment. The primary aim of the expedition would be to secure the secret knowledge of longevity that this tribe possessed.<sup>60</sup>

Jill and Irvine visited Ottawa, Canada, in July, obtaining new full Canadian passports and these were issued on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> June 1930, respectively, valid for all countries. The Canadians and the British High Commission in Ottawa were evidently unaware of the concerns noted by the British Embassy in Washington D.C. and the India Office. Jill had unwittingly thwarted the plan of the British Embassy in Washington and the Foreign Office to confine her to the UK.

Irvine told his wife that he was going to Asia and would return rich and famous.<sup>61</sup> Jill and Irvine arrived in Liverpool, England aboard SS *Newfoundland* of the Furness Withy Line from Boston, calling at Halifax, and Saint John's. They travelled 3<sup>rd</sup> class; money was tight.<sup>62</sup> On arrival on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1930 in Liverpool, the pair headed for the office of the Quebec agent-general in London – possibly to seek sponsorship for their proposed trip, then proceeding to see Batt family members in Hampshire.



*The SS Newfoundland*

However, Jill and Irvine still needed funds for their expedition. Even without an aircraft, mounting an expedition required a considerable sum for transport to and from India, food, clothing, film, firearms, payment to bearers and the hire of ponies, etc. Jill and Irvine were undaunted. Why on earth would anyone not wish to sponsor their expedition? All they needed was someone of great repute and standing, both in Canada and the UK, to be on board; a man who was a wealthy philanthropist, someone who would endorse their British-American expedition. Then others would surely follow. They just needed to find that individual and Lady Luck was smiling down on them.

With unbelievable good fortune, their benefactor set off from Canada to England, shortly after Jill and Irvine, with a crisis on his hands. He may have had money, but Canada did not, and he needed to find a means of saving the Canadian economy. A great depression had gripped Canada following the stock market crash, combined with a severe drought which impacted the prairies. He hoped that Britain would come to the rescue with a new trade deal.

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<sup>60</sup> The Advertiser (Adelaide) Sat 14<sup>th</sup> Feb 1931 p15

<sup>61</sup> Journey to Shangri-La: The Magic of China's Secret Kingdom by Scott Wallace published January 7<sup>th</sup> 2014 in National Geographic Traveller. Article states that Baird left from a Hudson River pier (New York) which is incorrect - ship's papers gave Boston as the embarkation point.

<sup>62</sup> UK Incoming Passenger Lists, card #147312

## 7. Paradise

The 1930's was a golden age for Himalayan exploration. There were to be 23 expeditions between 1931 and 1939, the vast majority of them being attempts to conquer unclimbed peaks. Power rivalry was playing out and teams from Britain, the United States, Italy and Germany raced to plant their national flags on the "roof of the world". Many of the expeditions met with tragedy and failure but that did not seem to deter others who followed. Jill and Irvine tapped into the quest to explore the Himalayas and created the grandly titled American-British expedition.

The pair were not attempting to climb an unclimbed peak but to discover a mysterious lost tribe. To make the adventure sound even more exciting, Jill also mentioned that they would be looking for the "elixir of life", also known as the philosopher's stone. This was thought to be some magic extract or concoction of herbs which prolonged life. Jill was well aware of the tensions in India at that time and had the fanciful notion that studying this mysterious tribe "will eventually smooth the unsettled conditions that prevail there at present".<sup>63</sup>

The recently elected Canadian Prime Minister, R. B. Bennett (pictured on a second visit to U.K. after the expedition returned), was now in London and he promised to supply snowshoes, guns and sleeping bags.<sup>64</sup> Sure enough, with a distinguished sponsor, others quickly followed.<sup>65</sup> The Dominion of Newfoundland was at that time still a separate country – it gave up its self-governing status in 1934 when its financial situation made staying fully independent untenable. The Prime Minister of Newfoundland (Sir Richard Squires) added his name to the list of sponsors as did the manager of the Bank of Montreal in London (Sir Frederick Williams-Taylor), the well-connected Canadian



Olympic committee member and director of the Canadian Pacific Railways (Sir George McLaren Brown, KBE), and the Vice President of Canadian National Railways (CJ Smith). Finally, the very distinguished chemist and former head of Optical Munitions and Glassware (OMGD) of the Ministry of Munitions, where Jill had worked during the first world war (Sir Herbert Jackson KBE, FRS) added his name. Inevitably, these names opened the door for contributions of dry food supplies, clothing, film, scientific equipment, transport, tents, etc. from thirty-eight well-known UK companies.<sup>66</sup> New Zealand contributed honey whilst Lord Inchcape of the P&O shipping line provided free first-class transportation to and from Bombay. Jill's enthusiasm, determination and charisma meant that the trip was now definitely on. She even had a letter from the London based Secretary of State for India, William Wedgwood Benn, to ease her entry to India and get permits for Sikkim.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Malaya Tribune 8<sup>th</sup> October 1930.

<sup>64</sup> This photo appeared in La Presse, Montreal, Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December 1931. The caption mistakenly says she is about to leave for the Himalayas, instead that she has recently returned.

<sup>65</sup> Article published in the "Townsville Daily Bulletin", Sat 7 Mar 1931, Page 4.

<sup>66</sup> For full list see flyer on page 63.

<sup>67</sup> The father of Tony Benn and the paternal grandfather of Hilary Benn, more recent UK politicians. He was Secretary of State for India between 1929 and 1931 for the Labour party in MacDonald's second government.



*The Miami News, Miami, Florida. 18 Jan 1931, Sunday. Page 37*

Meanwhile, the British Embassy in Washington and the India Office were somewhat ignorant of this. As Jill and Irvine boarded the *SS Ranpura* on 27<sup>th</sup> February 1931, the authorities sent a message to the shipping company, P&O, asking if the two explorers had valid documents, still believing that they had not been renewed. The response was that the ship had just sailed, but it was believed that their documents were in order, but as they were distinguished passengers, their documents would not be closely scrutinised and in fact a welcoming party had been provided for them!<sup>68</sup>

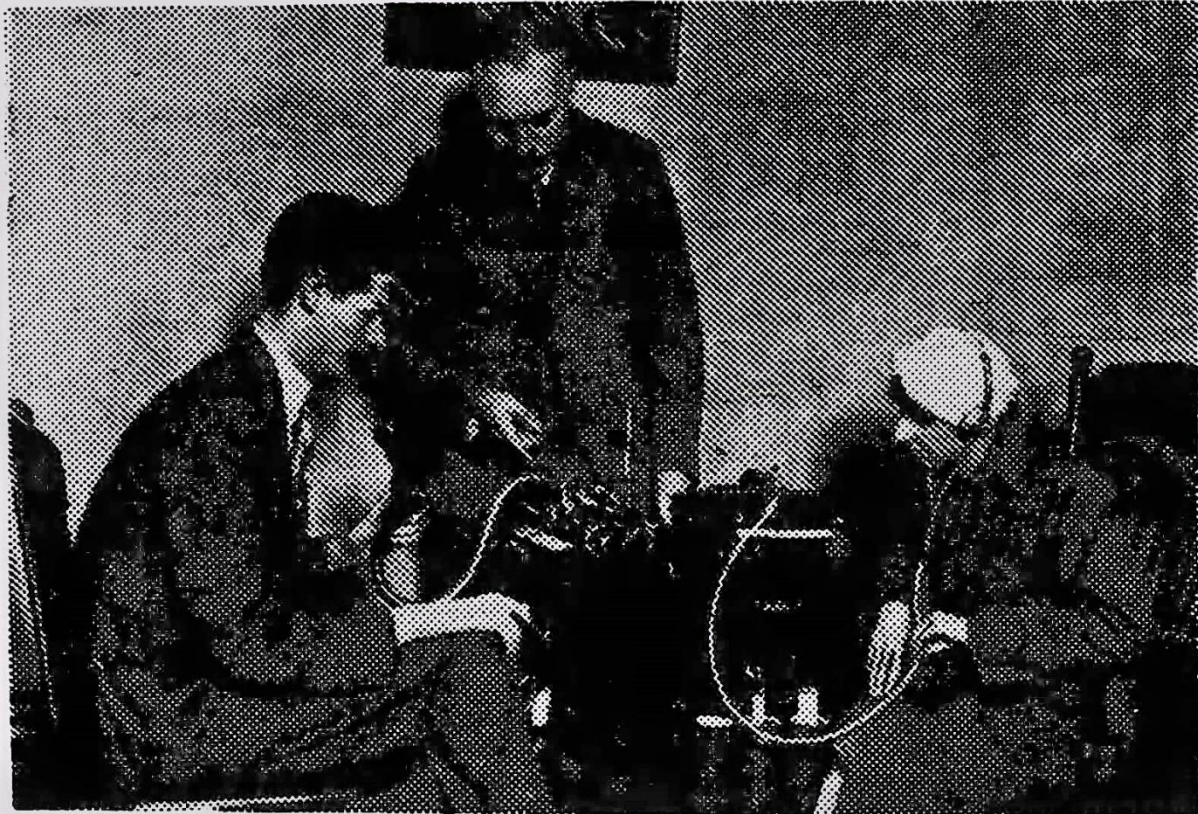
The ship sailed via Marseille, France, where the explorers gave an interview to the local newspaper.<sup>69</sup> The emphasis for the purpose of the expedition seems to have varied somewhat in that they now

<sup>68</sup> Visit to India of Miss Jill Cossley- Batt and Dr Irvin Baird, on An Expedition to the Himalayas | INDIAN CULTURE [indianculture.gov.in/archives/visit-india-miss-jill-cossley-batt-and-dr-irvin-baird-expedition-himalayas](http://indianculture.gov.in/archives/visit-india-miss-jill-cossley-batt-and-dr-irvin-baird-expedition-himalayas)

<sup>69</sup> Le Petit Marseillais, 7 Mars 1931, p.3/10

claimed they were going to try to discover how every-one can live to be a centenarian.<sup>70</sup> On arrival in Bombay (now Mumbai), they had no difficulty in passing through immigration, but the problem was with customs. Jill had assumed that because she had requested that the food and equipment for the expedition be exempted from customs duties, this request would be granted. It was not, and as usual, Jill and Irvine had no money. They offered to pay with a Canadian cheque, but this was wisely declined by their furious shipping agent who had to fork out on the promise of funds becoming available later.

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**Miss Jill Crossley-Batt (right) and Dr. Irvin Baird testing the dictating machine with which they hope to record the voices of the lost tribesmen.**

*Sunday Sun, Newcastle Upon Tyne, England Feb 15<sup>th</sup>, 1931, p14*

The beginning of 1931 was a momentous and volatile time in India. On 25<sup>th</sup> January, Mohandas Gandhi was released from prison where he had been held as a political prisoner. Winston Churchill made his views on Gandhi very clear during a speech that year: "It is alarming and also nauseating to see Mr Gandhi, a seditious Middle Temple lawyer, now posing as a fakir of a type well known in the East, striding half-naked up the steps of the Vice-regal palace...to parley on equal terms with the representative of the King-Emperor". On 13<sup>th</sup> February, New Delhi became the new capital of India, replacing Calcutta (now Kolkata), which had been suffering growing religious and political tensions with bombings and political assassinations. The British believed ruling India from New Delhi would be easier and more convenient.

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<sup>70</sup> New York Times, February 28, 1931, Page 12.

<sup>71</sup> Visit to India of Miss Jill Cossley- Batt and Dr Irvin Baird, on An Expedition to the Himalayas | INDIAN CULTURE [indianculture.gov.in/archives/visit-india-miss-jill-cossley-batt-and-dr-irvin-baird-expedition-himalayas](http://indianculture.gov.in/archives/visit-india-miss-jill-cossley-batt-and-dr-irvin-baird-expedition-himalayas)

Chandrasekhar Azad was an Indian who organized and led a band of militant youth during India's independence movement. Azad participated in several violent crimes, notably the Kakori train robbery (1925) and the revenge killing of a British police officer (1928). On February 27, 1931, Azad arranged to meet a revolutionary at Allahabad's Alfred Park (now Azad Park). He was betrayed to the police, who surrounded him as soon as he entered the park. A gun battle ensued, in which two police officers were wounded, and Azad was fatally shot. A few days later, Gandhi and the British viceroy entered into negotiations agreeing to an uneasy pact.

Two revolutionaries (the British would call them terrorists), both members of a small independence group, the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association, shot dead a British policeman and an Indian police head constable. Having been caught, they were convicted and hanged in March 1931, along with another associate. One of them, Bhagat Singh, became a popular folk hero after his death.

Dinesh Gupta another "freedom fighter" joined the Bengal Volunteers which then transformed itself to a more active revolutionary association and planned to assassinate certain Indian Imperial Police officers. Dinesh Gupta trained local revolutionaries in the use of firearms and revolutionaries trained by him were responsible for the assassination of three District Magistrates in succession, Douglas, Burge, and Peddy. On 8 December 1930, Dinesh, along with Benoy Basu and Badal Gupta, dressed in European costume, entered the Writers' Building in Calcutta and shot dead Lt Simpson who was Inspector General of Prisons. Dinesh survived the subsequent shoot out and was hanged on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1931. The trial judge who sentenced Dinesh was then killed by another revolutionary shortly afterwards.

With tensions running high in India, the authorities there had by now been advised of the misgivings expressed by the British officials about Jill in California. It was felt necessary to closely monitor Jill and Irvine's movements as this letter in the National Archives of India shows:

*CONFIDENTIAL.  
NO. 1688/P/2007.  
Head Police Office,  
Bombay, 30th March 1931.*

*My dear Khan Bahadur Saheb, (Assistant Director, Intelligence Bureau,  
New Delhi).*

*Please refer to the correspondence ending with my Confidential letter No.1597/P/2007, dated the 23rd March 1931.*

*Miss Cossley-Batt and Mr. Irvine Baird left Bombay for Delhi by the B.B. and C.I. Punjab Express on the 25th instant. They hold 2nd class tickets for Calcutta via Delhi. It seems to be their intention to stay in Delhi for about four days and to seek an interview with H.E. the Viceroy.*

*The Army and Navy Co-operative Society, Ltd., which acted as their agents in Bombay, had considerable trouble with them. The firm paid the Customs duty on their kit and equipment, as well as for their fare to Calcutta, but was unable to recover the amounts spent. Miss Cossley-Batt tried to persuade them to cash a cheque on the Bank of Montreal, but they refused to do so. Their debt to the Army and Navy Co-operative Society, Ltd., amounts to over R300/-, and the firm has instructed their Calcutta agents to hold Miss Cossley-Batt and her companion's baggage as a security for the debt. It seems that they have no fixed programme regarding their alleged expedition and are badly in need of funds. It was only with difficulty that they paid their hotel bill at the Taj Mahal Hotel. The whole of their equipment has apparently been*

*contributed by various firms by way of advertisement and the interest taken in them by the Army and Navy Stores is for the same reason. They stated to the Army and Navy that they hoped to meet all their expenses from film and lecture rights and that they should adjust their accounts when the money came "flowing in".*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Sd/- K. J. Petigara. Deputy Commissioner of police, Special Branch, Bombay*



*Jill and Irvine, looking the part in their Burberry outfits. (Scott Wallace Collection).*

Eccentric personalities are, it seems, attracted to each other. Aututo Giovanni Batista Lenzi, a strongly built Italian mountain climber who had climbed in Europe and Persia, arrived in Darjeeling on 4th January 1931, staying with Mr. B. P. Breyner, editor of the Darjeeling Times.<sup>72</sup> He waited there, in anticipation of joining the Batt-Baird expedition. Cooking his own food and drinking no liquid, he performed breathing exercises, visiting Tiger Hill early every morning without warm clothing, in anticipation of his attempt to climb Kanchenjunga (the third highest mountain in the world). He claimed to possess the power to climb any mountain in the world.<sup>73</sup> There were in fact four attempts on that mountain at that time, two in 1929, one in 1930 and one in 1931, the first and last by German Paul Bauer. None of these were successful, resulting in a number of deaths.

Unable to obtain release of their kit from Bombay without payment of the duty, they had to travel to Calcutta and await their luggage. The kit was surprisingly spartan for an eighteen-month expedition: tents, two automatic pistols, some “scientific” instruments, compasses, binoculars and a cine camera. Clothes are not mentioned, so they must have brought a bare minimum. To barter for food whilst travelling, they took a large quantity of beads, knives, penholders, and various other trinkets. The limited food supply had to be rationed to a few ounces a day: raisins, honey, olive oil, currents, chocolate and dried fruit. It was to be a vegetarian diet with no meat whatsoever.<sup>74</sup> Perhaps Jill gave a lecture, or she found a benefactor to provide funds for the release of their baggage – she was a past master at extricating herself from tricky situations.

The expedition stayed for three days at the famous Great Eastern Hotel in Calcutta (now Kolkata), sorting out the customs problems.<sup>75</sup> On April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1931, Irvine wrote a letter home to his wife who lived in West New York in New Jersey, describing the weather as “damnably hot” and “hoping to pull through all right with his knowledge and a good revolver”. It seems that they had been allowed to import the firearms despite misgivings by the authorities.<sup>76</sup>

The Viceroy, who they had visited in Delhi, had issued them with free train passes for the Darjeeling Himalaya railway. After travelling to New Jalpaiguri, they took the tiny narrow gauge to Darjeeling. The “Toy” railway, which was completed in 1881, provides spectacular views as it snakes its way up the foothills of the Himalayas. At Darjeeling, they met up with the Italian climber and engaged bearers, cooks and ponies for the difficult onward journey. By April 20<sup>th</sup>, they were ready to set off into the unknown.<sup>77</sup>

Although their expedition was never properly documented in a scientific manner, they did take 5,000 feet of cinefilm which was shown during later lecture tours.<sup>78</sup> But the Batt-Baird expedition’s stated purpose was to discover a new tribe and to cover more than a year of exploration and research about their longevity, customs, and eating habits.<sup>79</sup> This Chaldean tribe, originating in Iraq, was expected to consist of 600 people. On discovering this tribe, the expedition would then pitch their tents and stay

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<sup>72</sup> This name was probably transcribed incorrectly by an Indian unfamiliar with Italian names. It may have been Umberto Giovanni Battista Lenzi, a name which is relatively common.

<sup>73</sup> The first successful attempt on this mountain was achieved 34 years later in 1955, after many previous attempts, some with fatal consequences.

<sup>74</sup> Calcutta Statesman 20<sup>th</sup> March 1931.

<sup>75</sup> Mark Twain, Rudyard Kipling and more recently Queen Elizabeth II have all stayed here. In Bombay, they had stayed at the five-star Taj Mahal Hotel, which had seen equally famous and wealthy clientele. No wonder they were short of funds.

<sup>76</sup> Visit to India of Miss Jill Cossley- Batt and Dr Irvin Baird, on An Expedition to the Himalayas | INDIAN CULTURE [indianculture.gov.in/archives/visit-india-miss-jill-cossley-batt-and-dr-irvin-baird-expedition-himalayas](http://indianculture.gov.in/archives/visit-india-miss-jill-cossley-batt-and-dr-irvin-baird-expedition-himalayas)

<sup>77</sup> The Straits Times, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1931, p6

<sup>78</sup> Some reports state 10,000ft of cinefilm. Perhaps not all of it was used.

<sup>79</sup> The Advertiser, Adelaide, Sat 14 Feb 1931, Page 15.

with them, documenting their way of living. No footage was taken of the new tribe – the excuse was that these people did not like the noise from the cinecamera! In the absence of a proper record, we can only guess at their precise route. Sikkim was still a separate independent state at that time but is now a province of India. It is known that they visited Gangtok, the capital in the centre of the country, as Irvine Baird signed the visitor's book.<sup>80</sup>

Scott Wallace, Irvine's grandson, managed to find a brief 11-minute black and white film clip of their journey recorded by cinecamera. By matching the views on film with the current scenery, he proved conclusively that they reached the Yiga Choeling Monastery in Ghum. This monastery is situated at an altitude of 8000 ft high on a ridge above a steep mountain slope and has a gold ornamental spire. It was here that they filmed a



*Yiga Choeling monastery, Ghum, (postcard photo taken in 1940).*

lama dance and the monastery with its prayer wheels. Documentation shows that they reached a remote village in Northern Sikkim near the border with Tibet, called Lachen.<sup>81</sup> They stayed in Lachen's dak bungalow with a view of mountain slopes rising sharply and in the rainy season disappearing in a cloud of mist. They did extremely well to get this far, an area where isolated communities did live, cut off from the rest of the world. They were granted passes for three months and when they tried to extend these, permission was refused. A somewhat indiscreet policeman was assigned to ensure that they did not try to cross into Tibet, and when the couple discovered this, they wrote to the Maharajah to complain, without success. Access to Tibet was refused on the grounds that Jill and Irvine were "cranks" and that this would give the Tibetans a bad impression of Western Civilisation. They were also refused permission to enter Nepal and Bhutan.

