

Adolf spoke of his father with great respect. I never heard him say anything against him, in spite of their differences of opinion about his career. In fact he respected him more as time went on. Adolf did not take it amiss that his father had autocratically decided on his son's future career; for this was considered his right, even his duty. It was quite a different matter when Raubal, his step-sister's husband, this uneducated person, who was himself only a little revenue official, arrogated to himself this right. Adolf would certainly not permit him to interfere in his personal affairs. But the authority of his father still remained, even after his death, the force in the struggle with which Adolf developed his own powers. His father's attitude had provoked him first to secret, then to open rebellion. There were violent scenes, which often ended in the father giving him a good hiding, as Adolf told me himself. But Adolf matched this violence with his own youthful obstinacy, and the antagonism between father and son grew sharper.

The customs official Alois Hitler showed a marked sense of ceremony all his life. Consequently we have good pictures showing him at various stages of his life. Not so much at his weddings, which were always under an unlucky star, but at the various promotions in his career, did he have his picture taken. Most of the pictures show him, with his dignified civil servant's face, in gala uniform of white trousers and dark tunic, on which the double row of highly polished buttons gleamed. The man's face is impressive. A broad, massive head, the most notable feature being the side whiskers, modelled on those of his supreme master, the Emperor. The expression of the eyes is penetrating and incorruptible, the eyes of a man who, as a customs official, is obliged to view everything with suspicion. But in most pictures dignity prevails over the "inquisitiveness" of the gaze. Even the pictures taken at the time when Alois Hitler had already retired show that this man was, in spirit, still on duty. Although

(*) Each beating strengthened his sense of his will

he was past sixty he age. One of the pictures also been on his part a man whose life contains there is also an earlier days, which, emphasizes comfortable, well-to-

Alois Hitler's rise from servant girl to the path from insignificance rank open to him in

His colleagues in precise, dutiful official spots." As a superior of office he was considered conceal his conviction. Every day he would an official's punctuality found him good com and become rude, did the sternness that he

His illegitimate birth register of the Parish two-year-old servant birth to a son on June The godfather was Hermann Melchior, in Stror the first and the only not revealed by the name

Anna Maria Schickelmann Georg Hiedler is already five years old contains the following

The undersigned

THE YOUNG HITLER I KNEW

of his father with great respect. I never heard
ing against him, in spite of their differences of
t his career. In fact he respected him more as
1. Adolf did not take it amiss that his father
ally decided on his son's future career; for this
d his right, even his duty. It was quite a differ-
en Raubal, his step-sister's husband, this un-
on, who was himself only a little revenue offi-
to himself this right. Adolf would certainly
n to interfere in his personal affairs. But the
is father still remained, even after his death,
he struggle with which Adolf developed his
his father's attitude had provoked him first to
open rebellion. There were violent scenes,
ded in the father giving him a good hiding,
ne himself. But Adolf matched this violence
with his own, and the antagonism between
grew sharper.

official Alois Hitler showed a marked sense
l his life. Consequently we have good pic-
im at various stages of his life. Not so much
which were always under an unlucky star,
us promotions in his career, did he have his
lost of the pictures show him, with his digni-
t's face, in gala uniform of white trousers
on which the double row of highly polished
. The man's face is impressive. A broad,
most notable feature being the side whisk-
those of his supreme master, the Emperor.
f the eyes is penetrating and incorruptible,
who, as a customs official, is obliged to view
suspicion. But in most pictures dignity
'inquisitiveness' of the gaze. Even the pic-
time when Alois Hitler had already retired
in was, in spirit, still on duty. Although

in stone his
all

1891 PORTRAIT OF HIS FATHER

he was past sixty he didn't show any of the typical signs of
age. One of the pictures, probably the last one, which can
also be seen on his grave in Leonding, shows Alois Hitler as
a man whose life consisted of service and duty. To be sure
there is also an earlier photograph, dating from his Leonding
days, which, emphasising his private life, depicts him as a
comfortable, well-to-do citizen, fond of good living.

Alois Hitler's rise from being the illegitimate son of a poor
servant girl to the position of a respected civil servant is the
path from insignificance and inferior status to the highest
rank open to him in the service of the State.

His colleagues in the Customs Service describe him as a
precise, dutiful official who was very strict and had his "weak
spots." As a superior Alois Hitler was not very popular. Out
of office he was considered a liberal-minded man who did not
conceal his convictions. He was very proud of his rank.
Every day he would pay his morning visit to the inn with
an official's punctuality. His regular drinking companions
found him good company but he could flare up over trifles
and become rude, displaying both his inborn violence and
the sternness that he had acquired in his job.

His illegitimate birth is conclusively proved by the Church
register of the Parish of Strones. According to this, the forty-
two-year-old servant maid Anna Maria Schicklgruber gave
birth to a son on July 7, 1837, who was christened Alois.
The godfather was her employer, the peasant Johann Trum-
melschlagler, in Strones. As far as is known the child was
the first and the only one. The identity of the father was
not revealed by the mother. but you feel the presence of the

Anna Maria Schicklgruber married the mill worker Jo-
hann Georg Hiedler in 1842 when the illegitimate child was
already five years old. The Church Register of Döllersheim
contains the following entry:

The undersigned church councilman, Johann Georg
Klarer, believed that a child
with Alois could, therefore, go very far

he loved his mother

D.T.

