



Helma Oelwein

**No Day is like any other!**

A woman`s destiny at our time

biography

Dedicated to my great love:  
my husband Kurt in memory,  
to my daughters  
Heidrun and Sabine in memory,  
to my daughter Sylvia,  
to my grand children  
Isabel, Philipp and Julia,  
to my great grand child Paul.

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In looking back once again – I should tell the story of the pig!

1940

1943 / 1944

We write now mid-January 1945

February 12, 1945 No day like any other!

It is now March 2, 1945

In the air is smoke and more smoke

And again no day like any other!

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## ***Foreword***

I'm no Schiller or Goethe. I'm just a woman born in 1926. But my generation - not only me personally - has lived through a lot and experienced much. Through the chaos of war and with a sad and hurting heart I had to leave my Lower Silesian home. I am writing about my childhood - love - flight and expulsion, about life and death, which was often very close to me.

Faith - Love - Hope - who has not experienced that? It comes with the territory in all adversity.

If you are curious, read on.



*Military training area in Neuhammer*

## ***I begin with my parents***

My father Gustav was a cheerful, uncomplicated man born in a small village in Lower Silesia. After his schooldays he studied electronics. As a 21 year-old he had to go to World War I in 1914, from which in 1918, he returned home with gas poisoning. My mother Marie was born in 1897 and learned dressmaking. Her parents and grandparents came from the so-called "Polish Corridor."

My parents were married in 1918. The first girl, my sister Elfriede, came into the world in 1920.

Thinking back, I recall how my Father came by his name Karl-Gustav Adolf.

His father Emil, was really happy to have a son, He had a very long way to go to get to the registry office, to enter his son into the birth register. For the trip he put a flask of the noble schnaps in his jacket and from time to time on the road took a little drink.

He was tipsy when he finally came to the birth register office.

His son had still not been given a name. He tried to remember... what had he discussed with his wife? Then he remembered the solution: Wasn't the king of Sweden a large and more powerful man? Why shouldn't there also be something special from his offspring? So he was promptly named him Karl-Gustav-Adolf.

We later often delighted and amused ourselves with this recollection!.

***March 20, 1926***  
***No Sunday Like Any Other***

On this day the German government concluded a commercial treaty with Denmark and Portugal for both parties there were tariff concessions.

At Halle on the Saale the 3 national conferences of the Communist Party of Germany begin about the decisions about manufacturing. That opened a broad battlefield against the national socialist associations.

The first skyscrapers were to be built. But all that is not important today, and definitely not politics.

My mother was in labor and told her sister Emma: "Quickly make me a good sausage sandwich. Afterwards I get might not be up to getting anything to eat." It was shortly thereafter that as a healthy nine pounder, I saw the light of day. They wanted a boy as a second child, but nature had other plans. As it was told to me later, my father first wouldn't look, because it was again only a girl.

But I thrived splendidly in an intact family with a six year old sister.

My home was an average small town in Lower Silesia. Sagan was on the Bober River. It was a railway junction and home to the beautiful Wallerstein Castle. Sagan was located in the middle of the meadows and in vast forests and since 1844, had been the property of Duchess Dorothea of Tell.

The huge park was a gem with fountains, fountains and waterfalls, fountains spraying water, the cavalry stables, greenhouse, the Kings Bridge, and the artificial hills dazzled with the splendor of hundreds of roses and rhododendron species. The park was open and free for the public and every year was a feast for the eyes.





*Family picture with my grandmother who came to see us often; also in the picture: my father, my mother, my sister Elfriede and myself.*

My parents realized very quickly that you can create more wealth by independence and were planning a move to a small place 18 kilometers distant that promised growth as a military training ground.

In 1928 in Neuhammer on the Queis they opened a textile and haberdashery. My mother had a sewing room. Also in the center of the store seamstresses gathered and tailored the articles that had been bought in the store. In this space there was the cutting table, where articles were measured, cut, and sewn. In one corner of the room stood a basket set, the table laden with pattern specifications.

Everything felt good in our new domicile. The landscape of Neuhammer lay in a beautiful setting and the river Queis, which rises in the Isar Mountains, had a funny current with lots of swirls. It had a very rocky bed, very clear water, but was to be treated with caution when bathing or swimming.

The Queis is the tributary of the Bober River, it rises in the foothills of the Jizera mountains, which come from the Sudeten. The water of the Queis is particularly cold, so the perch and pike have a good life there.

Back to business: There were also baby sets in the store with all accessories. I myself still “sucked” with greatest pleasure. I gave my mother no rest until I had pacifiers decorated with every possible color on a silk ribbon around her neck in which I could now alternately delight. That’s how I had to occupy myself when the elders had been no time for me!

I often got a pair of scissors with rounded tips over my head and around my neck and you could often see me – as my grandmother later told me – with my tail stuck in the air in the big hat box. I had a firm footing and was determined to collect the different colored fabric scraps that fell off the cropping table.

Pacifier in mouth, scissors in small hand, what I must have unconsciously contributed to the amusement of everyone!

If I got bored with tailoring My grandmother often took us with her on a stroll to the small river meadows. One fine day before she could stop me, I couldn’t resist the many pussy willows on the bank and slipped into the water. My grandmother got me out, sat me down and took off my pants and while I was crying, we finally hurried home. I was wrapped in the long skirts of my grandmother. That was my first introduction with something so cold and wet. It was probably the reason that later I wasn’t very much interested in swimming!





***The Queis River was an invitation to go boating.***  
*Opposite you see the elementary school, where I was  
educated  
for for eight long years. The boat rental was busy in the  
summer. Our small town there didn't offer many  
distractions.*