Jill later donated six seeds to the US Department of Agriculture in 1942.<sup>82</sup> Five of these were said to have come from Kampa Dzong, Tibet (across the border with Sikkim) and the last from Nepal. Jill claimed that she had permission from the Dalai Lama to enter Tibet and Irvine later claimed that they had a record of his voice on their recording apparatus. At that time, the Dalai Lama was in Lhasa, organising the resistance against invading Chinese. He was ill and died two years later. In May 1931, he had organised a car with a Chinese chauffeur to be delivered to him from Darjeeling and at points in the mountain passes where there was no road to Lhasa, it was transported by 30 coolies.<sup>83</sup> Did Jill and Irvine witness this?

<sup>80</sup> Gangtok Visitors Book sold at Christies 27 Sept 2007. HIMALAYAN EXPEDITIONS, 1930s (christies.com)

<sup>81</sup> Journey to Shangri-La: The Magic of China's Secret Kingdom by Scott Wallace published January 7, 2014 in National Geographic Traveller. Similar article "North to the mountains" published in Spring 2016 edition of Smithsonian Journeys. Also, correspondence in India Office archived files.

<sup>82</sup> Items 143733 to 143738 received January 22, 1942. See Appendix for list of seeds.

<sup>83</sup> Time Magazine, People, May 11, 1931



It is therefore unlikely that Jill and Irvine actually entered Tibet but may have managed to get close to the border. One of the photographs in a book they were to publish much later about Buddhism has a photograph of “Rimpoche”, a Tibetan spiritual advisor, but he lived in Sikkim, not Tibet.<sup>84</sup> With regards to the seeds, would Jill really keep the seeds in a cool, dark, dry place for eleven years? Perhaps the seeds were initially given to someone so as to grow plants and further seeds could then be taken some years later. Kampa Dzong is an isolated Tibetan settlement on a windswept plain, mainly consisting of a walled fort. Getting there requires navigating a difficult high pass in the mountains. As for Nepal, Jill never went there.

What befell the Italian climber who accompanied them is unknown. After two months, the exhaustion of the high altitude (2,750m or 9,000ft in Lachen), combined with dwindling food supplies and the arrival of the monsoon season, which had started to create landslides, provided the impetus for the expedition to return to Darjeeling. Perhaps more pressing reasons were that their three month passes to visit Sikkim were about to expire and also that they had run out of provisions. They now had to sell some of their supplies to raise some money, starting with the guns which Irvin claimed, probably incorrectly, had been stolen. In one newspaper article, they stated that on the way back, they were attacked and the supplies on the ponies raided. The raiders failed to find seven jars of Imperial Bee honey donated from New Zealand which kept them going.<sup>85</sup> The attack by “Bhutanese” severed an artery in Irvine’s wrist, resulting in stitches made with a standard sewing needle by a native woman four hours later and the loss of the use of his thumb. Jill was hit on the jaw causing her severe injuries.<sup>86</sup> This story varied somewhat from that given to the Sunday Sun in Newcastle, England. In this account, they had a scrap with eight Bhutan bandits. Their 50 coolies disappeared at the sight of the bandits’ spears and Jill and Irvine were caught off-guard, their revolvers unloaded. Jill quickly reloaded her firearm, and the robbers were routed, one falling over a cliff. Jill lost some teeth in the fight and Irvine was badly wounded in the arm. There certainly were dangers from bandits: a lone explorer was killed when attacked a few years later.

Among the items they brought back were an ancient painting on a goat skin, coloured with vegetable dyes. Jill brought back seeds, herbs and spices. The most remarkable item was an ear drop. Such earrings were worn on the left ear as a badge of office by important people. This object was six inches long and belonged to the Maharajah of Sikkim in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It was made of solid gold inlaid with turquoise plaques and in the centre was a 26-grain pearl. At the time, only four of these items were known in Tibet, with this one being the first to leave the country. It was sold by Glendinings in London in September 1932 for a mere £200 (about £12,000 today).<sup>87</sup> How they acquired this precious item was never disclosed. Did they steal it or trade a firearm for it? Perhaps they impressed the chief lama with their devotion to prayer!

Sikkim has three principal ethnic groups; the Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepalis who have long practiced their traditional systems of medicine and have a strong belief in herbs, with about 490 medicinal plants grown there. There are many folk healers who cure various ailments, using mostly 44 of these medicinal plants. Sikkim is known to the Lepchas as “Nye-mael-liang” which translates as “paradise”.<sup>88</sup> Jill had stated that she believed that the longevity of the natives could be attributed to certain herbs.

On arrival back in Darjeeling by 22<sup>nd</sup> June, the couple, who were staying at the Mount Everest Hotel, sought a missionary. No doubt to give thanks for their safe delivery from what had been a dangerous and exhausting expedition. But there was another purpose. Jill and Irvine had decided to get married! It would be easy to assume that this was a marriage of convenience, so that Jill and Irvine could travel

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<sup>84</sup> Taring Rinpoche (ox.ac.uk)

<sup>85</sup> Otago Daily Times (New Zealand), Monday October 12<sup>th</sup>, 1931, p2

<sup>86</sup> The Canberra Times (Australia), Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 1931, p3.

<sup>87</sup> Barrier Miner, Broken Hill NSW, Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October 1932, p1

<sup>88</sup> Health Traditions of Sikkim Himalaya, J Ayurveda Integr. Med. 2010 Jul-Sep 183-189.

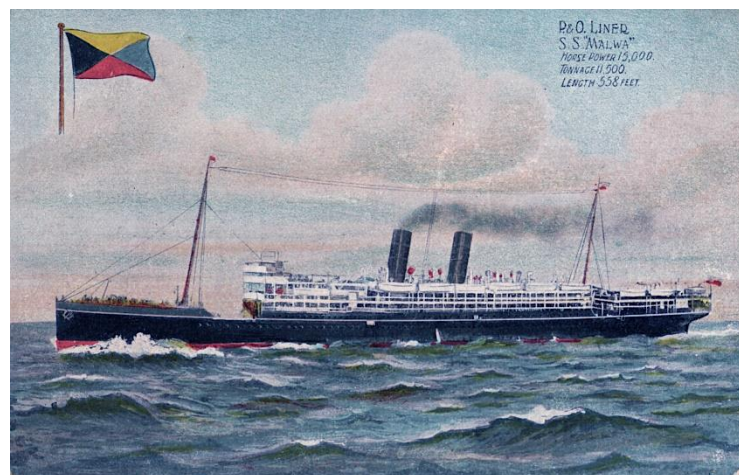
together, at a time when unmarried partnerships were considered to be scandalous. After all, Irvine was already married with a young daughter! However, this assumption may well be incorrect, as it seems that the couple really were compatible. This was not the only noteworthy event in Darjeeling at that time. One month previously, the now recently canonised Mother Theresa took her first religious vows in St Teresa's School, Darjeeling.

As for Irvine, he abandoned his family, who never saw him again but for a fleeting encounter by accident in New York.<sup>89</sup> He was virtually destitute, so could not pay any alimony or provide support. Nonetheless, it was very unfortunate that a man should abandon his wife and daughter in such a way. His wife could not remarry and did not know if he was alive or dead. His daughter never really knew him – shortly after his first marriage, he went off to South America on expeditions, then left to go on adventures with Jill. His mental state is unknown, but he indulged and supported all Jill's fantasies.

Jill did not change following her marriage. She continued life just as before, when single. Irvine seemed to be content to follow Jill wherever she chose to go. This nomadic life prevented him from working for many years (apart from supporting Jill with her lectures), a situation which he seemed to find acceptable. He worshipped Jill who didn't mind that she was the only breadwinner. The relationship appeared to be based on dependency – Jill needed someone to keep telling her how marvellous she was. Irvine was in awe of Jill's ability to manage whatever life threw at them. They needed each other.

It was later reported that Irvine worked as a representative for Reuters (his obituary and a tribute from Jill). This is probably something of an exaggeration. Reuters may have found him some work to do and had exclusivity for his story, paying him a fee to cover his hotel expenses and to pay the bearers, until the pair set off back to England. Journalists had to be careful what they wrote: the Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act, 1931, empowered the Government to "censor statements prejudicial to Britain's relations with foreign powers and prohibited publication of documents, statements and dispatches containing matters defamatory to Indian princes or foreign countries". Being a Reuters correspondent in India at that time carried certain restrictions which we would not find acceptable in a democracy today, unless at war.

They caught the *SS Malwa* home, once again travelling first class, arriving back on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1931.<sup>90</sup> They caused something of a sensation when they turned up at a London hotel wearing their Burberry explorer's outfits. The India Office, meanwhile, determined that Jill and Irvine should not return to India and wrote to the Canadian authorities requesting that their passports should be stamped "Not valid for India".<sup>91</sup> They were never to return to "paradise".



*The P&O liner, SS Malwa. Used as a troopship during The Great War, it was scrapped in 1932.*

<sup>89</sup> Journey to Shangri-La: The Magic of China's Secret Kingdom by Scott Wallace published January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014, in National Geographic Traveller.

<sup>90</sup> UK Incoming Passenger Lists, card #127543

<sup>91</sup> Visit to India of Miss Jill Cossley- Batt and Dr Irvin Baird, on An Expedition to the Himalayas | INDIAN CULTURE [indianculture.gov.in/archives/visit-india-miss-jill-cossley-batt-and-dr-irvin-baird-expedition-himalayas](http://indianculture.gov.in/archives/visit-india-miss-jill-cossley-batt-and-dr-irvin-baird-expedition-himalayas)

## 8. Rejuvenation

Of course, they had to say they had found the mysterious Chaldean tribe in order not to disappoint their many sponsors!<sup>92</sup> Back in England at the end of 1931, Jill and Irvine announced, in London, their “discoveries”. There were many sceptics, and their claims were not widely accepted by anthropologists and scientists, although there was some debate in these circles. It is all too easy to be dismissive of all Jill’s claims. As usual, they were a mixture of fact, invention, research and hunch. A Ukrainian lady called Helena Petrovna Blavatsky maintained that there is a link between the Chaldeans and Tibet.<sup>93</sup> Even today, she has her adherents in the Theosophical Society.



*The couple, after having eaten on 17<sup>th</sup> September 1931. (Shutterstock ID 3972711a ).*

The pair claimed to have identified the race of people by their writings and in particular their hieroglyphics which were similar to the old Chaldeans. It was also observed that *they continue to marry at 75 or 80 and are very hardy. The girls are attractive and have good skins, and long unbrushed hair. They did not use cosmetics or perfumes and use fat on their hair. They can go about scantily clad despite the cold and did not suffer from nervous tension.*<sup>94</sup> Some of this is quite plausible based on what we now know. Indeed, many of their observations mirrored those of eminent doctor Sir Robert McCarrison, a physician and nutritionist in the Indian Medical Service who was knighted in 1933 and was appointed physician to the King in 1935. He noted that *certain of these races are of magnificent physique, preserving until late in life the characters of youth; they are unusually fertile and long lived, and endowed with nervous systems of notable stability. These people live on a very frugal diet, consisting of apricots which they sun-dry for winter use, vegetables and goat’s milk; goats are the only*

<sup>92</sup> The Canberra Times, Tue 10 Nov 1931, Page 3 and also Syracuse Journal, Friday 8 January 1932, page 7

<sup>93</sup> Chaldeans, Hierophants of the Aryan Root-Race by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky p29

<sup>94</sup> Time magazine, Monday January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1932, article headed “Science: Lost Tribe?”.

*livestock and while butter is made from the milk, goat's meat is eaten only on feast days.*<sup>95</sup> These qualities, McCarrison noted, were due to differences in nutrition, and his views on nutrition will be discussed a little later.<sup>96</sup>

There were small nomadic tribes in remote areas of the Himalayas at that time and who are still present today, who would have developed their own customs and dialects. But the primary interest of the expedition was to discover the secret of longevity. The claim that the people were mainly vegetarians was largely correct. In the summer months when Jill and Irvine arrived, they were indeed totally vegetarian, eating fresh produce and allowing their animals to graze. As the weather worsened, they would then slaughter some of their animals for food.

Some of their other assertions are dubious. They claimed this mysterious tribe numbered about 400 and lived in caves at an altitude between 23,000 and 26,000 ft. – the numbers and altitude seemed to vary in the telling. Although unable to accurately determine their maximum ages, an estimate of 120 years old was made based on their appearance. On other occasions, ages of 145 years or more were mentioned – it seems the locals sometimes claimed great age to please or impress European explorers.

Their expedition was sufficiently noteworthy to be mentioned in *Time Magazine* on Monday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1932, under the headline “Science: Lost Tribe?”. It starts, “*Skepticism greeted a tale of Tibet brought to London last week by one Jill Cossley-Batt, Englishwoman, and a Dr. Irvine Baird, Canadian. But the pair claimed that they had proof of a tribe who live in a cranny of the Himalayas and "are white and appear to belong to the earliest civilization. We were able to identify this race of people by their writings. Their hieroglyphics are the same as those of the old Chaldeans. It is possible that some 2,000 or more years B.C. they moved away from their home in Mesopotamia and traveled to the lands to the north of India*”.

The medical profession had long been ignorant of the importance diet and relaxation play regarding one's health.<sup>97</sup> According to the 2019 Global Burden of Disease Study of 195 countries, dietary factors are the single leading cause of death, exacting an even greater health burden than smoking. Jill had probably noticed the effect diet and stress had on her health. Restricting meat, having plenty of exercise, a lack of obesity and the use of certain herbs and oils, combined with Buddhist relaxation breathing and chanting may indeed prolong life.<sup>98</sup> We now know this, but the medical profession preferred, both then and now, to rely on surgery, psychology and the pharmaceutical industry to maintain one's health. Telling someone to take a pill is much easier for both the doctor and patient than having a difficult and time-consuming conversation about obesity, lifestyle and diet. Jill and Irvine were really on to something, but the lack of quoted research and scientific rigour in their writing meant that they were not taken seriously. Had the medical establishment realised that neither Jill nor Irvine had any medical qualifications, they would have been even more scathing about the book they were to write.

It is most unlikely that our two explorers survived on biscuits, chocolate, honey and raisins during their stay in Sikkim. Their porters would cook their own meals and would have undoubtedly shared these with Jill and Irvine in exchange for a few of their treats. Once the party reached a town or village, they would be able to barter their dry provisions for more nutritious food. They also wanted to discover what the local population ate, another incentive for trading their imported foodstuffs. So, it would be reasonable to presume that once settled in a location, they would eat local produce. The details of the local diet have been documented in a journal of hill research published in 2007 by the Sikkim Science Society with the title *Food Consumption in Sikkim with special reference to Traditional Fermented*

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<sup>95</sup> The foundations of nutrition by Mary Swartz Rose, pp304-305.

<sup>96</sup> McCarrison - Nutrition and National Health - 1 (journeytoforever.org)

<sup>97</sup> The Lancet: September 2019 DOI:[https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196\(19\)30173-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196(19)30173-1)

<sup>98</sup> Empathy and Compassion in Buddhism and Neuroscience by Alfred W. Kaszniak.

*Foods and Beverages: A Micro-level Survey.* This provides the following details of a typical diet in Sikkim. It also mentions that wheat flour is starting to replace rice in the urban populations; this would not however have been the case in the 1930's.

*Traditional foods have an important bearing in the dietary habits of the people of Sikkim. Bhatdal-tharkari-achar (rice-legume soup-curry-pickle) is the basic dietary pattern of the Sikkimese meal. The morning starts with a full mug of tea with sugar or salt with or without milk, with a pinch of hot black pepper. The first meal in the morning is a simple bhat-dal-tharkari-achar (rice-legume soup-curry-pickle) corresponding to cooked rice, dal, vegetable mixed with potatoes, meat or milk products and pickles. It is followed by light refreshment with mostly traditional snacks and tea in the afternoon. The second meal is dinner around early evening, which consists of the same bhat-dal-tharkari-achar. Bhutias and Lepchas usually eat thug-pa, noodles in soup. Though the people of Sikkim are mainly rice eaters, nowadays, roti or chapatti (wheat-based baked bread) is replacing traditional rice eating habits among the urban population. In the rural areas, people mostly eat cooked maize as staple food. Popularly known as dhenroh, boiled maize-rice, it continues to be a staple food in villages. In high altitudes mainly north Sikkim, people drink pheuja, butter tea prepared from yak milk. More than 20 varieties of ethnic fermented foods and more than 10 types of fermented beverages are consumed in Sikkim.*

*Livestock mostly plays a subsidiary role in a mixed farming system. Yaks are reared mostly on extensive alpine and sub-alpine scrublands between 2100 m to 4500 m altitude for milk products and meat. River fish is consumed as fresh and {is also found in} traditionally processed products in Sikkim.*

There does not appear to be anything really unusual about the diet of the people of Sikkim, other than it seems quite appetising and healthy. The mystical diet which promotes longevity appears to remain a mystery, other than it involves the absence of processed foods with the extensive consumption of fermented foods and a variety of fruit and vegetables. Could it be that it was what they did **not** eat or drink had a significant effect on Jill and Irvine? Diet, however, is little discussed in the literature on physical illness and even less for mental illnesses.<sup>99</sup> Many of those with health issues respond positively to elimination of cow's milk, gluten and a reduction in the intake of red meat, sugar and caffeine. Rice, maize and buckwheat are free of gluten. Milk from a yak or goat can often be tolerated in cases where cow's milk cannot. It is very possible that these dietary changes, combined with meditation, regulated breathing and regular exercise, with a lack of stress, made a significant impact on Jill and Irvine's physical and mental health.<sup>100</sup> Fermented foods contain probiotics; in fact, they are more powerful than artificial probiotic supplements and improve both gut health and mental health.<sup>101</sup>

The pair set to work on a book called the *Elixir of Life*, which mainly covered diet, nutrition and hygiene but wandered into other areas of lifestyle. The experiences and observations they had in the Himalayas were the basis of this book. They may have been unable to find a publisher or unwilling to accept the royalties offered. Jill decided to self-publish, creating "Python Publishing Company". For the first edition, this had a postal address in London, for the second edition, In Toronto, Canada. The second edition was printed in Canada and priced at \$2. Presumably, the name python was chosen because they had encountered a python during their adventure. There are two named pythons in that part of India – Burmese pythons and Indian rock pythons – Burmese pythons are mainly found near water so it would have been a rock python that prompted the name. In 1933, the first edition of their

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<sup>99</sup> Schizophrenia: Nutrition and Alternative Treatment Approaches (nih.gov) and Plant-based diet for schizophrenia – Botanical online (botanical-online.com) and Bread and other edible agents of Mental Disease, *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 2016; 10: 130.

<sup>100</sup> The author shares some of Jill's genetic make-up. He finds that his well-being is significantly improved if he avoids products with gluten and lactose, restricting consumption of sugar, caffeine and red meat.

<sup>101</sup> Fermented foods, microbiota, and mental health: ancient practice meets nutritional psychiatry (nih.gov)

book was published with limited interest for the general public. Copies of this book can, however, still be found in the libraries of prestigious institutes, no doubt gathering dust in some of them – The Wellcome Library, London; University of Oxford; Trinity College Library, Dublin; Harvard University Medical School; four Canadian institutions and the University of California, Davis (Shields Library). The significance of nutrition and other environmental factors on health, particularly mental health, was not properly appreciated at that time. Far more interest may have been taken if published more recently!

