



Descent

Rabbits of Ravensbruck

THE RABBITS OF RAVENSBRÜCK

During the year August 1942 to August 1943, a number of young Polish women were forcibly taken to the Revier, in Ravensbrück, in groups of five to ten, anesthetized, and awakened with deep wounds on their legs. Some of those operated on died shortly afterward; those who survived the operations suffered serious aftereffects.

It became known, almost immediately, that these "operations" had been performed by an internationally renowned surgeon, SS Professor Karl Gebhardt director of the Hohenlychen clinic near the camp, which was reserved for the luminaries of the Reich. This doctor's victims were very young, almost children, and chosen from groups of high school and university students.

Germaine Tillion reported that when she arrived at Ravensbrück in October of 1973, some of the women who had survived the operations were executed, but there were about sixty women still alive.

Out of the 74 Polish victims called *Rabbits*: 5 died immediately as a result of the experiments, 6 with still unhealed wounds were executed in the camp and the rest, 63 of them, miraculously survived thanks to help of other inmates of the camp. The survivors suffered permanent physical damage. Four of them: Jadwiga Dzido, Maria Broel-Plater, Władysława Karolewska and Maria Kuśmierczuk eloquently testified against Nazi doctors at the Doctors' Trial in 1946.

The criminal experiments consisted in the deliberate cutting out and infection of bones and muscles of the legs with virulent bacteria, the cutting out of nerves, the introducing into the tissues of virulent substances and the causing of artificial bone fractures. The experiments were conducted in conditions of utter disregard for the basic principles of asepsis. After all operations, the victim was left to her own fate and was in most cases exposed to harmful factors hampering self-defense by the organism. Some victims died in consequence of the operation itself or of the resulting complications and several were shot, while the survivors suffered major and extensive injuries to their organs of movement.

The above text is a fragment from the Medical Statement issued in 1958 by Dr. Hanna Dworakowska a member of the Selection Board headed by Professor of Medicine A. Gruca. The Board was composed of Professors and Drs.: Askanaz, Batawia, Bialecki, Chojecki, Czyzewicz, Dworakowska, Grzywo-Dabrowski, Hausman, Kodeiszko, Kuligowski, Litwin, Łapinski, Malawski, Reicher and Rutkiewicz and other representatives of the medical world, as well as of delegates of the League of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Welfare and the press and representatives of the American Hiroshima Peace Center, headed by Professor W. Hitzig.

The experiments conducted on Polish political prisoners in Ravensbrück by Nazi doctors fall into two groups.

Group one aimed at testing the efficiency of sulphonamide drugs. This was



done by deliberately wounding the selected victim and by introducing various virulent bacteria (staphylococci, gas bacilli) into the wound after which the patient was given one of the tested drugs. Whatever the scientific result of these experiments, the fact remains that they were invariably very painful and often resulted in the patient's death or permanent bodily injury.

Experiments in group two aimed at studying the processes of regeneration of bones, muscles and nerves, and also the possibilities of transplanting bones from one person to another. The operations consisted of breaking up, dissecting and grafting bones, muscles and nerves. They caused unbearable pains and resulted in lifelong infirmity of the nerves of the lower limbs. Experiments on bones consisted of breaking (osteoclasia), grafting and (osteotomy) splitting. The performing of an osteoclasia operation took up to three hours during which the bones of the lower limbs were broken sometimes in several places and then re-set. The wound was then stitched up and given plaster cast dressing. This cast used to be removed before the bones had time to set so that the process of regeneration might be studied while testing the efficacy of various healing methods. Transplantation of bones consisted in grafting parts of the left tibia on the right leg and vice versa, also of grafting the fibula onto the tibia. Parts of the fibula were sometimes removed altogether. Osteotomies were performed in two operations: during the first, rectangular incisions were made on both tibiae and these incisions or "splinters" were removed during the second operation. No less than six incisions were made on one occasion. The study of the process of regeneration in the osseous tissues was the main purpose of these experiments, but also, according to Dr. Stumpfegger's words - they were meant to help to solve some problems in plastic surgery, which would have wide application after the Second World War was won by Germany. All the bone operations were extremely painful and they caused permanent deformities.

The last series of experiments, which was started on August 16, 1943, was performed in the camp prison under direct physical force exerted by the SS wardens in view of the violent resistance put up by the Polish women selected to serve as guinea-pigs. Many of the Polish victims have given their evidence before the American Military Tribunal sitting in Nuremberg and before Polish juridical authorities. Their testimony illustrates the nature of the experiments, the "after care" received by the patients, the mental and physical injuries inflicted on the victims.



Bogumila Babinska

BOGUMILA BABINSKA

Bogumila Babinska was born in Poland in 1915 to a Catholic family. She grew up in Krzemieniec where her father worked as a teacher. After completing high school she went to study in Warsaw and graduated from the University of Commerce with a Master's degree in business from the University of Commerce.

After the start of World War II, Bogumila began working for the Polish underground. In 1941 she was caught, arrested and sent to the Lublin prison where she was beaten and tortured. In September 1941 she was sent to Ravensbrück. At Ravensbrück she performed forced labor twelve hours a day. Among her tasks, she manufactured straw shoes for the Germany army. The Nazis chose her as one of 74 prisoners nicknamed "Rabbits" or guinea pigs for sadistic medical experimentation. German doctors experimented on her twice in November and December 1942, making four cuts on the muscles of her thigh. Then, in the beginning of 1943, they cut open her shinbone. She suffered severe pain and high fever and was very sick for months to come. However, despite the pain, she still had to return to work following the operations and labored for 12 hours each day knitting socks for German soldiers. The purpose of these experiments was to test the regeneration capabilities of bones, nerves, and muscles.

Courageously, she and a few close friends began to send messages about this written in urine between visible written lines to their families in Warsaw and Lublin. Bogumila's uncle was a member of the Polish Home Army (Armia Krajowa). Using couriers, he informed the Polish Government-in-exile in London and the Red Cross about these experiments.

In August of 1943 Bogumila and the other "Rabbits" protested against the operations and as a result they were severely punished.