A second edition followed in 1935, which Jill promoted during her lecture tours. Meanwhile, Irving (he now seemed to prefer this name, having briefly been Irvine) intended to submit a paper to the British Medical Association on his nutritional findings in the Himalayas – if he ever did, they would not have published it, as he had no medical qualifications, having dropped out of his studies. His qualifications were listed as F.R.E.S. which presumably referred to “Fellow of the Royal Entomological Society”. Fellowship is awarded to someone who has made a significant contribution to the science of insects, but it does not infer any academic qualification. Baird was not a fellow of that society, another imaginary qualification to add to the list!

One might assume that this book was pure fabrication, a result of delusional beliefs. After all, Jill had set out to discover the secret of longevity and was looking for a mysterious potion which would provide the answer. Why was this book in the prestigious Wellcome Institute Library? How had they acquired it? I put this question to them. At first, they told me they had no records of this, but a researcher there followed up, advising me that an earlier copy had gone missing. Both editions of the *Elixir of Life* were then purchased for the collection in the early 2000’s – these were second-hand. Why buy them some 70 years later?

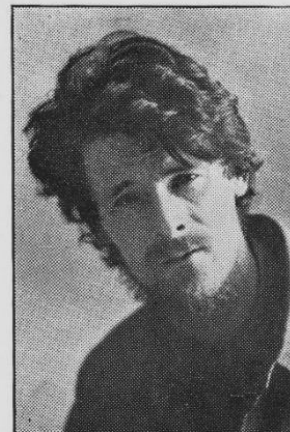
Whilst *Elixir of Life* was read in North America and Britain, one country where it was not was the Republic of Ireland, where it was banned.<sup>102</sup> Jill and Irving were to join a long list of authors who had at least one book banned on account of Roman Catholic sensitivities: Marie Stopes, Ernest Hemmingway, H G Wells, Aldous Huxley, Bertrand Russell, to name but a few. They were in illustrious company. How and when did the book make its way into Trinity College Library, Dublin?



Dr. Cossley Batt with Rimpoche, spiritual advisor to Tibet's monastic legions.



DR. COSSLEY BATT, B.A.; D.Sc.



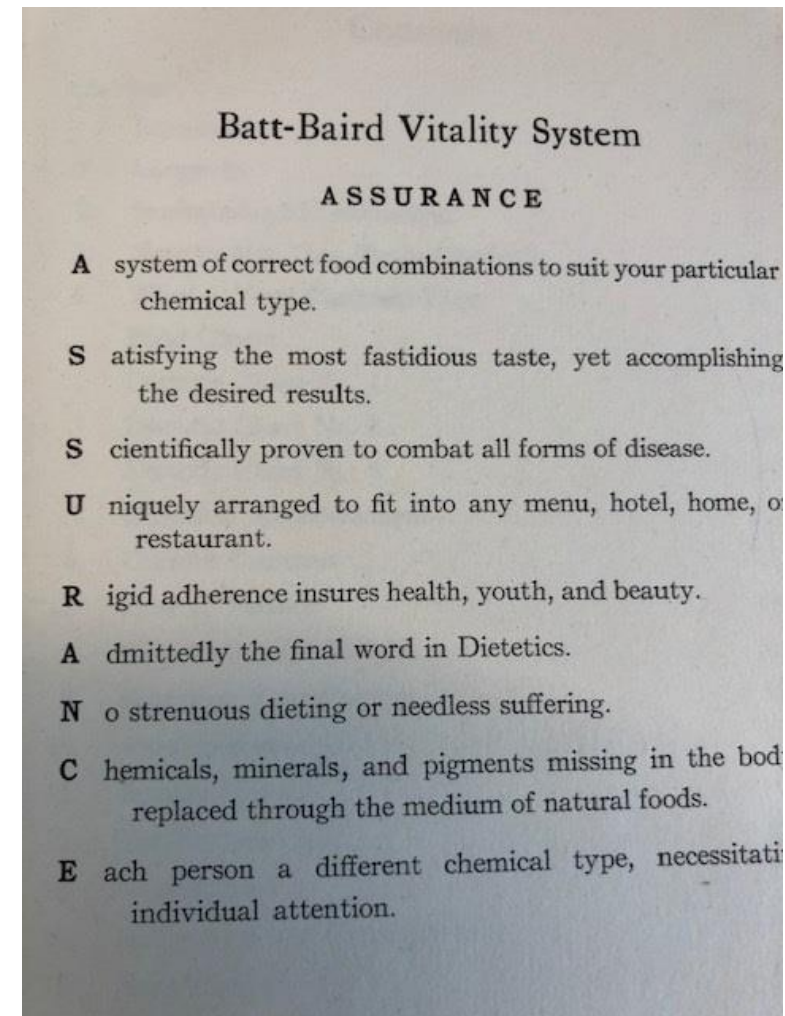
Photos taken in 1930's but used in book *Sipa Khorlo*, published in 1955.

<sup>102</sup> The Irish Times, Banned Books 19 August 1933 p8

I was naturally curious to read this book, and I entered the Wellcome Library with some excitement. I was surprised to note in the 1935 edition that there was no mention of magic ingredients or herbs to promote long life. In 1928, Jill had already undertaken research and stated, "The secret of their semi-perpetual youth is due to a mysterious brew which they make from mountain herbs and which, while not intoxicating, seems to add great vitality to the body. This is their only drink except water. Besides, they eat only one kind of food at a meal".<sup>103</sup> One might have expected her to regurgitate this advice in the book. In fact, there is only a passing reference to one particular nut which is called a "Changnut" which they say may have medicinal properties and no mention is made of mystical herbs. Himalayan oil features prominently, without the book explaining what is in the oil, but it is believed to be a mixture of nut oils and olive oil, as will be revealed later.

The book, dedicated to "Suffering Humanity", is a combination of good sense, provocative statements and debateable theories. It is not just about nutrition but also about wellbeing. It mentions something called the Batt-Baird vitality system! This is about keeping the body "youthful and healthy". It will also help those afflicted by some disease or malady. Most importantly, this system gives practical advice on proper combination of foods and their reaction upon the body. Specific chemical elements found in food were assigned to certain beneficial attributes. For example, iron gives "warmth, magnetism, mental endurance, creative ability, success, ambition and vitality".

The authors suggest that humans fall into 11 chemical types; for example, calcium people are not interested in reading or sentimental music. "Sulphurites" are good at dancing, acting and singing. One's diet should be adjusted according to the assigned chemical type. There is



*The Elixir of Life promoted the Batt-Baird Vitality System*

also a vegetarian diet. Well, there may be some truth in that not everyone responds equally to certain diets, but one should take the assertions in the book with a pinch of salt – not too large according to the authors as they have a theory that excess salt and a deficiency in potassium, iodine and sulphur may be the cause of cancer. Take strawberry, dandelion or violet leaves for cancer troubles! Actually, we now know that bacon and preserved meats can cause certain types of cancer, so that theory may have been on the right track. Diets high in salt-preserved foods, such as pickled vegetables and salted or pickled fish, have been linked to an increased risk of stomach cancer. High blood pressure, resulting in heart attacks and strokes, can also be caused by having too much salt in the diet.

<sup>103</sup> The Evening Star, Washington D.C. May 11 1928 p4.

As for food combining, that remains a controversial topic and one that was quite popular in the early twentieth century. Nutritionists agree that one certainly needs to eat a balanced diet with foods from each group of foods. The book lists proportions of fats, proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins (sic) and mineral matter which should be eaten. Honey should be used instead of sugar. Bananas, oatmeal and nuts come recommended. Foods to avoid are fried foods, white flour, white sugar and white bread. Fresh fruits should be eaten with proteins, not starches, whilst citrus fruits go well with nuts, but not with cheese, milk, starch or vegetables. Interestingly, similar advice was given in 2017 on a popular Indian website.<sup>104</sup> There is evidence that some foods need to be taken with fats or an oil (could be Himalayan oil perhaps) in order to gain the benefits of absorbing vitamin A, vitamin D and vitamin E. The book does not promote vitamin and mineral supplements: a varied diet of fresh raw food is the order of the day. Even today, there are differing opinions, but in general terms, fresh uncooked fruit and vegetables, which are promoted in the book, are considered healthier than canned or boiled ones, with a few exceptions such as tomatoes, carrots, spinach, peppers and cabbage, which are better cooked if one disregards the loss of vitamin C caused by cooking.

The importance of food on one's mental wellbeing is mentioned. "By mixing chemicals, you can gain self-confidence, good memory, courage and greater brain capacity". The book goes on to say: "Memorize new poetry or language. Form good habits. Force yourself to do things which are good for you although you feel disinclined".

Hardly enough to get the book banned in Ireland, is it? In Ireland, The Censorship of Publications Act, 1967, finally limited the period of prohibition orders of books to twelve years (although books released after this period could be banned again by the Board). It is doubtful however, if many people in Ireland read the book, some 34 years after publication in 1933! Then I found the passages I had been looking for in chapter 12 of the 1935 edition, obviously written by Jill (but endorsed by Irving) and aimed specifically at women: *The dissemination of sex knowledge has now become an essential study in our everyday lives. The authorities realise that lack of knowledge on this very vital problem, has often resulted in untold misery and tragedy. There are some people, however, who will raise their hands in protest at the very mention of the word "sex", but due to co-educational conditions in our schools and colleges, the necessity of speaking plainly on this subject becomes imperative. It is now an accepted fact, that all things pertaining to life may become a subject of legitimate enquiry, provided it is presented in a clean and healthy manner. Despite the obstacles of bigotry, egotism, religion, etc., which every modern-minded teacher has to combat, it is gratifying to observe that some worthwhile progress is being made along the lines of sex education. It is our belief that this knowledge should be imparted to our boys and girls at schools, colleges, and universities.*

Having fired a salvo at prevailing illiberal attitudes, she then has a good dig at men – this chapter is definitely intended for women! *Many women are misunderstood by their husbands. This is brought about by virtue of many things. The husband oftentimes demands far too much; then again, home environment may not be congenial. There may be too many children to care for; seldom does a husband consider that he does not have the wherewithal to sustain another offspring. Nor is he interested. His first consideration is the satisfying of his own selfish desires. Little does he realise the price that has to be paid, eventually.* One wonders if this reflects Jill's upbringing, with siblings arriving at regular intervals, needing care and attention, preventing her in turn from getting the attention and financial support she felt she deserved. She herself was the result of an unplanned pregnancy (from birth and marriage records, we know she was conceived prior to the marriage of her parents, regarded as immoral at that time).

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<sup>104</sup> 5 harmful food combinations you must avoid | India.com/lifestyle



The passage goes on to say: *Many obstinate ailments in women can rightly be traced to childbearing. This is particularly true among working classes, where through gross ignorance, mishap often enters, the consequence being that they bear many unwanted children. There should be means and opportunities whereby women should possess the knowledge and power that will enable them to decide under what circumstances they will undertake this important function of motherhood. It is a very grave problem, for the world is already populated with poor mental and physical specimens of Humanity. The need for healthier children is obvious, and this can only come about, when woman is able to protect herself from the opposite sex, who are mentally and physically undesirable. Woman must become master of her own destiny, for on her depends the future welfare of the human race.* She then discusses menstruation. Strong and controversial views, with hints of eugenics and somewhat ironic given Jill's own situation, having seemingly avoided any close relationship prior to meeting Irving.

The role genes play in longevity has been a subject for debate and the latest thinking is that genes play a minor role to assist people in reaching about 90 years old. After that age, genes become an increasingly significant factor in helping achieve extreme longevity. The possible lifespan of humans is also subject to some debate. Many researchers believe an age of about 127 is the maximum which could ever be achieved, whilst others believe that an age of 150 might conceivably be possible. The oldest age recorded with reliable records is a woman of 122, although many other individuals in the past have had ages recorded up to about 150. Some of the latter individuals could recall events which seemed to prove that they did indeed live beyond the age of 130. Current research indicates that women, as a category, live on average 8% longer than men, but this varies by country.

Is there such a thing as a longevity gene? It has been found that there is a gene mutation known to extend the lives of worms, flies and mice which also appears in long-lived humans. Ashkenazi Jews who survive past the age of 95 frequently possess this gene, called IGF1. It is thought likely that centenarians have not just one lucky gene but several.<sup>105</sup> The elusive combination has yet to be identified. Could there be another reason that some people living in the Himalayas do achieve remarkable ages? Living at a high altitude can in fact be detrimental to health, resulting in a condition called hypoxia. The people who live in Ethiopia and the Andes with ancestors going back thousands of years have more oxygen per blood volume than other people, thus avoiding the negative symptoms. Tibetans, on the other hand, breathe more air with each breath and breathe more rapidly, allowing them to avoid the dangers of hypoxia in pregnancy and mountain sickness with old age. Tibetans on average live longer than the Han Chinese who now form a large part of the Tibetan population.<sup>106</sup>

And what do the medical profession think about nutrition? Not enough, according to the *McCarrison Society*, established in 1966 by a group of doctors and dentists. Although Sir Robert published quite a few articles and was highly regarded in his lifetime, his views on nutrition were largely ignored, as were Jill and Irving's somewhat similar views. The founders of the Society were united in their belief, based on science, that whole fresh food is vital for good health. They further believed that "Western food, with its degradation of quality through excessive processing, imbalances and heavily refined products including fats and sugars, deficiencies in minerals and vitamins, chemical additives and contaminants, are in synergy, major factors in Western disease". The frustration of Society members, many of whom were eminent in their respective fields (the Society no longer appears to be active), was shared by two other distinguished scientists, Roger John Williams (1893-1988), a prolific scientist in the fields of biochemistry and nutrition, and double Nobel prize winner Linus Pauling (1901-1994).

Page 18 of *Elixir of Life* gives the advice, "constructive thinking coupled with correct eating is the secret of good health, happiness, youthfulness and longevity". Other topics addressed in *Elixir of Life* are

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<sup>105</sup> Scientific American – "Methuselah" mutation linked to longer life. JR Minkel March 4 2008.

<sup>106</sup> High Altitude Hypoxia: Many Solutions to One Problem. Harvard University blog, July 1, 2012

breathing exercises, stretching and “reducing” which is more widely known as weight loss. The book states, “Deep breathing exercises are essential”, suggesting games, dancing, skipping, swimming, horse riding, rowing and brisk walking. It is truly amazing that this was being promoted over 90 years ago – we tend to think such advice is based on recent research. Recent experiments to do with breathing have shown the remarkable results which can be obtained through breathing correctly using a 5.5 second cycle, something Jill and Irving would have practiced when praying in Buddhist temples.<sup>107</sup> Yoga, a form of stretching, gives nine physical and mental health benefits.<sup>108</sup> Weight loss, or in a few cases weight gain, continues to be a subject of major interest, both for appearance and health reasons. In the book, one is warned about quacks and charlatans working in this field – nothing has changed it seems! Having lived in Hollywood where actresses needed to look alluring and sexy (and be willing to indulge in sexual activity with movie moguls), Jill was well aware of the need for people to remain beautiful and youthful. In fact, that need is just as great today with vast amounts being spent on cosmetic surgery. The book does not advocate surgery but gives treatments for the neck, face, eyes, hair (including dandruff), feet, hands, fingernails and advice on clothes and makeup. Given Jill’s dress attire, to give advice about clothes may seem rather amusing, but the advice was based on the importance attached to how one dressed in Hollywood films. In silent films, the way a character dressed indicated their position in life and possibly if a character was good or evil, orthodox or liberal. The 1928 film about Anastasia was called “Clothes Make the Woman”.

The *Elixir of Life* is about much more than nutrition; it is about a lifestyle. For those suffering from nervousness, a suggestion is to take up hobbies or pastimes. For those suffering from shock from the Great War, one should consider country life and outdoor sports. For contracted nerves caused by manual or heavy mental work, have a massage and try good corrective exercises. Advice is given on how to address stammering, headaches and neuralgia, without any mention of prescription drugs. In his book *The Cult of Youth – Anti-Ageing in Modern Britain*, Professor James Stark states that Jill and Irving were somewhat unusual in highlighting the social pressures which led to the demand for rejuvenation.<sup>109</sup> Heather Addison in her book *Hollywood and the rise of Physical Culture* described the mid to late 1920’s thus: “This cult of youth which celebrated young adulthood as the most privileged period of life, was the product of a number of historical forces, including prevailing American views on aging; the demands of an emerging consumer culture; and concerns about the motion picture camera’s propensity to highlight the physical signs of advancing age”.<sup>110</sup>

So how does the information in the *Elixir of Life* stack up with what we know 90 years later? There is evidence that people live longer in so-called Blue Zones which include places such as Sardinia, Okinawa in Japan, Loma Linda in California, a peninsular in Costa Rica and Icaria in Greece.<sup>111</sup> The diet of people living in these different places cannot be identical. However, there appear to be good foods and bad foods. 100% wholewheat bread, nuts, beans and fruit are good. Sugar-sweetened beverages, salty snacks, packaged sweets and processed meats are bad. These are the nine lessons which characterize the lifestyles of these people: 1. Take moderate physical activity every day, 2. Have a purpose in life, 3. Reduce or avoid stress, 4. Keep the calorific intake of food down, 5. Eat a predominantly plant-based diet, 6. Moderate one’s alcohol intake and ideally limit it to red wine, 7. Engage in spirituality or religion, 8. Engage in family life, 9. Engage in social life. One may ask, what about lack of pollution (in the air, water and in food), a benign climate, having good dental health, elimination of dangerous and debilitating diseases, absence of extremes of poverty and great wealth, a fairly relaxed lifestyle, being a non-smoker, etc.? Some of these “lessons” may not be achievable or be too restrictive, so why

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<sup>107</sup> Breath: The New Science of a Lost Art (2021) by James Nestor and Breath as Prayer and 5.5 Second Breathing | Spirituality & Health (spiritualityhealth.com)

<sup>108</sup> 9 Benefits of Yoga | Johns Hopkins Medicine

<sup>109</sup> Published by Cambridge University Press, 2020. Comment made on page 91.

<sup>110</sup> Cinema Journal 45, No. 4, Summer 2006 © 2006 Michigan Publishing

<sup>111</sup> The Blue Zones: 9 Lessons for Living Longer From the People Who’ve Lived the Longest by Dan Buettner. Published by National Geographic.

bother? Although longevity was a stated objective, the *Elixir of Life* was more about general health and perhaps we should be more concerned about the avoidance of diseases of old age (dementia, some cancers, strokes, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, osteoarthritis, vision and hearing loss, etc.) than simply about longevity without reference to such disease.

For brain health, the latest thinking is along these lines.<sup>112</sup> *Avoid or restrict consumption of trans fats, alcohol (a single glass of red wine or beer is permissible), sugary drinks, artificial sweeteners, fried foods, doughnuts, white bread, white rice, red meat, full fat cheese, fish containing mercury, high-fructose corn syrup. Eat beans, leafy green vegetables, berries, moderate intake of red wine, olive oil, plenty of vegetables, nuts, whole grains, eat fish once a week, poultry twice a week.* These rules apply not just to maintaining a healthy brain but to many diseases of old age. We can now judge the *Elixir of Life* against these recommendations and decide how good the advice was. Not bad really!

Jill decided to keep her maiden name and there were some good reasons to do this. Firstly, she and Baird may not have wanted to alert the authorities to their bigamous marriage. Secondly, that was the name by which she had become well known and a respected writer. In fact, she no longer made any reference to spurious titles – she was comfortable being Dr. Jill Cossley-Batt, the famous explorer. Her autobiographical memory remained faulty however, as she claimed subsequently, including in a book *Sipa Khorlo*, to have spent many years living in Tibet.

After publishing the *Elixir of Life* in 1933, which they promoted and distributed themselves, the pair set off for Quebec, Canada, on board the *SS Duchess of Richmond*, which departed from Greenock, Scotland, in October.<sup>113</sup> They soon visited Montreal and then Ottawa on the start of a Canadian tour which included the northern US states such as Michigan.<sup>114</sup> On this tour they regaled tales of “The Lost Tribe” which they claimed to have discovered, the tribe having remarkable good health and longevity. The trail then goes cold until October 1935 when they published the second edition of the *Elixir of Life*. Jill probably stayed in Canada during most of this period, for she obtained a ten-year Canadian passport in June 1935 (Baird had previously obtained Canadian citizenship). In the winter of 1935/36, she was in Vancouver after passing through Calgary where she gave some lectures, slipping on some ice and breaking an ankle. Despite this misfortune, she continued with her engagements using a wheelchair.<sup>115</sup> In April, she took out a lawsuit against the city, claiming compensation for loss of earnings as a result of her injury.<sup>116</sup> She settled for \$1600, quite a large amount at that time. Despite her injury, in February 1936, wheelchair-bound Jill presented to a packed house at the Crystal Ballroom, Hotel Vancouver.

Jill also published a book called *The Lost Tribe*, but with no surviving copies advertised, it is not possible to state when this was published. It cannot have sold many copies. In 1938, a fellow explorer, F Bailey Venderhoef Jr., published an account of a similar, but more extensive journey into Sikkim and Western Tibet. Reading his detailed illustrated account of his expedition, one gets a good impression of the conditions and people Jill and Irving would have encountered.<sup>117</sup>

Jill and Irving travelled across Canada in 1936, visiting such remote cities as Winnipeg and Saskatoon. There, they told reporters that they were investigating edible weeds found in Canada for medicinal

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<sup>112</sup> What Are the Worst Foods for Your Brain? (webmd.com)

<sup>113</sup> UK Passenger Departure Card #160631 and Canadian Passenger Arrival card on 27/10/1933 in Quebec City.

<sup>114</sup> The Lethbridge Herald of Monday, October 30, 1933, page 6 and The Brandon Daily Sun of Wednesday, December 6, 1933, page 7

<sup>115</sup> Shoal Lake Star, Shoal Lake, Manitoba, Canada March 26, 1936, page 3 and The Province, Vancouver, Tuesday February 25, 1936.

<sup>116</sup> The Vancouver News-Herald, April 23<sup>rd</sup> p8.

<sup>117</sup> A Glimpse of Another World: A Journey through Western Tibet (1938) published by University of California Santa Barbara and the Santa Barbara Museum of Art.

and food value. They were to use this knowledge sometime later when producing a health chart. Growing up in the country on a farm, Jill had no doubt already drunk nettle soup and experimented in sampling leaves! These so-called weeds are often surprisingly nutritious; dandelion greens are four times higher in vitamin A than broccoli and twice as high in vitamin K – just avoid the stems. A cultivated wild plant is no longer classified as a weed; perhaps we should grow fields of dandelions!

Jill also visited Seattle in 1936, working on a project concerning Himalayan oil, returning to Vancouver in 1937. After their arrival, Jill and Irving booked the Lyric Theatre in Vancouver on Sunday April 11<sup>th</sup>, 1937, for a one-off presentation including extensive film (5,000ft of footage) of the Himalayan Expedition. This theatre had held 2,000 persons when built, the capacity reduced when the gallery was removed in 1935. Nevertheless, they must have expected at least 1,000 persons to attend.<sup>118</sup> The audiences would have consisted largely of the more prosperous middle class, with the time and inclination to experiment with different diets and a thirst for adventure. One question which must have frequently been asked would have been “what is this Himalayan oil mentioned in your book?”. Jill needed to have both an answer and a new money-making venture.



*The Lyric Theatre, Vancouver, 1935. Jill and Irving lectured here in 1937.*

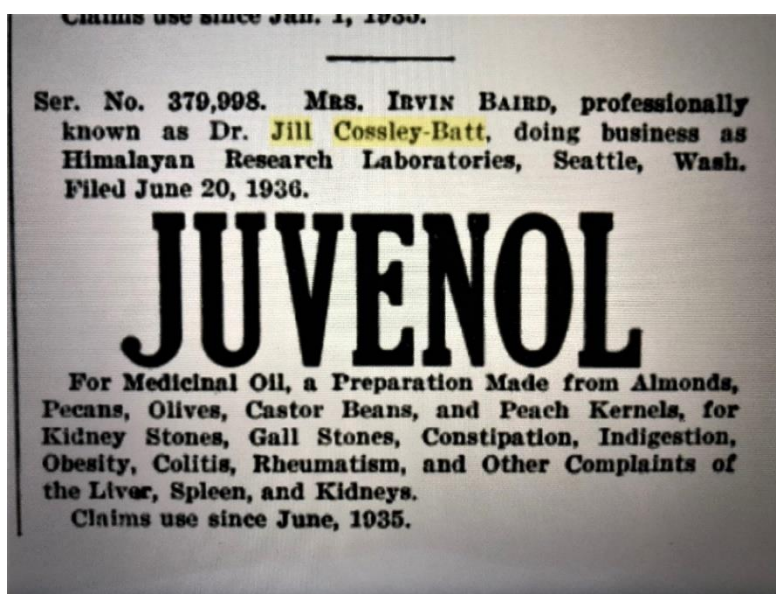
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<sup>118</sup> The Province, Sat April 10, 1937 p13. Advertisement for the event.

## 9. A lot of bottle

During 1935, it appears that Jill started to experiment with various oils for use as a medicine and salad dressing. One of these oils was “made from Almonds, Pecans, Olives, Castor Beans, and Peach Kernels” and could be used “for Kidney Stones, Gall Stones, Constipation, Indigestion, Obesity, Colitis, Rheumatism, and other Complaints of the Liver, Spleen, and Kidneys”. She filed an application to trademark *JUVENOL* on 20th June 1936 in Seattle, claiming it had been used since June 1935. What she failed to mention was that about a quarter of the ingredients were mineral oils. Having patented this concoction, she started to manufacture it, selling it for \$2 a bottle (the book *Elixir of Life* also cost \$2). That is quite expensive, the equivalent of about \$40 in today’s money. The so-called Himalayan Research Laboratories where it was manufactured were initially in Seattle and then in Santa Monica, California (near Los Angeles): Jill must have returned to her old haunts.

On September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1938, some 125 boxes of the oil were seized by the District Attorney for Oregon in Portland. The oil had been dispatched from Santa Monica in April of that year. It had been labelled “suitable for use as a salad dressing”, but was deemed unsuitable for salad dressing as no mineral oil was mentioned in the list of ingredients. A further issue was that the curative and therapeutic claims were false and fraudulent. The recommended dosage was “two



tablespoons a day which will keep you fit and healthy”. The bottles were released under bond on condition that the oil be relabelled.<sup>119</sup> This probably put an end to this venture as the “pure” ingredients had been adulterated with the mineral oil and no medicinal benefit could be claimed. Without the mineral oil, the concoction would have made a nice salad dressing. Nut oils can be beneficial to the health of one’s heart – the one condition Jill failed to mention, also providing vitamins A and E. Caster bean oil and mineral oil are laxatives. The oils may have been more useful as a skin moisturiser, although the oil was not advertised for that purpose. Four years later during the second world war, mineral oil became a typical ingredient for salad dressing, owing to animal and vegetable fat shortages!

It would appear that Jill and Irving’s attention now focussed on other aspects of nutrition, namely the human need for vitamins and minerals and the source of these essential nutrients. It was in the 1940’s, with some minor adjustments in the 1950’s and 1960’s, that recommended dietary allowances (RDAs) were established. The RDA *definition* states that the RDA is the amount of a nutrient that a *healthy* person needs to remain healthy. Roger Williams proved that even genetically identical individuals (mice in this case) might have as much as a 20-fold difference in need for a specific nutrient. That means that the definition only applies to those lucky few who have a lower nutrient need than most. Health advice continues to quote RDAs as if they are sacrosanct. These RDA levels may prevent scurvy, rickets, pellagra and beriberi in 97% of the population, but does that really mean that such people meeting these intake levels can be considered healthy? RDAs vary by country, sometimes by a remarkable amount, between USA, UK, Europe and Japan. They are clearly rather subjective.

<sup>119</sup> Food and Drugs Act, Notices of Judgement 1938 Ref 30002

A US national survey, NHANES 2007-2010, surveyed 16,444 individuals over the age of 4. This survey found that 94.3% of the US population do not meet the daily requirement for vitamin D, 88.5% for vitamin E, 52.2% for magnesium, 44.1% for calcium, 43.0% for vitamin A and 38.9% for vitamin C. Low levels were also found for potassium, choline and vitamin K. All the vitamin B levels were inadequate as were copper, iron, phosphorus, selenium, and zinc. Sodium consumption, on the other hand, was overconsumed by 90% of the population.<sup>120</sup> The author of the report admits that the results of the survey cannot be entirely accurate and may be subject to bias, but even so, the general conclusions of the study remain valid (i.e., many of us do not meet adequate nutritional requirements of micronutrients and do not eat the so-called “normal balanced diet”).

Supplements were starting to be available in the 1930's, but Jill and Irving did not promote these supplements, believing that food should be the primary source. Although the medical profession may then, as now, have shown too little interest in nutrition, there was one company that did, a company which was famous for pickles, sauces and other products, leading to a total of 57 varieties (this was in fact a marketing ploy and the number of products varied).

HJ Heinz was not only a brilliant marketer but also a man with strong ethical principles. He died in 1919, and the company was taken over by his son Howard who maintained the same principles. A research centre was established in Pittsburgh and in 1934 *Nutritional Charts for Medical and Other Specialists* was published by this centre. This publication by Harold A. Wooster and Frederick Conrad Blanck, was updated regularly to reflect the rapidly evolving knowledge of vitamins and minerals at that time. With a plain covering, this book consisted of information on which foods contained which nutrients, with tables (not really charts as such) for each vitamin or mineral.

In the 1920's, certain supplements started to become fashionable. Vitamin A and C sales surged as the public began to believe that if a supplement contained vitamins, it contained other miraculous chemical compounds as well. This led to vitamin B2 (riboflavin) as a supplement, gaining popularity in the 1930's. The supplement companies were obviously not interested in educating the public about which foods contained these vitamins and minerals, but they did make the public aware of the need for these nutrients. However, it was not until the early 1940's that mineral supplements and vitamins became affordable for most people.

The current thinking is that in many instances, the vitamins and minerals found in food sources are easier for the body to absorb than those in supplement form. With the added benefit of the other nutrients found in food, eating healthily gives far greater benefits than opting for supplements and eating poorly. Self-diagnosis of vitamin and mineral deficiencies is common practice, so it is obvious that many people feel fatigued or anxious and may be getting a placebo effect from pills and tonics. Either that or many people are genuinely undernourished or are taking them as a prophylactic.

There was a need to educate doctors and the general public about healthy eating at a time when convenience processed foods were starting to take hold, releasing housewives from slaving away in the kitchen and making food affordable. The typical working man was concerned, at a time of austerity, with having cheap calorie-rich food on the table, often making them deficient in certain minerals and vitamins. However, an issue of more concern to the Government was the health of the armed forces serving overseas. In 1942, the US Army requested that 1,000 new dietitians be available by 1943. The US Army, US Navy, Veterans Administration, and civilian hospitals were all calling for more trained practitioners to join their ranks. The American Dietetic Association published a booklet, *Dietitians Are Urgently Needed*, that was distributed to college students in all programs to attract them to the profession. Evidence of malnutrition, past or present, was noted in 25% of those drafted to

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<sup>120</sup> Oregon State University: Linus Pauling Institute “Micronutrient Information Centre”.

military service. Whatever the magazines of that time listed as a typical American diet was obviously not applicable to many of the working population.<sup>121</sup>

Both Jill and Irving believed that information on vitamins and minerals needed to be available in a more accessible way to both doctors and the public. They were pipped to the post by Lester C. Vanetta of Portland, Oregon. He established the “Wheel o’ Life” company and marketed an ingenious device which involved rotating a wheel to line up with a particular nutrient which then showed which foods contained each one. He patented his invention in August 1941. These wheels were then issued to various medical practices who inserted their own name on them as a marketing device. At about the same time, vitamin companies such as Vitex issued their own charts showing the necessity of taking their products. Likewise, the National Livestock and Meat Board produced a multi-page food value chart with common vitamins (A, B, C, D), calcium, phosphorus, iron and copper.

In 1941, the U.S. government set requirements for vitamins A, B1, B2, B3, C and D with minerals calcium and iron. The portable rations issued to the armed forces in the second world war highlighted the need to supplement such rations, which of necessity lacked fresh fruit and vegetables, causing deficiency illnesses rarely seen in the Western world amongst the troops. Certain B vitamins were added to flour, a practice which continues to this day; when grain is milled to produce processed white flour, nutrients are lost. Home and “victory” gardening became an important activity towards the end of 1941. Emphasis was placed on the fact that a continuous supply of fruit and vegetables of the right type and in the correct amount were vital to good health, strong bodies and a “strong Nation”. Volunteer leaders helped promote the work and “Victory Garden Committees” were established. There were also initiatives to produce more crops, more livestock and poultry and to increase dairy output<sup>122</sup>. As is so often the case, it takes a war to make things happen. Imports were now a problem; the Japanese threatened the Pacific and German U-Boats started to cause havoc in the Atlantic.

This interest must have been the catalyst for Jill and Irving to publish a wall chart. Jill had publicly maintained that she wanted to do something to aid the war effort. The *Victory Vital Health Wall Chart* produced in 1943 by Jill, together with her husband, was perhaps one of their most significant unheralded pieces of work.<sup>123</sup> This may have been the first single-sheet comprehensive vitamin and mineral chart ever produced.<sup>124</sup> The chart was endorsed by several medical doctors, being updated several times as knowledge improved (e.g., the discovery of vitamin B12). Did Jill and Irving follow the guidelines in the chart, and did they feel beneficial results? Probably not, as their lifestyle precluded this.

Try to find any of these *Vital Health Charts* today and you are likely to be unsuccessful. None may have survived. After my mother’s death, I was rummaging through some old papers she had kept and found a folded piece of paper. Unfolding it revealed the third edition of the Batt-Baird *Vital Health Chart*. What makes this so unusual is the listing of so many wildflowers, weeds and the leaves of plants which would not normally be eaten. Many of these unusual additions to the more standard list of fruit and vegetables are indeed very nutritious.

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<sup>121</sup> History Snapshot: Dietetics Student Experience in the 1940s (jandonline.org)

<sup>122</sup> Report of Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, 1941-42. Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

<sup>123</sup> The word “Victory” was inserted into the title of many products in the early 1940’s, to show one’s patriotism during World War 2. That word was dropped in later editions.

<sup>124</sup> Apr, 15, 1943; AA 428705; Python pub. co., New York. 13691. Catalog of Copyright Entries 1943 Pamphlets, Leaflets, Etc. New Series Vol 40 Pt 1 For the Year 1943

# VITAL HEALTH CHART

By Doctor Jill Cossley Batt. B. A. (Oxon); D. Sc(Lond) and Irvin Baird.

**CALCIUM or LIME** This is the chemical which builds strength, endurance, positiveness, which gives long life and red blood, preserves the teeth and makes the bones strong. It is found in eggs, egg-shells, cheese, meat, lettuce, turnip tops, peas, beans, lentils, rice, barley, rye, millet, corn, oatmeal, whole-wheat products, arrowroot, bananas, nuts, water, milk and cabbage.

**CHLORINE** Chlorine is the chemical which expels waste matter and keeps the joints and tendons supple. It is found in lettuce, hops, green onions, leeks, cabbage, garlic, mustard leaves, cress, motherwort, elm leaves, bamboo sprouts, mapleleaf sprouts, bean sprouts, peach leaves, water-cress, parsley, dandelion leaves, strawberry leaves, grapes, asparagus, tomatoes, cucumbers, endive, escarole, prunes, radishes, apples, celery, and all kinds of green leaves.

**FLUORINE** This chemical preserves youth, is a protective against infections, bone disease and skin irritations. It aids in the preservation of tooth enamel. It is found in nuts, meats, beans, bonemarrow, beets, turnips, carrots, parsley, carrotway and parsnips.

**IODINE** This is the gland rejuvenator which renews mental energy, pep and confidence. It is excellent in cases of goitre, insanity, obesity, asthma, nervous-breakdowns, cancer, ulcers and baldness. It is found in dulse, seaweed, Irish-moss, sea-spinach, sea-holly, fish, fish-oil, onions, garlic, citrus fruits, pineapples, mushrooms, green kidney-beans, cabbage and asparagus, if grown within five miles of the ocean.

**IRON** Iron is the master chemical which keeps the life force in harmony throughout the body; enriches the blood corpuscles, gives warmth, magnetism, mental endurance, creative ability, success, ambition and vitality—but is only properly absorbed when the body has its required amounts of Sulphur and Potassium. It is found in liver, meat, oatmeal, raw egg yolk, whole-wheat products, barley, rice, rye, corn, spinach, carrots, endive, chicory, grapes, eggplant, raisins, cherries, nuts, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, elderberries, beets, currants, ailsander, stinging nettles, gentian, hops, plums, figs, dates, apples, pears, gooseberries, red-cabbage, dandelion leaves, wine, yeast, yeast vegetable extracts, Cape berries and molasses.

**MAGNESIUM** This is a cool alkaline which refreshes the body and promotes sleep; it is also a laxative, aids the complexion and prevents wrinkles. It is found in gooseberries, lemons, limes, oranges, grapefruits, tangerines, leaves, garlic, onions, leeks, ailsander, groundsel, hepatica, spinach, apples, endive, red and white cherries, okra, chicory, watercress, radishes, unpulverised rice, rhubarb, oatmeal, rye, beans, corn, lentils, bananas, raw egg and mineral spring water.

**MANGANESE** Manganese is the chemical which makes strong nerves, coordinates thought, gives elasticity and quick recuperative ability. It is found in watercress, endive, parsley, sorrel, chicory, groundsel, ferns, mint, okra, thyme, dandelion, garden cress, mustard leaves, peach leaves, elm leaves, strawberry leaves and clover.

**PHOSPHOROUS** This is the life chemical which is consumed with every thought. It prevents neurasthenia and enables the other elements to create bone, brain and red blood cells, thereby preventing fatigue. It is found in meat, eggs, cheese, okra, cod liver oil, cabbage, carrots, fish, celery, celery seeds, oatmeal, nuts, brown rice, turnips, whole-wheat products, carrotway roots, rye, parsnips, barley, corn, beans, peas, lentils and coconut.

**POTASSIUM** This is the pain-reliever and healer, which aids hair growth, prevents constipation and spread of disease and causes one to be enthusiastic. It is the chemical in which most people in this modern, luxurious twentieth century are deficient, otherwise rheumatism, arthritis, infantile-paralysis and numerous other present-day complaints would have declined. It is plentiful in beets, parsley, beet leaves, grapes, grape leaves, plums, potatoes (particularly the skins), sage, bites, red clover, red clover leaves, strawberry leaves, blueberries, huckleberries, blackberries, blackberry leaves, ferns, senna pods, St. John's bread, pennyroyal, saffrage, watermelon, elderberries, red cabbage, thyme, red thistles, and all the edible plants with red flowers.

**SILICON** Silicon is the hair growing chemical, which brightens eyesight, the temperament and the complexion. It is found in oatmeal, brown rice, barley, rye, coconuts, corn, peas, beans, lentils, wheat, herrings, cheese, sage, thyme, hops, figs, prunes, bone-marrow, raw eggs, nuts, yeast, cucumber seeds, celery seeds, melon seeds, meat, almonds, hazel nuts, pecan nuts, cod liver oil, halibut liver oil.

**SODIUM** This is the good nature and clear brain chemical which alkalizes the blood and like Potassium enables the blood to absorb other chemicals, such as Calcium, Phosphorus, Iron and Iodine. Sodium aids digestion, neutralizes acids and poisons, has a special action on the spleen and enables this mysterious organ to function properly. Sodium in combination with Sulphur and Potassium keeps Calcium and Silicon in solution in the body, thereby preventing Arthritis, Ossification and hardening of the arteries. It heals and prevents catarrh, asthma, deafness, moodiness, jaundice, warts, anaemia, sallow complexion, suppressed menstruation, female irregularities and high blood pressure. One can find it in peach leaves, parsley, elm leaves, cowslip flowers and seeds and leaves, celery and celery seeds, hops, parsley seeds, dandelion leaves, and flowers, ferns, bamboo sprouts, mustard leaves, madder leaves, sorrel leaves, garden cress, field cress, water cress, French beans, leaves and flowers, linden flowers, liverwort, hepatica, jasmine flowers, common field daisies, lily of the valley, camomile, calamint, agrimony, celandine, nasturtium, nettles, leeks, onions, goutwort, angelica, blessed thistle and motherwort.