The Germans sent a large transport from Warsaw to Ravensbrueck concentration camp following the suppression of the Warsaw uprising in October of 1944. While waiting to be processed as a new prisoner, one woman wanted to get rid of her camera and traded it to one of the "rabbits" in exchange for a piece of bread. The "rabbits" wanted to take photographs to document their mutilated legs. Joanna Szydłowska secretly took pictures of Maria Kusmierczuk and Barbara Pietrzyk from behind a barracks. If she had been caught she would have been subject to a death sentence. The women then discarded the camera but kept the film hidden in their barrack. All of the "rabbits" stayed in Barrack #32.



The German camp personnel planned to execute the "rabbits" on February 4, 1945. Bogumila succeeded in hiding and survived thanks to the help of prisoners of various nationalities.

On April 23, 1945, the Red Cross evacuated some Ravensbrück prisoners to Sweden. Camp authorities would not allow the "Rabbits" to leave as they were still trying to deny their existence. However, a French prisoner named Germaine Tillion was rescued. She bravely smuggled the film out with her.

On April 28, 1945, the Nazis sent the "Rabbits" along with the other remaining prisoners on a death march. Though crippled, the women walked home without either water or food.

After returning to Warsaw, Bogumila continued her professional career and married. She passed away in 1980 in Warsaw.

Germaine Tillman returned to Paris and developed the film the first time after the war. The French prisoners stayed in touch with their Polish comrades, and after the war, Germaine Tillion sent the negatives back to the victims of the operations. Two of these pictures were first published in a book entitled "Ravensbruck" by Wanda Kiedrzyńska. Helena Rafalska (Hegier) kept the film in her possession until she gave it to Anna Jarosky, the daughter of Jadwiga Dzido, another one of the "Rabbits".



Rosi Forsberg

ROSI FORSBERG

Rosi Maria Elisabeth Mauskopf was born in Sulus on the border of Hungary and Slovakia on January 13, 1928.

In 1941, her parents sent her to Budapest to care for her sick aunt. Her family was deported to Auschwitz in 1943, while Rosi remained in the Budapest ghetto. She was then rounded up with other Jews and forced to walk to the Austrian border, from which she was transported to Ravensbrück.

Rosi was put in a punishment bunker several times because of her activities in the camp. At the end of 1944, she was forcibly sterilized. With this treatment and others she joined the unenviable group of prisoners who were nicknamed "Rabbits." In 1945, she was transported to Bergen-Belsen and liberated from there by the Swedish Red Cross in April. She remained in Sweden, and required ten years of medical treatment and 30 surgical operations because of her mistreatment in Ravensbrück.



Mary Harris Jones

MARY HARRIS JONES

Mary Harris "Mother" Jones was an Irish-American schoolteacher and dressmaker who became a prominent labor and community organizer. She then helped coordinate major strikes and cofounded the Industrial Workers of the World.

At age 60, she became known as Mother Jones. She worked to get better conditions for coal miners and to have child labor laws enforced. *Mother Jones* magazine, established in 1970, is named for her.

Mary Harris was born on the north side of Cork City, Ireland, the daughter of Roman Catholic tenant farmers Richard Harris and Ellen (née Cotter) Harris. She was baptized on 1 August 1837, which indicates she most likely was born in late July.

Mary Harris immigrated with her family to Canada as a teenager. She received a Catholic education in Toronto. She immigrated to the United States and became a teacher in a convent in Monroe, Michigan.

She moved first to Chicago and later to Memphis, where she married George E. Jones, a member and organizer of the National Union of Iron Molders, later the International Molders and Foundry Workers Union of North America, in 1861. She eventually opened a dress shop in Memphis on the eve of the Civil War.

There were two turning points in her life. The first, and most tragic one, was the loss of her husband George and their four children (all under the age of five) during a yellow fever epidemic in Memphis, Tennessee. After her entire family succumbed to the disease, she returned to Chicago to begin another dressmaking business. Then, four years later, she lost her hard earned home, shop and possessions in the Great Chicago Fire. Following this loss she turned to the nascent labor movement and joined the Knights of Labor, a predecessor to the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW or "Wobblies"). After the Knights ceased to exist, Mary Jones became largely affiliated with the United Mine Workers. With the UMW, she frequently led strikers in picketing and encouraged the striking workers to stay on strike when the management brought in strikebreakers and militias.

Her political views may have been strongly shaped by the 1877 railroad strike, Chicago's labor movement, and the Haymarket Riot and depression of 1886.

Active as an organizer and educator in strikes throughout the country, she was particularly involved with the UMW and the Socialist Party of America. As a union organizer, she gained prominence for organizing the wives and children of striking workers in demonstrations on their behalf. She became known as "the most dangerous woman in America", a phrase coined by a West Virginia district attorney, Reese Blizzard, in 1902, at her trial for ignoring an injunction banning meetings by striking miners.

"There sits the most dangerous woman in America", announced Blizzard. "She comes into a state where peace and prosperity reign ... crooks her finger



[and] twenty thousand contented men lay down their tools and walk out.*

Jones was ideologically separated from many of the other female activists of the pre-Nineteenth Amendment days due to her strong opposition to abortion and outspoken aversion to female suffrage.

She was quoted as saying that "You don't need the vote to raise hell!" Her opposition to women taking an active role in politics was based on her belief that the neglect of motherhood was a primary cause of juvenile delinquency.

She became known as a charismatic and effective speaker throughout her career. She would liven her rhetoric with real and folk-tale characters, punctuate with participation from audience members, and include humor-ridden methods to rile up the crowd such as profanity, name-calling, and wit.

By age 60, she had effectively assumed the persona of "Mother Jones" by claiming to be older than she actually was, wearing outdated black dresses and referring to the male workers that she supported as "her boys". The first reference to her in print as *Mother Jones* was in 1897.

In 1901, workers in Pennsylvania's silk mills went on strike, many young women demanding to be paid adult wages. John Mitchell, the president of the UMWA, brought Mother Jones to Pennsylvania in February and September to encourage unity among the striking workers. She encouraged the wives of the workers to organize into a militia, who in turn would wield brooms, beat on tin pans and shout, "Join the union!"

She held that wives had an important role to play as the nurturers and motivators of the striking men, but not as fellow workers. She made claim that the young girls working in the mills were being robbed and demoralized.

To enforce worker solidarity, she travelled to the silk mills in New Jersey and returned to Pennsylvania to report that the conditions she observed were far superior. She stated that "the child labor law is better enforced for one thing and there are more men at work than seen in the mills here."