**SULPHUR** Sulphur is the chemical which expels body impurities and enables the liver to do its work successfully as a storehouse and transformer. It cleanses the bloodstream, beautifies the hair and skin and is most beneficial in cases of gallstones, cysts, tumors, pimples, eczema, poison ivy, poison oak and erysipelas. It is found in dandelion leaves and flowers, spinach, cabbage, onions, leeks, garlic, milk thistles, hops, beer, apples, turnip tops, beet leaves, French or kidney bean leaves, plums, prunes, apricots, apricot leaves, peaches, peach leaves, sage, parsley leaves and flowers, majoram, mustard leaves and flowers, nettles, thyme, carrots, carrot seeds, carrotway, carrotway seeds, celery seeds, yeast, ailsander, sorrel leaves and flowers, yellow violet leaves and flowers, asparagus, figs, nasturtium leaves, alfalfa, fennel, motherwort, hepatica leaves and flowers, blackberry leaves, black currant leaves, gooseberry leaves, honey, egg yolks, strawberry leaves, peas, melons, melon seeds,

**CARBON**

**NITROGEN OXYGEN and HYDROGEN**

This is the chemical name of Charcoal, which is found in combination in many minerals and in all animal and vegetable substances. Being an acid absorber it is excellent for indigestion and is easily obtained by applying great heat to all kinds of foods, particularly starches, such as breads, cereals, etc. One of the best forms of charcoal is toast.

These are the colorless, odorless, gaseous elements which are essential to all animal and vegetable life and constitute about one fifth of the total volume of the atmosphere. Our ability to absorb these three elements depends on the proper balancing of the other chemicals and the magnetism of our bodies.

## Vitamins or Live Chemicals

Vitamins are the live elements which are to be found in all natural foods. The best forms of vitamins are fish liver oils and the green buds or sprouts which are at their best in the spring time. Eat them immediately after plucking because cooking, frigidation and oxydization destroys most vitamins.

Promotes growth, gives resistance to infections. It aids in maintaining good vision and helps to prevent blindness. It increases the life-span, improves the condition of the skin, prevents tooth decay, kidney stones, colds and catarrh. It is found in butter, carrots, cheese, cream, milk, bananas, parsley, kale, cantaloupe, cherries, prunes, tomatoes, liver, egg yolks, cod liver oil, nuts, halibut liver oil, almond oil, wheat germ oil, soy bean oil, peach kernel oil, olive oil and all green leaves providing they are freshly plucked and have not deteriorated through frigidation, oxydization or cooking.

One of the first vitamins to be isolated and identified. A nerve tonic which stimulates assimilation and appetite. Recognized for some time as a specific cure for deficiency diseases such as beri-beri, nervousness, neuritis and some heart disturbances. Being a combination of live Sulphur, Potassium and Phosphorus, it prevents indigestion and constipation, also increases vitality and enthusiasm—absolutely essential for expectant mothers who desire healthy, normal, happy babies. It is found in beer, brewers yeast, wheat germ, rice shavings, germinated grain, cabbage, carrots, beans, peas, lentils, nuts, liver, liver extracts, meat, milk, buckwheat, wild rice, spinach, bran, peas, peppers. The best source of supply are the fresh young sprouts of any edible plant such as ferns, sprouts, hawthorne sprouts, young violet sprouts, maple tree sprouts, kidney bean sprouts and potato peelings.

These are rarely deficient in the average varied diet. They are found in vegetables, yeast products, citrus fruits, cereals (if properly cooked), meat, cheese, milk, raw eggs, and particularly the fresh young leaves, flowers, roots and fruits of edible plants. (Dandelion leaves, beets, beet leaves, parsley, garden cress, red clover leaves and flowers, cooked nettles, spinach and nuts are most helpful and effective in the preservation of the natural color of your hair.)

**VITAMIN "B-12"** Excellent in cases of ANAEMIA. Found in Liver, Yeast Extracts and Beets.

This is the anti-scurvy vitamin—also called ascorbic or cevitamic acid. It is a protection against ulcers, scurvy, anaemia, bleeding gums, swollen limbs, pains in the joints, low blood pressure, rheumatism, arthritis, minor hemorrhages. Containing as it does live iodine and sodium in combination with live sulphur and potassium, this is an excellent gland vitamin. It is found in raw fish, seaweed, sea-holly, sea-spinach, kelp, Irish moss, lemons, limes, oranges, grapefruits, tangerines, pineapples, green peppers, bamboo sprouts, bean sprouts, watercress, cucumbers, tomatoes, cranberries, dandelions, string beans, parsley, pimientos, raw potatoes and all young, fresh, edible leaves—particularly if they are grown within ten miles of the ocean and have lots of sunshine.

This vitamin regulates the use of Calcium and Phosphorus in the body, prevents rickets, bone deformities, muscular weakness, nervousness and tooth decay. It is found in butter, cream, milk, cheese, egg yolks, nuts, seaweeds, caviar, all kinds of fish and irradiated foods, cod liver oil, halibut liver oil and plenty of sunshine.

This vitamin is excellent for very bad conditions of nervousness and weak muscles. It is found in all foods containing live Phosphorus and live Calcium. Being essential to reproductive functions, it is highly recommended for sterility, frigidity and loss of vigor. It is found in butter, wheat germ oil, soy bean oil, almond oil, wheat germ, celery seeds, nuts, raw egg yolk, rye, brown rice, buckwheat, wheat, corn, barley, oatmeal, beans, peas, lentils, chard, oysters, black molasses, some meats, seaweeds, clams, caviar. It is better taken in combination with live sodium and live sulphur which is to be found in all non-poisonous green leaves which bear yellow and white flowers—when it proves excellent for weak eyes.

This is the vitamin which is usually lost in the refining and cooking of foods. It prevents colitis, pellagra, skin eruptions, catarract, ulcers and loss of vitality. It is found in liver, liver extracts, yeast, yeast products, fermented hops, egg yolks, dandelions, cress, mustard-greens, turnip-greens, kale, milk, bananas, bean-sprouts, bamboo-sprouts, fresh bean leaves, salmon, caviar, oysters, clams, soy bean sprouts, parsley and all kinds of edible fresh green leaves and cereals if eaten uncooked.

Vitamin "K" is a live sodium compound. There is still much uncertainty about the results derived from this Vitamin. While marvelous things have been discovered in this particular field, research has not been thorough enough and experiments numerous enough to fully ascertain their true values. We do know, however, that pure Vitamin "K" has been found miraculously in cases of infants threatened with internal bleeding. In a thoroughly harmless form it can be found in camomile flowers, the tiny common field daisy, blossoms of yarrow, and the blossoms of the lovely lily of the Valley.

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Revised Edition, Copyright 1949

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PYTHON PUBLISHING COMPANY  
P. O. Box 957, Grand Central Annex,  
New York 17, N. Y.

PRINTED IN U.S.A.  
3rd, Revised Edition, 1959

PRICE TWO DOLLARS

The first edition (1943) was called the Victory Vital Health Chart. This is the third edition (1959) newly discovered vitamin B12 added. Vitamin G is now known as Riboflavin (vitamin B2). Thiamine is also known as vitamin B1. Vitamins were originally called vitamins, erroneously linked to "amines" which are organic derivatives of ammonia. Note the large number of edible "weeds" which are listed (e.g., dandelion, clover, groundsel, cowslip flowers, field daisies, strawberry leaves, etc.).



The chart lists about 40 of these unusual foods. The leaves, flowers and seeds of a number of plants are listed, including salad ingredients such as turnip tops, weeds and wildflowers. Mention is made of dandelions, ferns, clover and nettles, and the leaves of garden plants such as nasturtiums, violets and peaches. Plants growing near the sea are said to be especially beneficial for vitamin C and iodine. Various sea weeds are mentioned as is Irish moss. Then there are bean sprouts, mushrooms and charcoal. One needs to know how to prepare these ingredients – some are eaten raw (added to salads), others steamed or made into a soup or liquidised to make juice.

Picking some of the ingredients required foraging, perhaps along a roadside or the edge of a field, in rock pools at the seaside or in woodland and wasteland. A book of wildflowers would be required by all but the most knowledgeable, to avoid collecting poisonous or bitter-tasting plants. One could hardly go to the greengrocer and ask for a pound of dandelion leaves. This chart was produced at a time of war when citizens were being asked to grow their own produce and ornamental gardens might have been converted to vegetable plots. Even so, the practicalities of harvesting some of the ingredients would have precluded their common use, particularly for city dwellers (foraging in public parks is usually forbidden). Jill and Irving were obviously not equipped to measure the vitamin and mineral composition of the many plants listed and must have obtained that information through extensive research of the then current literature, which would have lacked some of the information they were seeking. Even today, the composition of many plants is not known. A paper written as recently as 1998 was the first to provide information on the chemical composition of eight species of commonly eaten edible wild plants.<sup>125</sup>

Modern fruit and vegetables are bred for taste, appearance and yield. Disease and pest resistance are given top priority, not nutritional content. As a result, modern crops often contain reduced amounts of vitamins and minerals compared with crops grown in the past. Use of pesticides is now widespread, so foraging for wild plants is not very practical these days. According to author Michael Milburn, weeds contain more beneficial nutrients such as vitamins and minerals on a per-weight basis than cultivated foods.<sup>126</sup> He concludes “There is a growing recognition of the need to change current dietary patterns and of the value of traditional foodways”. “Wildman” Steve Brill was made famous when he was arrested in Central Park for pulling weeds to teach people about edible wild plants. He later said (with Evelyn Dean), “Most Americans are overfed and malnourished” and “although wild foods won’t make you live forever, their extra nutrients often help forestall or prevent degenerative disease”.

Intensively farmed land not replenished by organic means is steadily losing some of its nutrients and more alarmingly, is being eroded at a faster rate than topsoil is being replaced. There has recently been growing interest in the use of wild plants and fungi for medicinal purposes and as herbs. In 2019, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew published a booklet “Wild Plants for a Sustainable future”. Whilst the Batt-Baird Health Chart was not entirely vegan, it did highlight fruit, vegetables, legumes, wild plants, mushrooms, nuts and seaweed. Western society is now increasingly turning to these foods for nutrition instead of processed flour, red meat, poultry and eggs, partly as a result of the perceived benefits to reduce accelerating climate change and partly for human health or animal welfare reasons. As for dairy products, they are not necessary for optimal health, but for many people, they are the easiest way to get the calcium, vitamin D, and protein they need. Phasing out herds of methane-producing dairy cows is going to be a challenge.

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<sup>125</sup> Mineral Nutrient Composition of Edible Wild Plants - ScienceDirect

<sup>126</sup> Indigenous\_Nutrition\_compressed.pdf (utep.edu)

Jill showed an interest in numerology, having studied longevity and the great ages quoted in the Old Testament. Numerology is any belief in the divine or mystical relationship between a number and one or more coinciding events. It is also the study of the numerical value of the letters in words, names, and ideas. Often associated with the paranormal, alongside astrology and similar divinatory arts, Jill issued what was probably a booklet or pamphlet called *Friend or Foe* on this topic. Unfortunately, no copies seem to have survived. For some reason, Irving was similar enthused, publishing a book called *Do you know...* in 1940. Only one copy can be readily found, held in the University of California, Santa Barbara Library. Apart from this one book, Irving's name only appeared on two books, the *Elixir of Life* and a future book on Buddhism, over a decade later.

By the end of the 1930's, Jill and Irving's financial situation must have been quite dire. Jill's adventures were now old news, and she had exhausted the potential audience for her lectures on the West Coast and in Western Canada. The *Juvenol* oil venture had ended in disappointment. As far as is known, Irving never had a permanent job. If so, his obituary failed to mention one and two later visits by Jill's sister, Eva, failed to discover one. Both the book, *Elixir of Life*, and *Juvenol* oil were being discounted to \$1 to get rid of stock. Events in Europe dominated the news. Nine-year-old exploits in the Himalayas were a distant memory.

Both Irving and Jill were familiar with New York City, a place where they could reinvent themselves and start life afresh. They must have tired of being nomads and sought a base, although they never owned any accommodation, living in hotels and rented serviced apartments. It appears that they separated at about this time, Jill and Irving living in separate addresses, Jill in New York and Irving in nearby Westchester. No doubt financial difficulties and a very uncertain future contributed to this state of affairs.

The outbreak of war must have unsettled them both, with not-too-distant memories of the Great War. For those in Britain and the Empire, World War 2 commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1939 and both Jill and Irving wanted to help the war effort. Irving was registered in February 1942 on a draft card. At that time, he was not a US citizen but did appear to have Canadian citizenship. It seems he elected to join a Canadian militia known as the Legion of Frontiersmen, which was a



*The house in Westchester where Irving lived in the early 1940's.*

civilian paramilitary branch affiliated with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Canadian Army. Irving was promoted to Captain, a title given to those in charge of a "Squadron" or group of troops. Just before the start of World War 2, the Canadian branch had 411 members, this branch then splitting into two after disagreements. The Frontiersmen wore Stetson hats, navy blue tunics, khaki pants, and brown boots, acting as auxiliary police at parades and civic functions. Some members served in the second World War, not as Frontiersmen but as members of the armed forces. Irving probably joined in 1942, when many Canadian troops were dispatched to Europe, there being little need to join prior to that time. We do not know where he served, but it is likely to have been in Montreal, his adopted city when in Canada.

**REGISTRATION CARD—(Men born on or after February 17, 1897 and on or before December 31, 1921)**

SERIAL NUMBER T <b>261</b>	1. NAME (Print) <b>FRANCIS KENNEDY IRVIN BAIRD</b> (First) (Middle) (Last)	ORDER NUMBER T <b>11352</b>
2. PLACE OF RESIDENCE (Print) <b>1115 CLAY AVE, PELHAM MANOR, WESTCHESTER N. Y.</b> (Number and street) (Town, township, village, or city) (County) (State)		
3. MAILING ADDRESS <b>SAME</b> (Mailing address if other than place indicated on line 2. If same insert word same)		
4. TELEPHONE <b>PELHAM 8-3191</b> (Exchange) (Number)	5. AGE IN YEARS <b>42</b> DATE OF BIRTH <b>DECEMBER 13, 1900</b> (Mo.) (Day) (Yr.)	6. PLACE OF BIRTH <b>EDINBURGH</b> (Town or county) <b>SCOTLAND</b> (State or country)
7. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS <b>DR. J. BATT, 35 WEST 32<sup>ND</sup> ST. NEW YORK, N. Y.</b>		
8. EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS <b>NONE</b>		
9. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS <b>PYTHON PUBLISHING CO., 35 WEST 32<sup>ND</sup> ST. NEW YORK, N. Y.</b> (Number and street or R. F. D. number) (Town) (County) (State)		
I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.		
D. S. S. Form 1 (Revised 1-1-42)		☆ GPO 16-21630-1 <i>Irvin Baird</i> (Registrant's signature)

Draft card showing Irving lived in Westchester but listed his business as Python Company with same address as Jill. Reverse of card gives his height as 6'-1", weight as 165lbs with blue eyes, grey hair, a ruddy complexion and a scar on the neck.

Immigration records show that Jill was living at the Wellington Hotel, New York, in 1943.<sup>127</sup> She must have lived here for some time before this, as the hotel was listed as her address on an immigration form when returning from Canada, the hotel being her long-term residence. According to a later press article, she disclosed that she had lived in New York City from the end of 1940, presumably initially at 35 West 32<sup>nd</sup> St, New York, one block from the Empire State Building. Python Publishing now had a New York address (previously Toronto, Canada), and Jill worked on writing the occasional pamphlet or small book. Most of these publications have no recorded copies in existence. One book she wrote was *Latin in 25 Lessons*. For a woman with limited secondary education to produce a Latin Primer was a remarkable achievement and does indicate that she had a good grasp of that language. Whether she could speak 13 languages as she once claimed is doubtful, but she may have studied rudimentary phrases in a number of languages to help her gain credibility in her talks.

**REGISTRAR'S REPORT**

DESCRIPTION OF REGISTRANT					
RACE	HEIGHT (Approx.)	WEIGHT (Approx.)	COMPLEXION		
White <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6' 1"	165 lbs	Sallow		
	EYES		HAIR		
Negro	Blue <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Blonde	Light		
	Gray	Red	Ruddy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Oriental	Hazel	Brown	Dark		
	Brown	Black	Freckled		
Indian	Black	Gray <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Light brown		
		Bald	Dark brown		
Filipino			Black		

Other obvious physical characteristics that will aid in identification  
**SCAR ON LEFT OF NECK**

I certify that my answers are true; that the person registered has read or has had read to him his own answers; that I have witnessed his signature or mark and that all of his answers of which I have knowledge are true, except as follows:  
**NONE TO MY KNOWLEDGE**

*Elizabeth G. Hubbard*  
(Signature of registrar)

Registrar for Local Board **739 PELHAM NY**  
(Number) (City or county) (State)

Date of registration **FEBRUARY 16 1943**

Local Board No. <b>739</b>	<b>110</b>
Westchester County	<b>739</b>

Rm. 600, County Office Bldg.  
White Plains, New York  
(The stamp of the Local Board having jurisdiction of the registrant shall be placed in the above space)

16-21630-1

<sup>127</sup> Nov 23, 1943. Manifest 445 entry occurred when Jill returned from visiting Eva in Sillery, Quebec. Her address is given as Wellington Hotel, New York City.

These occasional self-published articles would not have made a great deal of money. One might imagine, therefore, that the Wellington Hotel was a sleazy establishment used by travelling salesmen, on the wrong side of the tracks, in a less than salubrious part of New York City. It was in fact one of the best residential hotels in New York, on the corner of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 55<sup>th</sup> Street, right next to Central Park and close to Carnegie Hall. A postcard of the hotel in 1940 gives the room rates. It had 700 rooms and the double room rates varied from \$3.50 to \$7.00 per day. At first glance that appears to be remarkably inexpensive, equating to between \$70 and \$140 in today's money. But trying to estimate costs in the past with those in the present is not an exact science, given the change in the cost of living and average level of wages.

Taking an average room rate of \$5.25, the cost per month at that time comes to about \$160/month or an annual cost of \$1,920. Tax rates went up dramatically during the war from 4% to about 20%. Assuming 20% tax and allowing other expenditure for meals (they always ate at restaurants), clothes, books and newspapers, travel, health, laundry,

telephone calls, outings to cinemas and shows, etc., Jill and Irving would need a combined annual income of at least \$3,200. The average rent for an apartment in Manhattan at that time was about \$50/month, increasing to about \$100 for a three-room apartment near Central Park. To put this in perspective, the average salary for a male worker in 1940 was about \$1,368/year, whilst a teacher could make a paltry \$1,500/year, both before tax. Women were paid just over half the pay of a man. Jill and Irving were living way beyond their means on Jill's income, whatever little amount that might be.

Some years later, Jill was to visit London and invite her brother Jack to see her. She gave her address there as an apartment in the district of Knightsbridge. Jack thought she must have imagined an address in one of the most exclusive residential districts in London and set off, not really expecting to find her there. He did find her, living in a penthouse apartment, close to the famous Harrods department store. "How can you possibly afford to stay here?", he asked her. She dug out a payslip, on which was printed the name Du Pont.<sup>128</sup> As far as is known, neither Jill nor Irving ever worked for any of the Du Pont companies.



*Wellington Hotel, c1940*

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<sup>128</sup> As told to me by my late mother, Ruth Davies (Batt), Jack's daughter.

Jill had shown that when it came to raising funds, or surviving on next to no income, she could be Machiavellian. So how had she achieved this style of living? One theory springs to mind. Jill and Irving had fallen out in about 1939. Irving tried unsuccessfully to author a book on his own, leaning heavily on Jill's previous articles. Could Jill have had an affair with a member of the famous and wealthy Du Pont family, blackmailing that individual who then paid her from the Du Pont company account so that nothing could be traced back to him? The DuPont Textile Company was one of the original tenants of the Empire State building and a DuPont was on the board for the construction of that building. Jill's New York address was initially one block distant from the Empire State Building.

When Irving returned from his military service in Canada, Jill and Irving reunited, living happily ever after on the regular income. There are a few concerns with this theory, although it is not totally without merit. Jill was 49 years old in 1940, no spring chicken. She would have driven most men to distraction after a relatively short period. Her reports regarding personal matters were known to lack credibility in certain areas, so any claims of an affair could be easily refuted. Do blackmailed individuals offer a lifetime regular income? The person involved would have to be a DuPont company executive in order for a non-employee to be paid a salary.

There could be another explanation. Try this one which involves a square and compasses! Freemasonry is said to have originated from guilds of the Scottish masons in the Middle Ages. Until relatively recently when it has been in decline, masonry was a means for politicians, wealthy industrialists, the judiciary and other prominent members of society to meet each other, sharing their wealth with those less fortunate and looking after the interests of each other. In those times, it was a secret society with certain traditions and beliefs (possibly less so today). One needed to believe in the "Grand Architect of the Universe", aka "God", and some believed that masons had a link with the Old Testament (i.e., the builders of Solomon's temple). In the early days, only men could become Freemasons, then some lodges allowed wives and daughters of members to either be admitted or join sister organisations with similar aspirations. As with many secret societies, there are certain significant numbers, sometimes only revealed as one climbs the hierarchy. In the case of masonry, five numbers of particular note are: 3 (three levels of a stonemason's craft), 33 (the supreme number in Scottish Rite Masonry, the age at which Jesus died), 9 (multiples of 3, representing wholeness and completion), 7 (prophesies and a significant number in the Old Testament, often considered to be a lucky number), 5 (five-pointed star, pentagon, five points of Fellowship).<sup>129</sup> Another source, states that the following additional numbers are significant: 4,8,11,12,14,15,21,26,27,40,81.<sup>130</sup> There is no doubt that numerology played an important role in masonry at that time (and perhaps today as well).

Whilst some masons prefer their identity to remain secret, prominent known masons include Simon Bolivar, Voltaire, Goethe, Mozart and Sir Winston Churchill. In the United States we can list George Washington, Paul Revere, Benjamin Franklin and many US Presidents including Franklin D Roosevelt who was president from 1933-1945, winning four presidential elections. The wealthy and somewhat incestuous Du Pont family had accumulated a vast amount of wealth within their extended family from their various businesses, which largely involved chemicals and to a lesser extent, motor cars. Many of that family were masons, some having founded lodges, and some had so much money to burn that they became noted philanthropists. Eva Du Pont was to marry the third son of President Roosevelt, and her brother was an executive with the Du Pont company.

Any man can apply to be a mason, but one has to be of good moral character, and at that time, needed to look and behave like "one of them". One did not have to be wealthy or famous, but it certainly made admission easier. Both Jill and Irving craved being famous. Becoming associated with masonry would greatly assist that aim, allowing them to readily mix with some of the elite in society. They just

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<sup>129</sup> Yorkrightofcalifornia.org – some Masonic Numerology.

<sup>130</sup> The significance of numbers in Freemasonry (bcy.ca)

needed to polish their credentials. They were famous explorers, they had discovered the elixir of life, they believed in numerology, both having published articles on that subject. Irving was of Scottish extraction; surely, he was well qualified to become a mason and indeed he was admitted to the brotherhood. Did he then state he had to join the Canadian militia? His partner, Jill, could assist the masons with their magazine, but she needed a salary sufficient to cover for them both. A senior mason advised them that there was no means to do this directly, as expenditure was strictly audited and members were expected to donate their time on a voluntary basis, many of the wives having wealthy husbands. A wealthy philanthropic member, one of the Du Pont family, was contacted and he agreed to help. He was, or knew, an executive in the Du Pont company who could pay Jill a salary which reflected the standard of living to which she and her husband aspired, provided Jill worked for the masonic magazine. Jill was now tied to that job for the rest of her life in order to get the income to provide the lifestyle she desired.

Of course, Jill could have met a DuPont family member through the masons, that person becoming infatuated with her and setting her up for the rest of her life. It is known that Jill had an office with the masons with her name on the door.<sup>131</sup> Her responsibility was to obtain advertising for the magazine and then to distribute the magazine. It is also known that many of the DuPont family were (and still are) extremely wealthy, having more money than they needed.

In December 1941, Jill was in Washington D.C., claiming that she was trying to interview her former boss, Winston Churchill!<sup>132</sup> To claim he was her former boss was something of an exaggeration, but not totally untrue. Winston Churchill had just arrived on one of the most important missions of his life – to get President Roosevelt of the USA on board in the fight against Germany and to visit Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King. The USA had just entered the War following the attack by Japan on Pearl Harbour.

Earlier, Churchill had been partly responsible for the fiasco at Gallipoli in 1915, sacked and then reinstated to the coalition Government in 1917 as Minister of Munitions. His brief included chemical warfare which he believed could be a game changer at that time.<sup>133</sup> He would undoubtedly have visited the facilities at Porton Down. Churchill was also in charge of the Optical Munitions and Glassware Branch at the time Jill worked there. Jill stated in a newspaper article that she had travelled to Washington from New York where she had been for a year. She had visited the White House (probably trying to present her Nepalese and Tibetan seeds to Vice President Wallace), the British Embassy and the Canadian Legation, offering to help the war effort, using her knowledge of countries and languages.<sup>134</sup> She also stated she was working on a book but did not give the subject.

B-6 \*

### Former Aide Misses Churchill by Hours, Awaits His Return

**Dr. Jill Cossley-Batt Worked With Statesman During World War I**

She worked with Winston Churchill during the last World War and missed an interview with him here by two hours. She came here from New York City only to find that her former chief had departed for Ottawa, Canada.

However, Dr. Jill Cossley-Batt, of the Faculty of the University of London, says she will remain here in the hope that she may see the British Prime Minister when he returns to Washington. But in the meantime, she expects to present Vice President Wallace with seeds of the cinchona tree whose bark yields quinine. She gathered the seeds in the Orient.

With Dr. Irvin Baird and an expedition she spent five years in the high Himalaya mountains studying customs and culture of Tibet inhabitants. The expedition brought back reports of inhabitants who had lived as much as 120 to 150 years. She attributed this longevity to a proper diet, the high altitude and the administering of herbs at proper times.

**Worked With Churchill.**

Dr. Cossley-Batt has been in this country a year working on a book doing research. However, she strongly wishes to serve her country in any capacity that may be needed.

She explained that during the last war she worked with Mr. Churchill in the Chemical Warfare Committee office and since then has visited many countries and has a broad background, not only of languages, but of international events which may prove of value to the British Empire and the United States.

Among her numerous clippings was a letter asking full co-operation for her and the expedition during the stay in Tibet. Signed by the 13th Dalai Lama, it was in the native tongue.

**Visits White House.**

Since her arrival here Sunday she has visited the White House, the British Embassy and the Canadian Legation. However, she declined to reveal her discussions with officials except to say that she was here to do her part in the war effort.

Though as yet no appointment has been arranged she also expects to visit a number of Federal agencies. The wild quinine seeds she gathered for presentation to Mr. Wallace came from Nepal, India, she said.

The Oxford and London University educated woman left India in 1935 and since then has been in England, Canada and the United States.



**DR. JILL COSSLEY-BATT.**  
—Star Staff Photo.

*THE EVENING STAR, Washington, D.C., December 30, 1941, page B-6*

<sup>131</sup> The door with her name on it was seen by Jill's sister Eva and her husband.

<sup>132</sup> The Evening Star, Washington, D.C., December 30, 1941, page B-6, image 25

<sup>133</sup> <https://winstonchurchill.hillsdale.edu/churchill-and-chemical-warfare/> . Coincidentally, my great uncle on my father's side was to play a major role in the manufacture, testing and use of non-fatal chemical weapons including their use in North Russia in 1919. I have written a separate biography for Major Thomas Davies.

<sup>134</sup> Evening Star, Washington, Dec 30<sup>th</sup>, 1941.



*Jaunty Jill, the picture used by The Evening Star in December 1941.*

## 10. New York State of Mind

In June 1943, Jill gave speeches at a Rotary Club, New York and at the Bombay Club, Washington, about India, stating that Hindus need education before Home Rule, based on her experiences there.<sup>135</sup> She claimed to have spent most of her youth living in India and that her uncle was chief justice of the Supreme Court of Bengal. Home rule for India was a sensitive issue at the time, India gaining independence just a few years later in 1947. It seems that Jill would turn her abilities to anything on which she held strong views. Showing her diverse talent, Jill issued a pamphlet with the title *Brewing beer in Tibet* in March 1944.<sup>136</sup> At about this time, Jill became interested in writing more poetry. She wrote the *Victory Liberty Song*, published in January 1945 as the end of the war was imminent.<sup>137</sup> She also published a limited edition of a book called *Selected Poems* (date unknown). Jill had long been interested in poetry and whilst staying in Vancouver, allowed a newspaper to reprint a poem of hers called "Sympathy" which she claimed won the Oxford Prize Poetical Competition (sic) in 1915, when she was a student at Somerville College.

*It wandered on, the gathering gloom,  
That little soul so fair to see;  
Faintness and darkness all around,  
And none to hear its plaintive sound,  
That lonely cry for SYMPATHY.*

*It wandered on, the peril grew,  
That little soul so fair to see,  
The raging tempest drowned its moan.  
Men passed and left it there alone;  
We had no time for SYMPATHY.*

*There strode a sufferer through the mist,  
With nought to give - but sympathy;  
Home to his heart, his peril done,  
He bore that little lonely one.  
To rest for aye – in SYMPATHY.*

Jill and Irving became US citizens prior to 1950, and this may have been in 1945 when their passports expired. Jill still kept her maiden name, registering as Jill Cossley Batt (no hyphen).<sup>138</sup> She continued her interest in poetry, copyrighting the poem *Speak Gently* in 1949. "Irving" appears to have reverted to "Irvin" at about this time. In 1956, Jill renewed the copyright on her book *The Last of the California Rangers*. It expired after 95 years in 2023.<sup>139</sup>

Anna Eleanor Roosevelt was one of the most distinguished American First Ladies. Not only was she the longest serving First Lady but she was an admired diplomat and political activist. Though widely respected in her later years, Roosevelt was a controversial First Lady at the time for her outspokenness, particularly on civil rights for African Americans. She was the first presidential spouse to hold regular press conferences, write a daily newspaper column, write a monthly magazine column,

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<sup>135</sup> The News, Paterson, New Jersey, January 15, 1943.

<sup>136</sup> Mar. 15, 1944; A 133118. Python pub. co., New York. 15117

<sup>137</sup> Jan. 5, 1945; AA 473285. Python pub. co., New York. 191

<sup>138</sup> Court District: New York BATT, Jill Cossley\_555806 Record 1883 of 4961

<sup>139</sup> [https://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/california\\_rangers/](https://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/california_rangers/)



host a weekly radio show, and speak at a national party convention. After her husband's death in 1945, she moved to an apartment in Greenwich Village, New York. By 1950, she had relocated to rented suites at the Park Sheraton Hotel where she stayed for three years. This was just around the corner from where Jill and Irving were living.

Sillery, 25<sup>th</sup> April 1995

Dear Ruth,

Thank you so much for your latest phone call, which gave me great joy.

You will find enclosed a few notes about Jill. I apologize for the delay in replying to your request on the subject. Jill might have made a better use of her life, had not she met such a rascal as Irvin Baird, a parasite. Both lived a dangerous and hectic life, with no permanent address, for obvious reasons: they were living on a shoestring, at the first jack-an'-encounter. She was secretary to the Masonic Lodge where Eva and I had lunch with her; she had an office with her name on the door. She was, for a while, private secretary at Mrs. Roosevelt's office in New York; she showed me photocopies of correspondence etc.

Maurice Lebel was not very complimentary about Irvin Baird when writing to my mother, Ruth, describing the pair as living a "dangerous and hectic life".

Jill liked to mix with the rich and famous – perhaps that was how she obtained the position as Mrs Roosevelt's private secretary at her apartment. No formal record of this has been located, but this was verified by an eminent Canadian professor, Maurice Lebel OC, OQ, husband of Jill's sister Eva.<sup>140</sup> On a rare visit to see Jill in the 1960's, Jill mentioned this to him. When he expressed astonishment, Jill collected some copies of correspondence from her hotel room which proved that she had indeed worked for the former First Lady.<sup>141</sup> Perhaps this is not surprising – Jill knew the newspaper editors

<sup>140</sup> OC is Order of Canada, OQ is Order of Quebec. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maurice\\_Lebel1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maurice_Lebel1)

<sup>141</sup> This was confirmed in a letter Maurice wrote to my mother, Ruth Davies (née Batt), in 1995.

and owners of radio stations and was known to many of the masons and their wives. Living close by also helped: she and Irving had moved to the nearby Peter Stuyvesant Hotel. By the time of Eleanor's death, she was regarded as "one of the most esteemed women in the world"; The New York Times called her "the object of almost universal respect" in an obituary.

Whilst in Sikkim, Jill had become fascinated with Buddhism, talking to some of the monks who she met. She learned about the "Tibetan Wheel of Life" with its ritual, symbols and teachings. Jill had undertaken further study on her return, but nothing further emerged. Something seemed to renew her interest in the subject, and it could have been the most well-known man in America at that time.

Having become famous in World War I for his coverage of the war in north Africa and his role in creating the popular image of "Lawrence of Arabia," Lowell Thomas was one of the most well-known and highly regarded news correspondents of his day. In many ways he was like Jill, being a relentless self-promoter. Also, like Jill, he toured the States in the 1920's giving talks, often at the same venues as Jill. He loved movies and pioneered the introduction of Cinerama. He gave many talks on the radio about his extensive travels, initially on NBC stations. His wife often travelled with him on his lecture tours, but he was not good at managing money, having persistent debt problems. He hosted the first U.S. television news broadcast in 1939 and the first regularly scheduled television news broadcast beginning on February 21, 1940. He embraced dangerous situations and in April 1945, Thomas flew in a normally single-person P-51 Mustang over Berlin while it was being attacked by the Soviet Union, reporting live via radio. He was America's most fearless man to Jill's most fearless woman. By 1949, he was the most well-known journalist in the States.<sup>142</sup>

It was then that he decided to have one final hurrah. Hoping to visit Lhasa, Tibet, he arrived with his son, Lowell Thomas, Jr. in Calcutta in August 1949. Having received prior permission to visit the Tibetan capital, the two men journeyed to, and stayed in, Lhasa for one month. During their time in Lhasa, Thomas maintained contributions to nightly news broadcasts by long-wave and short-wave radio back to America. He succeeded in having an audience with the fourteenth Dalai Lama and was the last Westerner to visit Tibet before the Chinese took control of the country. Lowell was a prominent mason and Jill wrote several letters to him on his return.<sup>143</sup> Thomas published *Out of this World: Across the Himalayas to Tibet* in 1951, one of over 50 works he was to publish. Perhaps this exchange of correspondence encouraged Jill to write a booklet.

In July 1955, Jill and Irvine were ready to publish *Sipa Khorlo (The Tibetan Wheel of Life)*. Although listed as jointly authored, it was obviously written by Jill and contains an occasional use of the first-person pronoun, e.g., "I shall now analyse..." on page 16 and at the start of chapter 5, "In this chapter, I am going to view the most interesting part of the "Circle of Existence or Wheel of Life"".



Cover of book

<sup>142</sup> The Voice of America by Mitchell Stephens, p222 et al. St Martins Press.

<sup>143</sup> Marist Archives and Special Collections, Lowell Thomas Papers, Correspondence Box File 12 March 15<sup>th</sup> and June 7<sup>th</sup> 1950.

Chapter 6 is full of first-person pronouns with not a “we” to be found. The introduction to the book starts: “Since it has been my good fortune to have spent many years in Sikkim and Tibet...”.

The booklet was intended as an introduction to Buddhism for the lay reader, but was criticized by an academic, as it did not quote acknowledged sources of reference or provide any new insight. Nonetheless, copies can be found in such prestigious universities as Brown University and Université de Montréal. Although there had been an interest in Buddhism in the West for some time, it was not of great interest until a little later, when the sixties counterculture established a curiosity in Tibetan Buddhism. This was through Timothy Leary's publication of an adaptation of the so-called *Tibetan Book of the Dead* under the title *The Psychedelic Experience*. If Jill and Irving's book had been published ten years later, it might have generated more interest! Jill exchanged further correspondence with Lowell Thomas for two years after publication.<sup>144</sup> They no doubt massaged each other's egos!

Once again, Jill went on a lecture tour to promote her book. Whilst in Canada, her sister Eva and husband Maurice attended one of her lectures at a magnificent hotel known as Chateau Frontenac. Maurice described her as “a very articulate and forceful lecturer – she was quite a success!”. In a letter, he also stated, “Back in England, nobody cared about her. She had cut off all relations with family and her name was hardly ever mentioned”.



*Chateau Frontenac, Quebec, where Jill gave a lecture.*

In 1956, Jill renewed her copyright of *Last of the California Rangers*. She was now extremely busy arranging the marketing, printing and distribution of all the Python Publishing works as well as undertaking her masonic duties. She also published a “Special Paper” with the title *Tibetan Lamistic Wisdom Through Deep Breathing, Concentration and Meditation*, a topic which is still of interest today.

Jill's sister Eva and husband Maurice Lebel visited Jill on one occasion when Jill and Irvin were living at the Peter Stuyvesant Hotel. Maurice's observations (by letter in 1995) were as follows:

*We spent about two days with them. They were both penniless, living on a shoestring; in an open car, without doors, Irvin Baird drove all over. No petrol, no money for meals: the United Nations, Rockefeller Centre, the Masonic Lodge (both were Masons), Greenwich Village, Radio City, etc. Everywhere we went for a meal – I paid for everything – they had acquaintances and friends, shaking hands with one or the other. A strange world to me. Their apartment was full of books and as bare as a monk's cell. Who paid for the bill? God knows. Ready to move elsewhere at any moment.*

Another family member, Mark Edmonds, met Jill and Irvin while they were staying at the Peter Stuyvesant Hotel. He was given the impression that Irvin was practicing dentistry. As Baird was not medically qualified, the best he could legally have achieved was as a dental assistant. However, when Maurice Lebel met them, he thought Irvin was unemployed and living off Jill's earnings.

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

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AND  
DR. JILL COSSLEY-BATT, O.B.E.; B.A.; D.Sc.; F.R.S.G.  
LEADERS OF THE EXPEDITION

#### CONTRIBUTORS

Rt. Hon. R. B. Bennett,  
Ex-Prime Minister of Canada.  
Sir Herbert Jackson.  
Sir Richard Squires, Ex-Prime  
Minister of Newfoundland.  
Sir Frederick Williams-Taylor.  
Sir George McLaren Brown,  
(Canadian Pacific Railways)  
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#### AUTHORS

The Last of the California  
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(Funk & Wagnalls, N.Y.)

The "Elixir of Life"  
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London & New York).

#### BOOKS ON THE PRESS

The Lost Tribe.  
The Wheel of Life.  
The "Elixir of Life"  
(Revised Edition).  
"Latin in 25 Lessons."

ELIXIR OF LIFE. New, Revised, 1964 Edition by Drs. Batt & Baird, Internationally known Authors, Scientists, Explorers, Lecturers; Leaders of the British-American Himalayan Expedition. This simple, comprehensive, common-sense work is very different. It is non-faddistic. It is filled with excellent information and rational advice respecting the "3 Rs" to a Happy, Healthy, Long Life; namely Right Eating; Right Exercise and Right Thinking. A close study will reveal to readers the true values and benefits of Body Chemical (Mineral-Vitamin) Replenishment through the medium of Natural Foods and Liquids. Python Publishing Co. Price \$3.00.

SIPA KHORLO. (Tibetan Wheel of Life). by Batt & Baird, Hitherto unpublished facts pertaining to Buddhism. Presents an interesting, concise picture of Buddha's Life, Teachings, and Philosophy, with a brief history of Tibet, and a vivid interpretation of the Tibetan Wheel of Life, together with personal observations and data from ancient manuscripts. Illustrated, profound presentation of a fascinating subject". Dr. Herbert Lampkin, Chicago, Ill.