In response to the strike, mill owners claimed that if the workers still insisted on a wage scale, they would not be able to do business while paying adult wages and would be forced to close down. Even Jones herself encouraged the workers to accept a settlement. However, she continued to fight against child labor for the remainder of her life.

In 1903 Jones organized children, who were working in mills and mines at the time, to participate in the "Children's Crusade", a march from Kensington, Philadelphia to Oyster Bay, New York, the hometown of President Theodore Roosevelt with banners demanding "We want to go to School and not the mines!"

Many of the children at union headquarters had missing fingers and other disabilities, and Mother Jones attempted to get newspaper publicity about the deplorable conditions.

However, the mill owners held stock in essentially all of the newspapers.



When the newspapermen informed her that they could not advertise the facts about child labor because of this, she remarked "Well, I've got stock in these little children and I'll arrange a little publicity."

Permission to see President Roosevelt was denied by his secretary. Jones was told to write a letter to the president requesting a visit with him. Even though she wrote the letter, she never received an answer. Though the President refused to meet with the marchers, the incident brought the issue of child labor to the forefront of the public agenda.

In the Paint Creek-Cabin Creek strike of 1912 in West Virginia, Mary Jones arrived in June 1912, speaking and organizing through a shooting war between United Mine Workers members and the private army of the mine owners. Martial law in the area was declared and rescinded twice before Jones was arrested on February 13, 1913, and brought before a military court. Accused of conspiring to commit murder among other charges, she refused to recognize the legitimacy of her court martial. She was sentenced to twenty years in the state penitentiary. During house arrest at Mrs. Carney's Boarding House, she acquired a dangerous case of pneumonia.

After 85 days of confinement, her release coincided with Indiana Senator John Worth Kern initiating a Senate investigation into the conditions in the local coal mines.

Several months later she was in Colorado, helping organize coal miners. Once again she was arrested, served some time in prison and was escorted from the state in the months leading up to the Ludlow Massacre. After the massacre she was invited to Standard Oil's headquarters to meet face-to-face with John D. Rockefeller, Jr.. This meeting prompted Rockefeller to visit the mines and introduce reforms.

By 1924, Jones was in court again, this time facing charges of libel, slander and sedition. In 1925, Charles A. Albert, publisher of the fledgling *Chicago Times*, won a \$350,000 judgment against Jones.

Jones remained a union organizer for the UMW into the 1920s and continued to speak on union affairs almost until her death. In her later years, Jones lived with her friends Walter and Lillie May Burgess on their farm in what is now Adelphi, Maryland. She celebrated her *self-proclaimed* 100th birthday there on 1 May 1930, and was filmed making a statement for a newsreel.

She died in Adelphi at age 93 on November 30, 1930.



Dorothea Dix

DOROTHEA LYNDE DIX

Dorothea Lynde Dix was born to Joseph Dix and Mary Bigelow on April 4, 1802 in Hampden, Maine. She grew up in her wealthy grandmother's home in Boston. She fled there at the age of twelve, to get away from her alcoholic family and abusive father. She was the first child of three born to the Bigelows.

In about 1821 she opened a school in Boston, which was patronized by the well-to-do families. Soon afterwards she also began teaching poor and neglected children at home. But her health broke down, and from 1824 to 1830 she was chiefly occupied with writing of books of devotion and stories for children. Her *Conversations on Common Things* (1824) had reached its sixtieth edition by 1869. In 1831 she established in Boston a model school for girls, and conducted this successfully until 1836, when her health again failed. In hopes of a cure, in 1836 she traveled to England. She had the good fortune to meet the Rathbone family, who invited her to spend a year as their guest at Greenbank, their ancestral mansion in Liverpool. The Rathbones were Quakers and prominent social reformers. At Greenbank, Dix met men and women who believed that government should play a direct, active role in social welfare. She was also exposed to the British lunacy reform movement, whose methods involved detailed investigations of madhouses and asylums, the results of which were published in reports to the House of Commons.

After she returned to America, in 1840-41, Dix conducted a statewide investigation of how of Massachusetts cared for the insane poor. In most cases, towns contracted with local individuals to care for people with mental disorders who could not care for themselves, and who lacked family and friends to provide for them. Unregulated and underfunded, this system produced widespread abuse. After her survey, Dix published the results in a fiery report, a *Memorial*, to the state legislature. The outcome of her lobbying was a bill to expand the state's mental hospital in Worcester.

During the year 1844 Miss Dix visited all the counties, jails and almshouses in New Jersey in order to ascertain how the insane were kept and cared for. She prepared a memorial for the Legislature, giving a detailed account of the observations she had made and facts collected. Miss Dix made an urgent appeal to the Legislature to act at once and make the necessary appropriation for the erection of a suitable building for the care and treatment of the insane. She cited a number of cases, which came under her personal observation to emphasize the importance of the state assuming its duty to a class of unfortunates, which it had up, to this time neglected. Miss Dix's proposal for New Jersey, was presented pm January 23, 1845, by Joseph S. Dodd in the Senate, who was Miss Dix's supporter and himself an earnest advocate of the measure.



Mr. Dodd's resolution calling for a joint committee of both houses for further consideration of the subject was passed the day following. The first committee made their report February 25, and declared that it was unnecessary for them to occupy further time as they could only repeat what is better said, in the memorial of Miss Dix, "which presents the whole subject in so lucid a manner as to supersede the necessity of any remarks from us." They then concluded their report with a fervent appeal to the Legislature to act at once in the matter. While the higher-minded members of both houses were genuine converts to the measure and anxious for its adoption, there were a larger number of small politicians secretly opposing it because they were afraid they might lose some votes on account of increased taxation.

After this setback Miss Dix was up every morning before sunrise, writing letters and editorials. During the session she held frequent interviews with the members and in the evenings as often as possible she would argue to a company of 15 or 20 of whom were specially invited to her parlor. It was by such arguments with individual members that the measure was carried through. If Miss Dix had not remained on the ground and championed the cause it would have probably failed as it had at previous sessions of the legislature.

Henceforth, Dix traveled from New Hampshire to Louisiana, documenting the condition of pauper lunatics, publishing memorials to state legislatures, and devoting enormous personal energy to working with committees to draft the enabling legislation and appropriations bills needed to build asylums. In 1846, Dix travelled to Illinois to study mental illness. While there, she fell ill and spent the winter in Springfield recovering. As she recovered, she worked on research, and submitted a report to the January 1847 legislative session, which adopted legislation to establish Illinois' first state mental hospital.

In 1848, Dorothea Dix visited North Carolina and called for reform in the care of mentally ill patients. In 1849, when the North Carolina State Medical Society was formed, the construction of an institution in the capital, Raleigh, for the care of mentally ill patients was authorized. The hospital, named in honor of Dorothea Dix, opened in 1856. She was instrumental in the founding of the first public mental hospital in Pennsylvania, the Harrisburg State Hospital, and later in establishing its library and reading room in 1853.

The culmination of her work was the Bill for the benefit of the Indigent Insane, legislation to set aside 12,225,000 acres of Federal land (10,000,000 acres for the benefit of the insane and the remainder for the "blind, deaf, and dumb"), with proceeds from its sale distributed to the states to build and maintain asylums. Dix's land bill passed both houses of Congress, but in 1854 President Franklin Pierce vetoed it, arguing that the federal government should not commit itself to social welfare, which was properly the responsibility of the states. Stung



by the defeat of her land bill, in 1854 and 1855 Dix traveled to England and Europe, where she reconnected with the Rathbones. She conducted investigations of Scotland's madhouses that precipitated the Scottish Lunacy Commission.

The care of the insane in Nova Scotia drew Dix to visit the British colony in 1853. During her visit she travelled the remote and dangerous Sable Island to investigate reports of insane patients being abandoned on the island. The reports turned out to be largely unfounded but while on Sable, Dix assisted in a shipwreck rescue and upon her return to Boston, she led a successful campaign to send upgraded lifesaving equipment to the island.

The Union Army appointed Dix Superintendent of Army Nurses beating out Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell. Unfortunately, the qualities that made her a successful crusader—independence, single-minded zeal—did not lend themselves to managing a large organization of female nurses.

Dix set guidelines for nurse candidates. Volunteers had to be between the ages of 35 and 50 and had to be plain looking. They also had to wear drab and un-hooped black or brown dresses and were forbidden to wear jewelry or cosmetics. Dix did this to avoid vulnerable, attractive young women from being exploited by doctors as well as patients in the hospitals.

At odds with Army doctors, Dix feuded with them over control of medical facilities and the hiring and firing of nurses. She also had to deal with doctors and surgeons who did not want female nurses in their hospitals. To solve the impasse, the War Department introduced Order No. 351 in October 1863. It granted both the Surgeon General (Joseph K. Barnes) and the Superintendent of Army Nurses (Dix) the power to appoint female nurses. However, it gave doctors the power of assigning employees and volunteers to hospitals. This relieved Dix of real responsibility and made her a figurehead. She submitted her resignation in August 1865 and would later consider this "episode" in her career a failure.

However, her even-handed caring for Union and Confederate wounded alike, which may not have endeared her to Radical Republicans, assured her memory in the South. Her nurses provided what was often the only care available in the field to the Confederate wounded. Georgeanna Woolsey, a Dix nurse, said, "The surgeon in charge of our camp...looked after all their wounds, which were often in a most shocking state, particularly among the rebels. When Confederate forces retreated from Gettysburg, they left behind 5,000 wounded soldiers who were then treated by Dix's nurses.

In 1881, Dix moved into the New Jersey State Hospital, Morris Plains, where the state legislature designated a suite for her private use as long as she lived. Although an invalid, she still managed extensive correspondence. Dix died on July 17, 1887.



Katharine Graham

Katharine Graham

Katharine Meyer Graham was an American publisher. She led her family's newspaper, *The Washington Post*, for more than two decades, overseeing its most famous period, the Watergate coverage that eventually led to the resignation of President Richard Nixon. Her memoir, *Personal History*, won the Pulitzer Prize in 1998.

Katharine Graham was born Katharine Meyer on June 16, in 1917 into a privileged family in New York City, the daughter of Agnes Elizabeth and Eugene Meyer. Graham's father was a financier and, later, a public official. He bought *The Washington Post* in 1933 at a bankruptcy auction. Graham's mother was a bohemian intellectual, art lover, and political activist in the Republican Party. She shared friendships with people as diverse as Auguste Rodin, Marie Curie, Albert Einstein and Eleanor Roosevelt, and worked as a newspaper reporter at a time when journalism was an uncommon profession among women. Graham's father was Jewish and her mother was Lutheran, from a family of German descent.

Graham's parents owned several homes across the country, but primarily lived between a veritable 'castle' in Mount Kisco, New York, and a smaller home in Washington, D.C. Graham often did not see much of her parents during her childhood, as both traveled and socialized extensively. She was raised in part by nannies, governesses and tutors. Katharine endured a strained relationship with her mother. Agnes Meyer was reportedly very negative and condescending towards Katharine, which had a negative impact on Katharine's self-confidence. Her elder sister Florence Meyer was a successful photographer and wife of actor Oscar Homolka.

Graham was an alumna of The Madeira School and attended Vassar College before transferring to the University of Chicago. In Chicago, she became quite interested in labor issues and shared friendships with people from walks of life very different from her own. After graduation, she worked for a short period at a San Francisco newspaper where, among other things, she helped cover a major strike by wharf workers.

Her father's sister, Florence Meyer Blumenthal founded the Prix Blumenthal, given to painters, sculptors, decorators, engravers, writers, and musicians during the period of 1919-1954.

Graham began working for the *Post* in 1938. While in Washington, D.C., she met a former schoolmate; Will Lang Jr. The two dated, but broke off the relationship due to conflicting interests.

On June 5, 1940, she married Philip Graham, a graduate of Harvard Law School and a clerk for Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter. They had a daughter, Lally Morris Weymouth (born 1943), and three sons: Donald Edward Graham (born 1945), William Welsh Graham (born 1948) and Stephen Meyer Graham (born 1952).



Philip Graham became publisher of the *Post* in 1946, when Eugene Meyer handed over the newspaper to his son-in-law. Katharine recounts in her autobiography, *Personal History*, how she didn't feel slighted by the fact her father gave the *Post* to Phillip rather than her, "Far from troubling me that my father thought of my husband and not me, it pleased me. In fact, it never crossed my mind that he might have viewed me as someone to take on an important job at the paper."