Python Pub. Co. Price \$2.00

SPECIAL PAPER, TIBETAN LAMISTIC WISDOM THROUGH DEEP BREATHING, CONCENTRATION & MEDITATION. by Dr. Jill L. Cossley Batt. Price 25 cents. 5 copies \$1.00.

VICTORY VITAL MINERAL VITAMIN HEALTH CHART by Batt & Baird. Fourth Printing, 1966 Edition. Regarded by Medical and Scientific authorities as a valuable contribution to general Health and Welfare. Explains in simple language, the Health, Mineral and Vitamin values of natural foods, herbs and edible plants of the world. A most valuable source of information for all interested in Health, Dietetics, Botany, Bio-Chemistry, Gardening and Agriculture. Suitable as a Wall Chart for Schools, Colleges, Universities.

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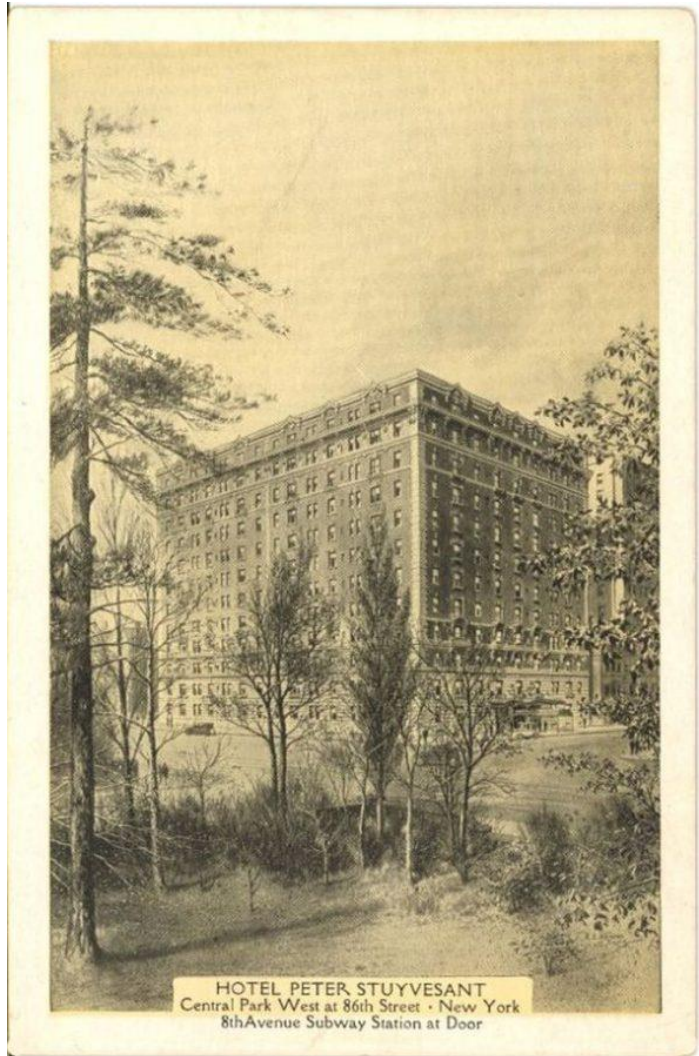
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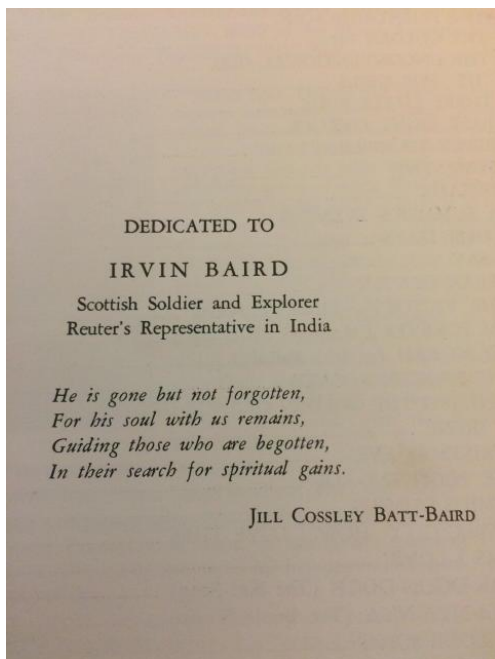
A flyer for Python publications issued in 1965. Interestingly, a revised 1964 edition of the Elixir of Life is mentioned but this may have simply been a case of renewing the copyright. The wallchart now has a fourth edition, release date updated manually to 1966, so this was imminent but delayed. Publishing "Tender Thoughts" may have been the cause of the delay.

Shortly before Irvin's death in 1964, Jill renewed the copyright for the jointly authored the *Elixir of Life*. Unfortunately, the wisdom in that book did not prevent Irvin from dying an early death at the age of 63. He died in St Luke's Hospital on 30<sup>th</sup> January. His brief obituary in the *New York Times* mentioned no occupation other than as a Reuter's correspondent in India (which cannot have been for long).<sup>145</sup> Irvin was believed to have been a Jehovah's Witness, possibly explaining why he did not volunteer to fight in the second world war.<sup>146</sup>

A distraught Jill published *Tender Thoughts – Lyric Poems*, a tribute to Irvin, using the name Jill Cossley Batt-Baird. Once again in the frontispiece, no mention is made of Irvin's occupation other than as a Reuter's correspondent. Jill was still working as the advertising manager for the masonic magazine, which she found to be hard work because of the deadlines at her advancing age (she was 73 years old).



Above, the Peter Stuyvesant Hotel. Jill and Irvin had apartment 716.



Left, a tribute to Irvin in her book of poems. She now called herself Jill Cossley Batt-Baird.

<sup>145</sup> The New York Times of 31 January 1964, page 27,

<sup>146</sup> Letter from Maurice Lebel.

The Peter Stuyvesant Hotel was sold in 1967, and all the internal partitions were replaced by 1970. It is likely that Jill had to leave during the refurbishment work as Jill lived her final couple of years at nearby Parc Cameron Apartments (41 West 86th Street). Always partial to a drink or two (remember her raids on Miss Jennings' drink cabinet), she had turned more heavily to drink, no doubt mourning the loss of her partner, and died of alcoholic poisoning in the Manhattan Metropolitan Hospital on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1969, aged 77. On her death certificate filled in by a member of the St Andrews Society, her name is given as Jill Baird, her occupation is listed as housewife and her birthplace is noted as London, England. Her sister, Eva, had to come to New York to identify her body and as she died a pauper, the masons paid for her funeral which was arranged by the St Andrews Society. She was buried as Jill Baird in an unmarked grave on a knoll in Cypress Hill Cemetery, Brooklyn, on 20<sup>th</sup> February 1969, about 40 feet away from Irvin, in ground purchased by the St Andrews Society. What became of her boxes and suitcases filled with books, photographs, film and newspaper cuttings is unknown. Her belongings were probably thrown away as Eva had no means of readily transporting Jill's effects back to Canada.



*The Parc Cameron apartments where Jill spent her final years.*

Jill was all but forgotten by relatives. My mother, Ruth Davies (née Batt) asked Professor Maurice Lebel for any information on Jill in 1995. On my mother's death in 2019, I sifted through old letters and books which included those from Maurice, together with two of Jill's publications. Jill was indeed a mystery to everyone and perhaps even to herself. What an extraordinary life!



*Left. Burial location of Jill – Scott Wallace and wife Meg in background, Cypress Hill cemetery. Below. St Andrews obelisk memorial to buried Scots.*

## Appendix – Sources and Newspaper Clippings

Source for all news clippings is *newspapers.com* except the Anaheim Gazette which can be found on [ag-1927-05-05.pdf](#) ([yoreanaheim.com](#)) and Australian newspapers (*Trove*, [trove.nla.gov.au](#)).

The *Indian Culture* website contains the information on events before and during Jill and Irving's trip to Sikkim: Visit to India of Miss Jill Cossley- Batt and Dr Irvin Baird, on An Expedition to the Himalayas | INDIAN CULTURE

The paper on Optical Munitions can be found at *Optical Munitions: Clinical and Experimental Optometry: Vol 1, No 9* ([tandfonline.com](#))

Use was made of *Ancestry*® and *FamilySearch*® websites for historical documents.

Information on Jack Batt's war record is held at *National Archives of Australia*, record B2455, Batt J [recordsearch.naa.gov.au](#)

Letters from Maurice Lebel and Mark Edmonds to Ruth Davies.

It is assumed that there is no copyright on unattributed photographs which have been retrieved from web sites.

Sources from books are attributed in footnotes or in the text.

A small sample of some of the many clippings used to compile this biography follows.

## ❁ OPTICAL MUNITIONS. ❁

By Miss J. L. COSSLEY-BATT, O.B.E., B.A., B.Sc.

(CONTINUED.)

When the Science Exhibition took place in London there were a great many Thermometers exhibited, which included a very rare type of Thermometer—"Deep Sea," made by Mr. Cosser. A great many of these were used during the war by the Navy. Again, passing by the Deep Sea Thermometer, and the Clinical Thermometer, the Army was in need of Survey Thermometers. Survey Thermometers were turned out in large quantities, and I need not omit to state that girls did all the dividing and all the engraving. Now, prior to the war, all the dividing and all the engraving was done by hand, but, when a war was on, it was waste of time. Machines had to be installed, and they were put into factories, and into the Outworkers' homes, no less than 5000 dividing machines. These were worked by girls, and a good divider earned £3 a week. Engraving machines were also worked by girls and young boys. A good engraver earned £2/10/- to £3.

Well, we had taken a number of German prisoners, and it was decided to give them some work to do, and there was formed a German Prisoners' little factory for making Thermometers, known as the Insulated type of Thermometer; either used for the dairy work or for the bath. Survey Thermometers were used by the Artillery, and there were thousands used in France. (The lecturer here exhibited sample of Chemical Thermometer).

There are now installed in Great Britain, four very good factories for making Clinical Thermometers. These factories employ a large number of men who have been trained since the outbreak of war, and a large number of returned soldiers, and also young women. They are all working on the Clinical Thermometer; I must admit they had more rejects than the old outworker, chiefly for bad bore and construction.

### Spectacles and Lenses.

Possibly you know that, owing to the sun in the Eastern lands, where our troops were fighting, the demand for spectacles was very great, and the inability of Great Britain to meet this demand was also proved, but, however, the Optical Munitions put up several other factories to stimulate industry. When the late Sir Wm. Crookes realised the necessity for re-producing Crookes' Glass, it was a great

boon to the men on the field. I have no spectacles here to show you, but I have some samples of lenses produced, and possibly many of you notice that the lenses you have received during the war have been very brittle. Well that is due to the fact that there has been too much B.A., due to the shortage of Potash, and these lenses are being improved daily. Since the outbreak of war there has been formed no less than 150 new optical factories, though some are in a very small way; many are now going to produce lenses in large quantities, and also in good quality.


Now, passing the lenses and the spectacle provision for a little while, we shall go on to the Scientific Instruments. The greatest scientific instrument was the Dial Sight. Possibly many of you are interested and familiar with the German instrument. I happen to have one of these picked up on the battlefield. It was certainly a very fine instrument, but I had examined one or two instruments in Great Britain as fine as the German one. The Dial Sight and Range Finder were turned out in large quantities by Conrad Beck, etc., and various other large factories. The machinery which was installed especially designed for the type of Dial Sight needed by the Army, and we were quite able to meet the demands of the Army in this direction. As a matter of fact, we more than met the demands in both these directions, but the great handicap with the Range Finder was that there were always new inventions cropping up, and as soon as they had completed one kind, another new type was discovered.

When one went over the various factories, and saw the instruments being made, it could not but be observed the large amount of good machinery which had been installed; everything the people wanted was at hand. They only had to apply to the Government, and they got what they wanted if the application was reasonable.

Of course you all know the Dial Sight is a very difficult instrument to manufacture, and it is very essential that it should be perfect in every detail, especially the lens. In order to produce this lens very clearly, it was found that a better class of emery was needed, and when the emery supplies fell off from the American Opt. Co., Great Britain was handicapped for

*After submitting a paper called "The Eye and Lenses" in August 1919, Jill followed up with "Optical Munitions", part of which is reproduced here. Jill certainly had an eye for detail and a good memory!*





Read this letter from Portland, Oregon, U.S.A., from a Doctor of Science

GENTLEMEN,—The writer has tested the Henrietta French Lemon Clay Pack on various skins of both old and young and can state with accuracy that it has resulted in a remarkable and lasting improvement, in cures of wrinkled skins, sagging muscles, blackheads and all blemishes.

Those who are interested in retaining the bloom of youth and a soft delicate skin, should avail themselves of the opportunity science has placed at their disposal. Do not delay to obtain a jar of Henrietta Lemon Clay Pack and regain the bloom of youth.

(Signed) JILL CROSSLEY-BATT, Dr.S.,  
Portland, Ore., U. S. A.

*Jill showed an interest in beauty products from the time she first arrived in Oregon.*

*The Province, Vancouver, British Columbia, Oct 12, 1922 · Page 8*

**PRINCE OF WALES MAY COME WEST TO SEE HIS COUSIN?**

By BARBARA MILLER

How many Los Angeles citizens know that their city numbers among its cosmopolites the daughter of earls and seton of the British royal family?

She is Lady Lillian Huntington Mountbatten, third cousin of the Prince of Wales, and related to the principal royal families of Europe.

But in Hollywood she answers to the name of Jill Crossley Batt and patients in the office of Dr. James A. Park, dentist, 6404 Hollywood boulevard, know her only as "Miss Batt," dental assistant.

"I have only been here ten days and people have found me already. I really can't understand it, for I had hoped to remain unknown."

Miss Batt is plainly bewildered by the rush of visitors to the little office. Press, society and the general public find it convenient to "drop in" for dental work and talks with the assistant.

The visit of her cousin, the prince, to this country and his arrival in New York, Friday, have special significance for Miss Batt.

Referring to the possibility of her cousin visiting California, Miss Batt remarked:

"We used to be playmates when we were children. I haven't heard from him for several months, so really can't say about his plans for coming here."



*I am really Lady Mountbatten! Not a very flattering photo so Jill later decided to keep her hair wrapped in an oriental scarf.*

*Los Angeles Evening Post-Record, Los Angeles, California, Aug 30, 1924 · Page 1*

*The Kansas City Times, Kansas City, Missouri Sat, May 19, 1928 · Page 14*

**Writes Her Way Through 8-Year Tour of World**

Touring the world in a leisurely fashion that has consumed eight years, an English young woman writer and lecturer now is in the United States on her way home. And she's not setting a definite date for arrival in London any more than she has set dates for getting to or from any of the places she has been in since she started.

WHEN Miss Jill Crossley-Batt, young English writer and lecturer, who is in Chicago on the last lap of an 8-year tour around the world, met her first lion in the jungles of Africa she admits she acted like an ordinary woman. "I started to travel," she said to Bertha Fenberg of the Chicago News, "as a special writer for the London Times, but sometimes my adventures got the better of me. I forgot I was connected with anything other than the scenes before me. Now I am a free-lance writer." The formal meeting with the lion was just such an incident to drive all thoughts of other worlds out of her mind.

"To be perfectly honest," said Miss Batt, who has a special zest for life and who has one anecdote right after the other on the tip of her tongue, "when I saw that lion I was so scared I dropped my gun. My legs stiffened as though they were made of stone. I couldn't budge. The lion looked at me and I looked at the lion. The strangest glance passed between us. Then the beast turned away, leaving me standing there in complete safety."

**FULL OF STRANGE SECRETS.**

One of her lectures is on "The Key That Unlocks the Door to the Mystery of the Far East." For she has lived among the Hindus and has learned a great deal of their secret ways. "I have more secrets locked up in me," she says. And they are not all secrets of the Indians or Arabs. For during the war Miss Batt was a chemist in a TNT factory in England, and through her position and her skill, came in contact with the prime movers of the World War. For a time she was in France and when the war was ended was granted free passage to Australia by Lloyd George as commendation for work done.

A graduate of Oxford, a special student at the University of London in chemistry, Miss Batt has lived one of the most remarkable lives since those trying days of the war. Not only does she know how the natives live in the South Sea Isles from actual experience, but she has traveled through country after country, sometimes rid-



MISS JILL CROSSLEY-BATT, WHO HAS HAD MANY STRANGE ADVENTURES IN AN 8-YEAR TOUR OF THE WORLD

ing a horse that cost \$150, as she did in Australia, sometimes walking through bogs and forests.

**LEARNS MORE GOING ALONE.**

Coming here from California, where she has written a book and acted in the studios of Hollywood, she is now bent on telling both men and women about the customs of sheiks, how it feels to live in disguise and to be on the verge of torture and death.

Questioned as to her courage in traveling alone, she said: "One has to go alone in order to learn all these things. I've been taken into families, when if I had some one with me, I never would have penetrated, never would have learned the things I now know. I lived for several months with a Chinese family, for several months with a Japanese family. I've slept in the palaces of India and I've been under the protection of a sheik of the desert of Sahara."

*Touring the world. In Chicago on her way home.*

## KIN OF PRINCE IN L. A.

LOS ANGELES, Sept. 5.—Third\* cousin to the Prince of Wales, "Jill Cossley Batt," dentist's assistant in this city, is hoping her royal relative may visit here during his American stay.

"You can't tell," she declares. "I know that a western visit is not his announced intention. But we used to be playmates when we were children and there are two other cousins of mine in the suite—Lord and Lady Mountbatten—who may influence him."

Miss Batt is in reality Lady Lillian Huntington Mountbatten, who finds the elevated place she might occupy in European royal courts far less intriguing than independent adventure.

During the war, Lady Mountbatten entered war work in an ammunition plant. So fascinating she found it that the war's end saw her determined to continue as a working girl.

She traveled all over the world, arriving here a couple of weeks ago. She obtained employment in a dentist's office, and there she can be found daily, dressed in regulation nurse's uniform, even to the low-heeled shoes.

"My great interest is in labor-producing conditions," declares the incognito royalty. "I have studied them extensively, and I have written a number of articles on the subject."

"That is why I travel and work under the name of Miss Batt—it is so much easier to establish confidential contact with others when they do not set you apart on account of a name."



LADY MOUNTBATTEN

Lady Mountbatten.

Santa Ana Register, Sep 6th, 1924,

## Author Will Relate Studio Experiences

Jill Cossley-Batt, British writer, lecturer and world traveler, will present her final program of the season Tuesday night at 8 o'clock in the auditorium of the Pasadena hotel. The lecture will be entitled, "Life's Flame," and speaker will tell of her experiences as a character actress in the Hollywood studios and an original story writer.

She has traveled in practically every country in the world, penetrating many interesting institutions in foreign countries, where previously only natives had entered.

Assisting Mrs. Cossley-Batt on this program will be the Essex twins, Don McDonald, female impersonator, and Alma Foster, violinist.

*The Pasadena Post, California. 9th April 1927  
p3*



—Illustrated Daily News Photo.

**ROYALTY IN HOLLYWOOD DENTIST'S OFFICE—**  
Lady Lillian Mountbatten, a relative of the Prince of Wales, having fled from England, it is reported, to escape a state marriage, has come to live in Hollywood. She is working as technical assistant to Dr. James D. Park, in Hollywood boulevard, under the assumed name of Miss Jill Crossley-Batt.

*Daily News, Los Angeles, Aug 24, 1924, p1*

## Dining With Cannibals.

### TEN YEARS' TOUR.

#### A Woman Traveller's Adventures.

When Miss Jill Cossley-Batt of Hampshire, was a little girl she had day-dreams of exciting adventures in which she encountered cannibal kins and gorillas. She grew into womanhood and determined to make these day-dreams come true, so she set out for a tour round the world.

That was ten years ago, and now, for the first time in a decade, she has gone back to England. During her absence she claims to have covered thousands of miles of territory, to have taken long walking tours through stretches of unexplored land, to have visited South Africa, Australia, South Sea Islands, India, China, Japan, the United States of America, and Canada.

Miss Cossley-Batt, a dark-eyed, dark-haired woman with a quiet voice and a sun-tanned skin, gave a "Daily Express" representative a

picturesque account of her adventures as she sat in the offices of the Quebec Government just before she left for Hampshire, where she intends to stay for a few months.