Meyer went on to become the head of the World Bank. Meyer left that position only six months later. He was Chairman of the Washington Post Company until his death in 1959, when Philip Graham took that position and the company expanded with the purchases of television stations and *Newsweek* magazine.

The Grahams were important members of the Washington social scene, becoming friends with John F. Kennedy and Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Robert F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, Henry Kissinger, Ronald Reagan, and Nancy Reagan among many others.

In her 1997 autobiography, Graham comments several times about how close her husband was to politicians of his day (he was instrumental, for example, in getting Johnson to be the Democratic Vice Presidential nominee in 1960), and how such personal closeness with politicians later became unacceptable in journalism. Graham is also known for a long time friendship with Warren Buffett whose Berkshire Hathaway owns a substantial stake in Washington Post.

Philip Graham dealt with alcoholism and mental illness throughout his marriage to Katharine. He had mood swings and often belittled her, calling her horrible names. On Christmas Eve in 1962, Katharine found out her husband was having an affair with Robin Webb, an Australian stringer for *Newsweek*. Philip declared that he would divorce his wife for Robin and he made motions to divide up the couple's assets.

At a newspaper conference in Phoenix, Arizona, Philip apparently had a nervous breakdown. Graham was sedated and flown back to Washington, where he would end up in the Chestnut Lodge psychiatric facility near Washington, D.C. During a weekend release from Chestnut Lodge on August 3, 1963, Philip Graham committed suicide with a 28-gauge shotgun at the couple's Glen Welby home.

Katharine Graham assumed the reins of the company and of the *Post*, after Philip Graham's suicide. Graham was de facto publisher of the newspaper from 1963 onward, formally holding the title from 1969 to 1979 and chairman of the board from 1973 to 1991. She became the first female Fortune 500 CEO in 1972, as CEO of the Washington Post Company.

As the only woman to be in such a high position at a publishing company, she had no female role models and had difficulty being taken seriously by many of her male colleagues and employees. Graham outlined in her memoir her lack of confidence and distrust in her own knowledge. The convergence of the women's



movement with Graham's ascension to power at the *Post* brought about changes in Graham's attitude and also led her to promote gender equality within her company.

Graham hired Benjamin Bradlee as editor and cultivated Warren Buffett for his financial advice. Buffett became a major shareholder and something of an *eminence grise* in the company. Her son Donald was publisher from 1979 to 2000.

Graham presided over the *Post* at a crucial period in its history. The *Post* played an integral role in unveiling the Watergate conspiracy and ultimately led to the resignation of President Richard Nixon.

Graham and editor Bradlee first experienced challenges when they published the content of the Pentagon Papers. When *Post* reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein brought the Watergate story to Bradlee, Graham supported their investigative reporting and Bradlee ran stories about Watergate when few other news outlets were reporting on the matter.

In conjunction with the Watergate scandal, Graham was the subject of one of the best-known threats in American journalistic history. It occurred in 1972, when Nixon's attorney general, John Mitchell, warned reporter Carl Bernstein about a forthcoming article: "Katie Graham's gonna get her tit caught in a big fat wringer if that's published." The two words "her tit" were cut on publication.

Graham had strong links to the Rockefeller family, serving both as a member of the Rockefeller University council and as a close friend of the Museum of Modern Art, where she was honored as a recipient of the David Rockefeller Award for enlightened generosity and advocacy of cultural and civic endeavors.

In 1966, Graham was the ostensible honoree of Truman Capote's Black and White Ball.

In 1973, Graham received the Elijah Parish Lovejoy Award as well as an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Colby College.

In 1975, Graham received the S. Roger Horchow Award for Greatest Public Service by a Private Citizen, an award given out annually by Jefferson Awards.

Graham published her memoirs, *Personal History*, in 1997. The book was praised for its honest portrayal of Philip Graham's mental illness and received rave reviews for her depiction of her life, as well as a glimpse into how the roles of women have changed over the course of Graham's life. The book won the Pulitzer Prize in 1998.

In 2000, Graham was named as one of the International Press Institute's 50 World Press Freedom Heroes of the past 50 years.

In 2001, Graham fell on a sidewalk while visiting Sun Valley, Idaho. She died on July 17, three days later in a hospital in Boise due to trauma resulting from the ensuing head injury.

In 2002, President George W. Bush presented her with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, posthumously.



Mary McLeod Bethune

MARY MCLEOD BETHUNE

Mary Jane McLeod was born in June 10th 1875 near Mayesville, South Carolina. She was the fifteenth of seventeen children born to Sam and Patsy McIntosh McLeod, both former slaves. Most of her siblings were born into slavery. Her parents sacrificed to buy a farm for the family. As a child, Mary would accompany her mother to deliver "white people's" wash. Allowed to go into the white children's nursery, she picked up a book and as she opened it a white child took it away from her saying she didn't know how to read. It was that moment that inspired her to learn.

McLeod attended Mayesville's one-room black schoolhouse, Trinity Mission School. She was the only one in her family to attend, so each day she taught her family what she'd learned. Her teacher Emma Jane Wilson became a mentor to her. Wilson had attended Scotia Seminary. She helped McLeod attend the same school on a scholarship from 1888-1893. The following year, she attended Dwight L. Moody's Institute for Home and Foreign Missions in Chicago, to become a missionary. Told that black missionaries weren't needed in Africa, she planned to teach.

McLeod married Albertus Bethune in 1898. They lived in Savannah, Georgia, where she did social work. They had one son, Albert.

Coyden Harold Uggams, a visiting Presbyterian minister, persuaded the couple to relocate to Palatka, Florida, to run a mission school. The Bethunes moved in 1899. Mary ran the mission school and began an outreach to prisoners. Albertus left the family in 1907. They never divorced. He relocated to South Carolina and died in 1918.

In 1896, Bethune began teaching at Haines Normal and Industrial Institute in Augusta, Georgia, which was part of a Presbyterian mission organized by northern congregations. It was founded and run by Lucy Craft Laney. A former slave, Laney ran her school with a Christian missionary zeal, emphasizing character and practical education for girls. She also accepted the boys who showed up eager to learn. Laney's mission was to imbue Christian moral education in her students to arm them for their life challenges.

Bethune adopted many of Laney's educational philosophies, including her emphasis on educating girls and women to improve the conditions of black people.

"I believe that the greatest hope for the development of my race lies in training our women thoroughly and practically."

After one year at Haines, Bethune was transferred to the Kindell Institute in Sumter, South Carolina.

After her marriage and move to Florida, Bethune became determined to start a school for girls. Bethune moved from Palatka to Daytona because it had more economic opportunity. In October 1904, she rented a small house for \$11.00 per month. She made benches and desks from discarded crates, and acquired



other items through charity. Bethune used \$1.50 to start the Literary and Industrial Training School for Negro Girls. She initially had six students—five girls aged six to twelve, and her son Albert. The school bordered Daytona's dump.

In the early days, the students made ink for pens from elderberry juice, and pencils from burned wood. They asked local businesses for furniture. Bethune wrote later, "I considered cash money as the smallest part of my resources. I had faith in a loving God, faith in myself, and a desire to serve." The school received donations of money, equipment, and labor from local black churches. Within a year, Bethune was teaching more than 30 girls at the school.

Bethune also courted wealthy white organizations, such as the ladies' Palmetto Club. She invited influential white men to sit on her school board of trustees, gaining participation by James Gamble (of Procter & Gamble) and Thomas H. White (of White Sewing Machines).

The rigorous curriculum had the girls rise at 5:30 a.m. for Bible Study. The classes in home economics and industrial skills such as dressmaking, millinery, cooking, and other crafts emphasized a life of self-sufficiency for them. Students' days ended at 9 pm. Soon Bethune added science and business courses, then high school-level courses of math, English, and foreign languages.

Bethune was always seeking donations to keep her school operating; as she traveled, she was fundraising. A donation of \$62,000 by John D. Rockefeller helped, as did her friendship with the Roosevelts, beginning in the 1930s, which gave her entree to a progressive network.

In 1931, the Methodist Church helped the merger of her school with the boys' Cookman Institute, forming the Bethune-Cookman College, a coeducational junior college. Bethune became president.

Through the Great Depression, the Bethune-Cookman School continued to operate, and met the educational standards of the State of Florida.

By 1941 the college had developed a four-year curriculum and achieved full college status. By 1942 Bethune gave up the presidency, as her health was being adversely affected by her many responsibilities.

In 1896, the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) was formed to promote the needs of black women. Bethune served as the Florida chapter president of the NACW from 1917 to 1925. She worked to register black voters, which had been made almost impossible by a variety of obstacles in Florida law. Members of the resurgent Ku Klux Klan threatened her in those years. Bethune also served as the president of the Southeastern Federation of Colored Women's Clubs from 1920 to 1925, which worked to improve opportunities for black women.

She was elected as national president of the NACW in 1924. While the organization struggled to raise funds for regular operations, Bethune envisioned its acquiring a headquarters and hiring a professional executive secretary. She implemented this when NACW bought a property at 1318 Vermont Avenue in



Washington, DC. She led it to be the first black-controlled organization with headquarters in the capital.

Gaining a national reputation, in 1928 Bethune was invited to attend the Child Welfare Conference called by Republican President Calvin Coolidge. In 1930 President Herbert Hoover appointed her to the White House Conference on Child Health.

In 1935 Bethune founded the National Council of Negro Women in New York City. This brought together 28 different organizations to work to improve the lives of black women and their communities.

Bethune said of the council:

'It is our pledge to make a lasting contribution to all that is finest and best in America, to cherish and enrich her heritage of freedom and progress by working for the integration of all her people regardless of race, creed, or national origin, into her spiritual, social, cultural, civic, and economic life, and thus aid her to achieve the glorious destiny of a true and unfettered democracy.'

In 1938, the NCNW hosted the White House Conference on Negro Women and Children, demonstrating the importance of black women in democratic roles. During World War II, the NCNW gained approval for black women to be commissioned as officers in the Women's Army Corps. Bethune also served as a political appointee and the Special Assistant to the Secretary of War during the war.

The National Youth Administration (NYA) was a federal agency created with the support of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). It provided programs to promote relief and employment for young people. It focused on unemployed citizens aged sixteen to twenty-five years who were not in school. Bethune lobbied the organization so effectively for minority involvement that she earned a full-time staff position in 1936. Within two years, Bethune was appointed to position of Director of the Division of Negro Affairs, and as such, became the first African-American female division head. She managed NYA funds to help black students through school-based programs. She was the only black agent of the NYA who was a financial manager. She ensured black colleges participation in the Civilian Pilot Training Program, which graduated some of the first black pilots.

Bethune's determination helped national officials recognize the need to improve employment for black youth. The NYA's final report, issued in 1943, stated, 'more than 300,000 black young men and women were given employment and work training on NYA projects. These projects opened to these youth, training opportunities and enabled the majority of them to qualify for jobs heretofore closed to them.'

Within the administration, Bethune advocated for the appointment of black NYA officials to positions of political power. Bethune's administrative assistants served as liaisons between the National Division of Negro Affairs and the NYA

Energetic

dream
big

oh
how
they
glow

CREATIVE

agencies on the state and local levels. During her tenure, Bethune also pushed national executives to approve a program of consumer education for blacks, a foundation for black crippled children, and planned for studies for black workers' education councils. National officials did not support these and the NYA was terminated in 1943.

Bethune became a close and loyal friend of Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt. At the Southern Conference on Human Welfare in 1938, being held in Birmingham, Alabama, Eleanor Roosevelt requested a seat next to Bethune despite state segregation. Roosevelt frequently referred to Bethune as "her closest friend in her age group." She had unprecedented access to the White House through her relationship with the First Lady.

She used her access to form a coalition of leaders from black organizations called the Federal Council on Negro Affairs, which came to be known as the Black Cabinet. It served as an advisory board to the Roosevelt administration on issues facing black people in America. It gathered talented blacks, mostly men, who had been appointed to many positions in federal agencies. The group gathered in Bethune's office or apartment and met informally. Although they didn't directly create public policy, they were a respected leadership among black voters. They influenced political appointments and disbursement of funds to organizations benefiting black people.