She confessed that all the dreams of her childhood had come true. She had seen gorillas and eaten with cannibals.

"I had my first experience with cannibals in the Kalahari Desert, in South West Africa, not far from the ex-Kaiser's old shooting ground," began Miss Cossley-Batt. "I had travelled miles with natives in a Government lorry drawn by a bullock team. That was just after the war, and travelling in that part in those days was not easy.

#### HASTY DEPARTURE.

"I believe that I was the first white woman to visit that part of the country and that only one has been there since I left.

"I became quite friendly with the cannibals and often dined with them, but they showed no desire to eat me! Only when a plague visited them they appeared to think I was somehow responsible, and I took a hasty departure.

"Near Lake Tanganyika I had an adventure with a gorilla. A terrible looking ape more than six feet high suddenly attacked our party.

One of the native boys was hurt, and had he not been the victim I most surely would have been. I believe I am right in my theory 'that gorillas will not harm women, and had I been alone, this one would have been quite friendly. Eventually my boys speared the ape, and carried its skin around triumphantly for weeks.

"My next adventures were in Australia, where I went to study aborigines. I found some of their customs, especially their marriage ceremonies, interesting. The men are subjected to tests of strength by other members of their tribe. I think civilized people might do well to follow some of their habits.

#### ROYAL RECEPTION.

"I made my way to the South Sea Islands. I was received royally by a King at Tonga, who is now dead. I was feasted, and there were special dances held in my honour. "I went on to Japan, and lived with a Japanese family, where I had an opportunity of seeing how cleverly the Japanese train and educate their children.

"Eventually I came to Western America. Then I crashed through the gates of Hollywood and became a film worker appearing in a film with Lillian Gish.

"But presently I am returning to India to study a special tribe that interests me. I believe that the study of this tribe will eventually smooth the unsettled conditions that prevail there at present."

## BARE-KNEED BRITISH GIRL BEARS TROPHIES FROM MANY LANDS

MISS JILL COSSLEY-BATT has found adventure in many lands during her world-circling hike and carries mementos of some of her experiences. In the first photograph she is shown wearing a costly ceremonial cap of a Persian youth. In the second picture she is wearing a Persian pharisee's costume. In the third, her favorite hiking outfit is displayed in detail. The fourth picture exhibits a \$12,500 scarf designed for Empress Marie Antoinette, which Miss Cossley-Batt has insured for \$10,000. —Wide World photos.



Oakland Tribune, 28th October 1927, p3 above and Anaheim Gazette, May 5th, 1927, p8 below.

## Talk Is Girl's World Ticket

British Hiker, War Worker, Pauses Here to Tell of Experiences.

Miss Jill Cossley-Batt, "The girl who is talking her way around the world," and who has paused for several weeks in the bay district to deliver lectures about her experiences, is in Oakland today.

Before she began to rove Miss Cossley-Batt graduated from Oxford university. In wartime she was awarded the Order of the British Empire for distinguished service in the chemical warfare department of that government.

Among her claims to distinction the British girl hiker was first woman ever to visit King George of Honga, a South Sea sovereignty. She has traveled with Arab sheiks in Sahara caravans, gone through India disguised as a boy, crossed the Himalayas to study Thibetan priesthoods and has traversed Australia.

Having hobnobbed with all the stars and celebrities of the world, in addition to facing unusual hardships and enjoying many unique experiences, Miss Cossley-Batt's talks are most entertaining, as well as instructive, and her most unusual gift of humor has been much appreciated by the various kinds of audiences she has addressed while in California. They include both churches and clubs.

Being extremely versatile and having had unusual educational advantages in addition to being a good linguist and great observer, Miss Jill Cossley-Batt is well able to discuss travel events, motion picture experiences, in addition to such matters as present day literature, the war debt, world economics, world peace and the high cost of living.

Miss Cossley-Batt's life has been a succession of adventures, and it is surprising that such a young woman should have the courage to undergo such extraordinary adventures. She is full of vivacity, possesses great magnetism, is a fluent platform speaker, and is referred to by many critics as the greatest woman speaker of the age. Possessing a great sense of humor, plus exceptional will power, perhaps it is not surprising that she has managed to come through so much successfully. It is not only her adventures that make her so interesting, but the philosophy of life that she has worked out for herself.

On Friday afternoon Miss Cossley-Batt will speak in the Hotel Angellina Roof Garden, at 2:30 p. m. This program is given under the auspices of the American Legion Women's Auxiliary and is for women only.

On May 10, 8 p. m., she will also present an evening (assisted by well-known artists) at the Fremont school auditorium, and this program is open to men, women and children.

In addition to lecturing, Miss Jill Cossley-Batt is writing up the orange industry for British publications.

# BRITISH GIRL, EXPLORER AND WRITER, HERE

Miss Jill L. Crossley-Batt,  
Adventuress, May Lecture  
In City

Miss Jill L. Crossley-Batt, internationally known writer, explorer and lecturer visited Benton Harbor yesterday afternoon, calling upon several local people interested in bringing Miss Crossley-Batt here next winter for a lecture.

Miss Crossley-Batt has traversed the farthest corners of the world. She has lived as a Mohammedan and desert Arab, penetrated into mountain fastnesses of primitive peoples, and frequented the busy marts of the world's life as a native in native garb.

She has a marvelous personality, is a gifted speaker and accomplished linguist. During her nine years of travel and adventure she has faced every imaginable type of danger and hardship. As a result she is perfectly poised and self possessed. She has a keen sense of humor, and a keen intuitive sense of understanding.

Speaking of her travels, Miss Crossley-Batt said yesterday, "during my travels, my eyes have been my passport, and my intuition my guide." Her experiences have been unique in the history of English woman-kind.

Besides her travels, Miss Crossley-Batt lists among her lecture subjects many of an intellectual type, among them "Companionate Marriage Through the Eyes of a Woman," "International Journalism," "The Lowdown on the Hollywood Movies," and "Philosophies and Religions."

Efforts are being made to bring Miss Crossley-Batt here during the coming winter season.

*The Herald-Palladium, Benton Harbor, Michigan, Apr 27<sup>th</sup>, 1928, p8.*

## Gives Wierd Temple Dance



XENIA YACOVLOFF

Former member of the Imperial Russian Ballet, who will present famous Nautch dance at Legion entertainment in Woman's Club Thursday night.

## WILL TELL LURE OF INDIAN TRAVEL

Miss Crossley-Batt and Artists To Appear at  
Woman's Club For Legionaires

Presentation of the famous Nautch dance by Xenia Yacovloff, former member of the Imperial Russian ballet, will be one of the unusual features of an entertainment at the Woman's club Thursday night, given by Miss Jill Crossley-Batt and her company of artists.

Mademoiselle Yacovloff will wear the characteristic apparel of the Nautch girls in presenting this dance. A suggestion of the mystic rites of the Indian temple is given in the atmosphere which the superior art of the dancer surrounds her presentation. As a prelude to this characterization, Miss Crossley-Batt will give a brief explanation of the Nautch dance and the Nautch girls who give this mystic temple ceremony.

Miss Crossley-Batt spent several years traveling in India and other oriental countries, and possesses a vast fund of information concerning the people of India. She visited the seven Mystery Men of India, disguised in male apparel that

she might learn of their marvelous powers and insight into human life.

This entertainment is to be further featured by pianoforte selections by Alexander Kossloff, noted artist, and artistic interpretive dances by Don McDonald, of the Dennis-Shawn dancers.

This performance is sponsored by Legion Post 44. Tickets at 75 cents are now on sale at the Mack Music store and the Glenn Box jewelry store.

### RALPH BLACK HERE

Ralph Black, of San Francisco, arrived last night at the home of his brother, City Clerk Lewis P. Black, for an extended visit here.

*Monrovia Daily News, Monrovia, California  
Jan 18<sup>th</sup>, 1927, p1.*

## British Heroine To Lecture On Travels

"SAN FRANCISCO, the city of my childhood dreams," says Jill L. Cossley-Batt, noted British writer, humorous speaker and world traveler, known in Great Britain as the girl who talked her way around the world. "The first look given to me was pictures of San Francisco. I memorized it from cover to cover, until today this city seems a part of me."

Jill L. Cossley-Batt was born in Hampshire, England, of French and English parentage; is a graduate of Oxford University in languages and literature, and of London University in science (chemistry). When war broke out she was still in her teens; nevertheless until her studies were completed did her bit as a dispatch van driver for the Y. M. C. A.; also helped to break in horses at Temple Remount Depot, in addition to doing a great deal of campaigning on behalf of Sir James Remnant, the member for Holborn District.

On receiving her final degrees, January, 1919, she was sent by the government to H. M. Factory Queensferry as a chemist on the T. N. T. and Tetryl plants. Later she filled the position as recorder to the chemical warfare department, and according to a testimony which she carries, signed by the General and Controller, was specially selected for this work on account of her high chemical qualifications, and was decorated with the Order of the British Empire for distinguished service.

At her own request, due to impaired health, on account of chemical fumes, she was given the position of H. M. Inspector of Optical Munitions and Glassware. This work necessitated her traveling and inspecting factory products in Great Britain, Ireland and France. The work was of a very secretive nature and very few women were permitted to fill such an important position.

March, 1919, she started her world travels, which have taken more than eight years. Her first trip was as a special correspondent of the London Times Trade Supplement, and in carrying out this mission she visited factories over all the British Empire and a portion of the United States.

Miss Cossley-Batt (not Miss Batt) is now on her last lap of this world tour, and expects to reach New York in March, 1928. Since the spring of 1919 she has crossed Australia on horseback with the exception of 500 miles. Was the first white woman to visit King George of Tonga, South Seas. Has hobnobbed with Egyptian seers and Arabian sheiks, while crossing the Sahara Desert.

Has lived in Chinese and Japanese families. Traversed India dressed as a Hindu boy, and was the first white woman to visit the Mystery tribe in the Himalayas, making a close study of their unusual mental and spiritual development, also their health and eternal youth secrets.

This young girl has hundreds of letters, autographs and snapshots from all parts of the world; these she prizes very much, hoping some day to compile a book of her travels when they can be used to general interest.

October, 1923, Miss Cossley-Batt stayed for a few days in San Francisco on her way to Hollywood, when she contributed several special trade articles to one of the leading newspapers.

While in Hollywood, she broke through the studio gates, and

## JILL COSSLEY-BATT



was successful in working her way from an extra to the head of a scenario department. She played the Archduchess in Von Stroheim's latest picture, "The Wedding March," and had twelve one reel comedies and two five reel Westerns on the screen in 1926. Since 1923 she has explored South America, Cuba and Mexico.

While in San Francisco she is completing a book on California which is already accepted by British publishers. The end of October she leaves this city to fill lecture engagements

across the continent. October 20, 8:15 in the evening, Miss Cossley-Batt will speak at the Paul Elder Gallery. Her subject will be "Forbidden Trails of Foreign Lands."

San Francisco Examiner, 9th October 1927, p57.

Note talk by Lowell Thomas, on Lawrence of Arabia and Allenby (bottom of cutting), who was also visiting San Francisco at that time.

This is one of the few articles which covers her movements prior to 1919. There is no "French parentage" which can be attributed to Jill!

**Debate**  
**"Should Companionate Marriage Be Legally Recognized?"**  
 Judge Ben  
**LINDSEY**  
 Rabbi Louis I.  
**NEWMAN**  
**SCOTTISH RITE HALL**  
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**PIGS**



# Brings Back Nut Which Will Quadruple A Person's Vitality

**Such Is Claim of Miss Jill Cossley Batt, Who Also Tells  
Of Centenarians in Himalayas Without Wrinkles or  
Grey Hair. Visitor To Ottawa.**

Civilization would be much better if it would return to the simple life, Miss Jill Cossley Batt, B.A., D.Sc., known as the most travelled woman in the world, told The Citizen this afternoon. With Dr. Irvin Baird, who was her co-leader on the Batt-Baird Himalayas Expedition of 1930-1931, she is paying a short visit to the Capital to confer with His Excellency the Governor-General, Premier R. B. Bennett, Hon. Robert Weir, minister of agriculture, and others.

A great believer in the benefits to be derived from plants and herbs, Dr. Batt brought back with her from the Himalayas a nut, which, she says, she has proved will increase a person's vitality four times.

She believes that other countries may learn a great deal from Tibet, which adapts the material at hand

to meet its own needs so successfully that it is economically independent. There is no such a thing as unemployment, the people are healthy, happy and contented.

The only white woman to ever visit the "Lost Tribe," who live in caves high in the Himalayan mountains, Miss Batt says that despite climatic conditions, many of the "Lost Tribe" have passed the century mark. They are extremely well preserved, having neither wrinkles nor grey hair, and appear to have an unusual abundance of vitality.

Canadian women seemed to be pale and the men not as virile as they might be, Miss Batt thought. In this age of mechanism, many of the ancient arts had been lost; in particular, the use of plants and herbs.


*In the book Elixir of Life, the name of this nut given by the natives is said to be "changnut".*

*The Ottawa Citizen Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, Nov 7th, 1933, p1.*

*Advert. 20 Feb 1936, p4, The Province (Vancouver)*

# TIBET

*"The Forbidden Land"*



**Jill Cossley-Batt**  
Famed Woman  
Explorer

**A** THRILLING travelogue, with 5000 feet of movies by Dr. Jill Cossley-Batt, O.B.E., B.A., D.Sc., and Dr. Irvin Baird, F.R.E.S., F.B.S.G., the leaders of the British Empire Himalayan Expedition to Tibet, will be given under auspices of the Vancouver International Club in the Hotel Vancouver Ballroom, Monday, February 24, at 8 p.m.



From Asia. Seeds collected by Dr. Jill Cossley-Batt, New York. Received January 22, 1942.

Collected in Kampa Dzong, Tibet, unless otherwise specified.

143733. CANAVALIA sp. Fabaceae.

143734. CROTON sp. Euphorbiaceae.

143735. JATROPHA CURCAS L. Euphorbiaceae.

For previous introduction see 107473.

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JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 1942

7

143733 to 143738—Continued.

143736. SOLANUM sp. Solanaceae.

143737. TERMINALIA sp. Combretaceae.

143738. (Undetermined.)

From Nepal.

Details of seeds handed over by Jill in 1942 to U.S. Department of Agriculture.

<b>MANIFEST</b>		Part of	ROUSES POINT, N. Y.	Date	NOV 23 1943	World No.	445
Family name		BATT		Given name		JILL LILY BATT COSSLEY	
Canadian passport 341172 valid until June 1, 1946.							
City No.	Place and date of issue	Section and subdivision	Quota country charged	I. R. P. No.			
203	Toronto, 7-28-43	Act of 1924) 5	Great Britain & N. Ire.	←			
Place of birth (name, country, etc.)		Age	Yrs.	Sex	M.	S.	Occupation
Yeworth, Hampshire Eng.		49		F	W.	S.	Writer
Language spoken		Language	Nationality	Last permanent residence (town, country, etc.)			
English		English	England	58 Hellet, Quebec City.			
Name and address of nearest relative or friend in country whence applicant came		History: Mrs. H. Lavelle					
as above.		as above.					
Immigration history		NYC 1928-1930		NYC & Wash 1930-6-1943		NYC 24th self	
Destination and name and complete address of relative or friend to join there							
Wellington Hotel New York City.							
Class of visa	Ever arrested and deported, or excluded from admission		Purpose of visit and time remaining				
B-100	no		Reside permanently.				
U.S. No.	Height	Weight	Complexion	Hair	Eyes	Remarks	
UNK. 15235	5 ft. 6 in.	145 lb.	Fair	brn	brn	Hotel 5016 W side of nose.	
Record and date of landing, and date of departure		NY NAKURA ???		Registered & fingerprinted.		Can. Id. location card No.	
Seattle June 1933		NY NAKURA ???		Registered & fingerprinted.		Can. Id. location card No.	
Examined by	Previously examined at	Date	Previous disposition	Present disposition	Foreign destination	Approved by	
[Signature]				USA CIV	P. I.	RAT 64.	
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, Immigration and Naturalization Service. Form I-548 (Ed. 1941) 10-11179							

Immigration card from Canada to USA, 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1943. Jill was returning from a stay with sister Eva, taking the SS Hellas from Quebec to Rouses Point, NY, a port town on the Canadian/US border. It seems that she had never formally changed her surname from Batt to Cossley-Batt and so travel documentation just gave her surname as Batt. She was apparently allowed to add Jill to her forenames and also Cossley. Note address in New York City given as Wellington Hotel.

## ONE WIFE, 5 HUBBIES

### TIBET, SUBJECT OF WOMAN EXPLORER

Sikkim . . . Tibet . . . Lhasa, forbidden city . . . the Potala, home of Dalai Lama . . .

Dr. Jill Cossley-Batt, O.B.E., B.A., D.Sc., reclining in an invalid chair, one ankle—broken in a fall on a slippery Vancouver sidewalk—swathed in bandages, but with her white-turbaned head held erect, spoke of these topics Monday night to as large a crowd as the Crystal Ballroom of the Hotel Vancouver has held in many a month.



Dr. Cossley-Batt

"Tibet — The Forbidden Land," was the title of the lecture, given jointly by Dr. Cossley-Batt and her co-explorer husband, Dr. Irvin Baird, F.R.E.S., F.B.S.G., under the auspices of the International Club of Vancouver — the record of a ten months sojourn on the top of the world in quest of a lost race, remnant of the ancient chaldeans.

#### WAY TO PEACE

It was fitting, Dr. Cossley-Batt said, in her clear, strong voice, that this lecture should be under such auspices. Her travels in Arabia, Africa, Tibet, the world over, had convinced her that complete understanding between races is the only way to world peace.

She started by giving a glimpse of the history of Tibet, whose power in the sixth century extended from Calcutta to the heart of China . . . until weakening influences — perhaps Buddhism was one — sapped the nation's strength.

A land where five boy babies are born for every girl baby; where the women, in consequence may have as many as five husbands; where women are looked up to; where men in thousands congregate in monasteries, as warrior monks, medical monks, religious monks, many of the latter developing prodigious mental powers, seeking nirvana through fasting, prayer, self-abnegation.

The Dalai Lamas, living in the age-old, eleven-storey Potala palace, were systematically poisoned in their youth by Chinese agents, to render the country weak—until the last Dalai Lama, guided by an intelligent tutor, circumvented them and lived into middle age.

#### FACTOR IN WAR

Dr. Baird, whose own talk was illustrated with moving pictures of the country, supplemented his wife's information with a brief discourse on Tibet's possible importance in a war between Soviet Russia and Japan.

One request Dr. Cossley-Batt made—for some one to send a black fox to Tibet. There's a superstition connected with black foxes there. Good presents, perhaps gold, would be the return.

Mrs. John T. McCay, president of the International Club, introduced the speakers, complimented Dr. Cossley-Batt on her courage in persisting with her lecture despite injury.

## Rotarians Hear Talk on India

### Dr. Cossley-Batt Says Hindus Need Education Before Home Rule

Speaking at a meeting of the Rotary club, Dr. Jill L. Cossley-Batt, author and scientist, said that the Hindus require centuries of education in modern living before they will be ready for home rule.

She said that they must unite religiously and separate the church from the state before they are ready for freedom. They must also drop many superstitions. The caste and traditions systems must be abolished, she added.

Dr. Cossley-Batt was born in Great Britain, spending most of her youth in India. Her uncle is chief justice of the Supreme Court of Bengal. She was co-leader of the British-American Himalayan expedition in 1931.

India, she said, is one great machine-shop, and the differences between her leaders and the British only skirmishes. She found more happiness in Tibet than in any other country in the world.

Miss Cossley-Batt was introduced by Gordon Imrie, of New York City, who has been her friend for years. Imrie was presented by Alfred Meese, chairman of the education committee. Rev. Howard A. Adair, vice-president, introduced Meese. President Frederick K. Barnes was in charge of the meeting.

The Vancouver Sun, Vancouver,  
British Columbia, Canada  
25 Feb 1936, p3.

The News, Paterson New Jersey. 15<sup>th</sup> Jan  
1943, p10.