In 1931 the Methodist Church supported merging of the Daytona Normal and Industrial School and the Cookman College for Men into Bethune-Cookman College, established first as a junior college. Bethune became a member of the church but it was segregated in the South, essentially forming two denominations. She worked to integrate the mostly white Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Bethune devoted much effort to educating both whites and blacks about the accomplishments and needs of black people, writing in 1938, "If our people are to fight their way up out of bondage we must arm them with the sword and the shield and buckler of pride - belief in themselves and their possibilities, based upon a sure knowledge of the achievements of the past."

She said a year later, "Not only the Negro child but children of all races should read and know of the achievements, accomplishments and deeds of the Negro. World peace and brotherhood are based on a common understanding of the contributions and cultures of all races and creeds."

On Sundays she opened her school to tourists in Daytona Beach, showing off the accomplishments of her students, hosting national speakers on black issues, and taking donations. She ensured that these Community Meetings were integrated.

When the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) that segregation of public schools was unconstitutional, Bethune took the opportunity to defend the decision by writing in the *Chicago Defender* that year:

Powerful

timeless



EXTRAORDINARY

WINNER



reach for the stars





"There can be no divided democracy, no class government, no half-free county, under the constitution. Therefore, there can be no discrimination, no segregation, no separation of some citizens from the rights, which belong to all.... We are on our way. But these are frontiers, which we must conquer.... We must gain full equality in education ...in the franchise... in economic opportunity, and full equality in the abundance of life."

Bethune lobbied federal officials, including Roosevelt, on behalf of African-American women who wanted to join the military.

Bethune was awarded the Spingarn Medal in 1935 by the NAACP. In 1949 she became the first woman to be given the Medal of Honor and Merit at the Haitian Exposition, Haiti's highest award. She also served as an advisor to five of the Presidents of the United States.

On May 18, 1955, Bethune died of a heart attack. Her death was followed by editorial tributes in newspapers all over America.

In 1973, Mary McLeod Bethune was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame. In 1985 the US Postal Service issued a stamp in Bethune's honor. In 1989 *Ebony Magazine* listed her as one of "50 Most Important Figures in Black US History." In 1999, *Ebony Magazine* included her as one of the "100 Most Fascinating Black Women of the 20th century."



First-class

Mighty

SUPER STAR

INCREDIBLE

Lucie Aubrac

LUCIE AUBRAC

Lucie Bernard was born on June 29, 1912 in Mâcon, the daughter of modest Burgundy winegrowers. She was raised in a Catholic family.

In 1939, Lucie married Raymond Samuel, a Jew, whom she met in Strasbourg in December 1939. Raymond Samuel would later come to be known as Raymond Aubrac, having had to change his surname due to open anti-Semitism and persecution of Jews during the Nazi occupation of France.

After the fall of France, Lucie joined the Libération-sud resistance group in Lyon after its formation by her husband. Later, she followed him to the Charles Delestraint's group.

In 1941 they joined forces with Emmanuel d'Astier to run the underground newspaper, *Libération*, the same year their first child, Jean-Pierre, was born.

Lucie never had a rank in the Resistance, but simply did all that was asked of her. She delivered packages, printed propaganda and hatched and executed escape plans.

She lived a dual life as mother of a boy, Boubou, and as a Resistance member who lived at an address known only to a few. She continued to teach, but had to be ever vigilant and careful.

On 21 June 1943, the Gestapo captured Raymond alongside high-ranking Resistance member Jean Moulin (under the alias "Max") and many others. They were taken to Montluc prison, located near Lyon. The Nazis sought Jean Moulin in particular, as he was General Charles de Gaulle's top representative in the French Resistance.

Lucie was able to talk face to face with Klaus Barbie, Lyon's Gestapo chief. Her alias was "Ghislaine de Barbentane", a name of high-standing, noble origin. Because of her pregnancy and a specific provision of French law called "marriage in extremis," under which a person condemned to death can marry civilly, Lucie managed to convince Barbie that she was unmarried, and being pregnant could not be a mother without being married (known as a "fille-mère"). Barbie unwisely allowed Raymond to be released for the wedding, which gave Lucie and the Resistance a fortunate opportunity.

On the day of Lucie and Raymond's "marriage", October 21, 1943, Lucie and her comrades attacked the German truck that was transporting the prisoners back to German command. They released Raymond along with the thirteen other members of the Resistance being held. Six Germans, including the truck driver and five guards, were killed during the attack and escape.

After the escape Lucie and her husband continued their activities with the Resistance and also had to be constantly on the run from the Gestapo. The Allies knew how much danger they were in and began to formulate plans for them to be rescued to England.

With Lucie pregnant with their second child, they had to move from city to



city and home to home to avoid being captured.

On November 11, 1943, Lucie's sister Jeanne, who had been her best friend and confidante, showed up unexpectedly. She brought news of Raymond's parents who were well and had remained successfully hidden. Lucie's two nieces were tucked safely away in a boarding school. Her husband, Pierre, a life-long friend had also been captured and was imprisoned with Raymond. Thanks to some clever forgery papers, he had been released but was also in hiding. Lucie's sister, knowing, Lucie's departure to England was imminent had risked much to come to say good-bye. She brought with her a layette for the new baby. She also brought a silver ring with a tiger's eye stone for Lucie to remember her by. Lucie promised to wear the ring until they met again. The visit did the drained and tired Lucie a world of good, but it was a tearful goodbye when the two sisters parted.

Over the BBC broadcasts, coded communications were sent that a rescue by plane would happen on the night of November 14th.

The Aubrac's with the beaconing team needed to help get them off, start for the appointed meadow in a pick-up truck. The leader of the team, Charles Henri places people where he wants them and orders, "Nobody smokes, talk in a low voice. Everybody else settle yourselves in the shadow of a hedge." Everybody else meaning the rest of the Resistance team, the others scheduled to leave with the Aubracs, and those in charge of the Resistance mailbags, crouch on their heels. The Aubrac's son, Boubou sleeps on a mailbag under a blanket. Time passes slowly.

After way too long of a wait for Lucie, the sound of a plane becomes more and more distinct. They spot the plane and Charles Henri sent the agreed upon code with his flashlight; the team has set up landing beams. The plane circles once, twice, getting closer to the ground. Then it climbs again and begins a third circle. One more circle and then it flies away
"Put the lights out!" Henri orders. "We didn't pull it off tonight. The pilot couldn't see us. The fog smothered our lights."
"Cover up the tracks," Henri orders "and let's get out of here fast."

Everyone scattered rapidly and the Aubracs returned to their "safe house." The tribulations weren't over for the Aubracs. They were moved to more "safe houses" in different villages. It was now late January 1944 and Lucie's due date was imminent. The February moon dates for departure were between the fifth and the fourteenth. Lucie was sure the date of conception for her child was May 14th and the birth was to take place between February 10th and 15th...

On February 8, they get word the departure is on. However, things did not go well. The truck taking them to the site broke down. When the plane arrived, it got bogged down where the sudden thaw from the previous day's good weather has made the ground soft. Everybody had to push the plane forward so it could take off. After much discussion the Aubrac's were told that the crew wanted to



destroy the plane and head for Spain. Charles Henri kept talking and finally came to Lucie with the pilot. The pilot agreed to try one more time to take off—just because he was grateful for all that Lucie had done for the cause. They were past the "safety margin" for a return trip. The engine started, and after an enormous bump at the end of the "runway" the airplane lifted off.

They arrived safely in England and Raymond was taken away for questioning—normal procedure. Lucie and their son were taken to a hotel. On February 12th, 1944, Lucie delivered a little girl, Catherine into the world. They had a second daughter, Elizabeth, in Paris in 1946.

Lucie's parents survived the war. Raymond's parents were arrested and handed over to the Klaus Barbie's Gestapo. They were killed at Auschwitz.

Having had their true identities revealed, Lucie, Raymond and their first child Jean-Pierre had to remain in England until the war ended. As it was the last alias they had used in France, Aubrac remained as their name in the United Kingdom. Their second child, Catherine became de Gaulle's goddaughter.

In 1946, Ho Chi Minh became godfather to the Aubrac's second daughter, Elizabeth.

After the war, Lucie Aubrac served on the consultative committees of the French Republic Provisional Government (GPRF). Her teaching degree was also restored, and she eventually returned to teaching. She was also active in the campaign for human rights. In 1984 Lucie Aubrac published her memoirs under the title *Ils partiront dans l'ivresse* (best translated as "They will leave with elation"). The French title refers to the radio code phrase the Aubracs listened for to know it was safe for them to leave for London. (The book was translated into English as *Outwitting the Gestapo*).

She was awarded the Legion of Honor by the French government.

Lucie Aubrac died in Issy-les-Moulineaux, near Paris, on March 14, 2007.



Grazyna Chrostowska

Grazyna Chrostowska

Grazyna Chrostowska, Ravensbruck prisoner #7714, in Lublin, Poland. Some sources note her date of birth as September 20, 1921 while other sources list the date as October 21, 1921. She came from a family of nobility. Her father was Michael Chrostowska and her mother was Wanda Pomianowska Slepowron. She had one sister, Apolonia.

The high school Grazyna attended showed a broad interest in the humanities. She wrote poems and other short forms of literature, she also tried her hand at fiction. She acted in theater, was active in scouting, and was passionate films. She wrote for the youth 'magazine "The Sun".

After the first German Occupation in WWII, Michael Chrostowski was one of the organizers of the PEC (Defenders of the Polish command,) the Polish underground group in Lublin. From September 26, 1939, Grazyna was a member of this organization and wrote for and distributed the magazine "Polish lives", an illegal newsletter.

She was arrested on May 8, 1941, along with her father during a visit to sister, Apolonia, who was already imprisoned in the Castle of Lublin, "Under the Clock", that had been turned into a jail.

While imprisoned in Lublin, Grazyna was tortured, but also wrote poetry. Grazyna's mother managed to smuggle the poems she wrote out of the prison and buried them until after the war.

Grazyna and her sister were exported September 23, 1941 to Ravensbrück. There, Grazyna worked in the manufacture of straw warmers for combat boots. Fellow inmates smuggled paper and pieces of charcoal to her so she could continue her poetry writing.

Women at Ravensbruck formed "family groups" within the camp that buoyed spirits, particularly during the grueling hours of roll call. The survivors referred to this phenomenon as "Lager Schwestern" or "camp sisters."

Grazyna's family group memorized by heart during the long evening and morning roll calls.

One of the poems memorized by her family group follows:

BIRDS

*Migratory birds,
Migrating birds that way you're flying,
The light of the heavens,
The other way you do not know already
If you do not impregnate our eyes full of tears, pain, and longing,*

*We hang on your wings
Chasing your flights...*

*Oh! Bypassing the wires away
No way your way
This lager cursed land by the people
And forgotten by God.*



Some of her poems were also smuggled out of Ravensbrück and were aired on the London BBC with other news about the camp in 1943.

There were many poets at Ravensbrück and just before the end of the war a group of Polish political prisoners risked their lives to gather all the poetry from the camp they could find. They buried the poems outside the camp in glass jars. Many of Grazyna's poems were among those buried.

In May 1975, one of these former prisoners, Dr. Henry Grabowski guided Polish officials to the site he remembered burying the glass jars. Miraculously, they found the rows of buried jars with the materials inside still intact. These documents have been transferred to the State Museum in Oswiecim.

In April of 1942, the Germans began executing Polish women by gunshot at a spot in the camp called, "The Place of Execution."

In the early morning hours of April 18, 1942, Grazyna wrote the following poem:

The Inquietude

The day is like the inquietude of Chopin's music,
The birds, scared away from their nest are circling
Low above the earth,
They are listening, afraid...

Quietness in the nature, warmth is life before a storm.
From the West, low, dark clouds flow.
Waylaid fear strikes into the heart.
Homesickness, homesickness...

I want to walk on soggy roads,
Listen to the sound of wind,
Hunt the breath of spring time,
Feel the deepest feeling,
Find quietness in love.

I walking, unable to find, keep changing and returning.
Somewhere far away, village hamlets are left behind.

Clouds flew to the East,
And on the east side,
Lonely, leaning, dark trees endure,
In the wind, and in the quietness,
They are swung by the Inquietude.

Ravensbrück, 18 April, 1942



Eight hours later, Grazyna and her sister, Apolonia were shot at the Place of Execution

In total, about 200 Polish women were shot at the Place of Execution. The last executions, of five Polish women, took place on January 5th, 1942. The brave demeanor of the Polish women led to their execution impressed even the Germans.



By Marcia Fountain-Blacklidge