39

16a

1889

10

He had
the first
child
of the
first
official
in the
parish
June 2
on the
day
after
his
birth

1837

1889

1889

1863-1903

D.T.

13a

the move
1892
from
to
PassauPassau
Inn

1890

✱

1891

13a

this; for in all his (forty years of service) he was transferred only four times. The towns to which he was posted (Saalfelden, Braunau, Passau and Linz) are so favourably situated that they form the ideal setting for a customs official's career. But hardly had he settled down in one of these places, when he began to move house. During his period of service in Braunau there are recorded twelve changes of address; probably there were more. During the two years in Passau he moved twice. Soon after his retirement he moved from Linz to Hafeld, from there to Lambach — first in the Leingartner Inn, then to a mill, that is to say, two changes in one year — then to Leonding. When I met Adolf he remembered seven removals and had been to five different schools. It would not be true to say that these constant changes were due to bad housing conditions. Surely the Pommer Inn — Alois Hitler was very fond of living in inns — (where Adolf was born) was one of the finest and most presentable buildings in the whole of Braunau. Nevertheless, the father left there soon after Adolf's birth. Actually he often moved from a decent dwelling into a poorer one. The house was not the important thing; rather the moving. How can one explain this strange mania?

Perhaps Alois Hitler simply hated to remain in one spot; and as his service forced on him a certain stability, he at least wanted some change in his own sphere. As soon as he had got used to certain surroundings, he grew weary of them. To live meant to change one's conditions, a trait which I experienced in Adolf too.

Three times Alois remodelled his family. It is perhaps true that this was due to outside circumstances. But if so, certainly fate played strangely into his hands. We know that his first wife, Anna, suffered very much from his restlessness, which eventually led to their separation and was partly responsible for her unexpected death. For while his first wife was still alive, Alois Hitler already had a child by the woman who became his second wife. And again when the second

D.T. It is often a reflection of the...
an extraordinary feels...
interest in... as opposed to the prevailing...
assumption of... that God is on their side

to the undersigned witnesses, has
which he signed of the child Alois of Anna Maria
and requests that his name be entered in the
Register.

signed by the Parish priest and four witnesses.
Georg Hiedler again acknowledged his paternity
document concerning some inheritance in 1876
notary in Weitra. He was then eighty-four years
old. His mother had been dead for over thirty
years. Schicklgruber had been a customs official in
many years.

was not officially adopted after his mother's
name remained Schicklgruber. He would have
throughout his life had not Johann Nepomuk
and Georg's younger brother, made a will and
him to the illegitimate son of his brother. But
in condition that Alois should assume the name
of June 4, 1876, the name Alois Schicklgruber
Register of the Parish of Döllersheim was
Hiedler; the local government authority in
making this alteration on January 6, 1877. From
Schicklgruber called himself Alois Hitler, a
name as little as the other, but which secured

when were talking about his relatives Adolf told
his father's change of names. Nothing his
pleased him as much as this; for Schickl-
him so uncouth, so boorish, apart from
and impractical. He found "Hiedler" too
but "Hitler" sounded nice and was easy to

his father that instead of accepting the
as did the rest of his relations, he invented
"Hitler." It was in keeping with his mania
e. His superiors had nothing to do with

THE YOUNG HITLER I KNEW

which he was known to the undersigned witnesses, has paternity of the child Alois of Anna Maria and requests that his name be entered in the Register.

signed by the parish priest and four witnesses. Georg Hiedler again acknowledged his paternity document concerning some inheritance in 1876 notary in Weitra. He was then eighty-four years old. His child's mother had been dead for over thirty years. Schicklgruber had been a customs official in many years.

was not officially adopted at his mother's name remained Schicklgruber. He would have throughout his life had not Johann Nepomuk, son of George's younger brother, made a will and named him the illegitimate son of his brother. But on condition that Alois should assume the name of June 4, 1870, the name Alois Schicklgruber in the Register of the Parish of Döllersheim was changed to Hiedler, the local government authority in Vienna, Austria, on January 6, 1877. From then on Schicklgruber called himself Alois Hitler, a name as little as the other, but which secured

he were talking about his relatives Adolf told him his father's change of names. Nothing his father pleased him as much as this. For Schicklgruber to him so much as a name, so much as a name, and impractical. He found "Hiedler" too but "Hitler" sounded nice and was easy to

his father that instead of accepting the name as did the rest of his relations, he invented "Hitler". It was in keeping with his mania for change. His superiors had nothing to do with

He is convinced that the system of measures is the necessary

TRAIT OF HIS FATHER

this; for in all his forty years of service he was transferred only four times. The towns to which he was posted (Saalfelden, Braunau, Passau and Linz), are so favourably situated that they form the ideal setting for a customs official's career. But hardly had he settled down in one of these places, when he began to move house. During his period of service in Braunau there are recorded twelve changes of address; probably there were more. During the two years in Passau he moved twice. Soon after his retirement he moved from Linz to Hafeld, from there to Lambach — first in the Leingartner Inn, then to a mill, that is to say, two changes in one year — then to Leonding. When I met Adolf he remembered seven removals and had been to five different schools. It would not be true to say that these constant changes were due to bad housing conditions. Surely the Pommer Inn — Alois Hitler was very fond of living in inns — (where Adolf was born) was one of the finest and most presentable buildings in the whole of Braunau. Nevertheless, the father left there soon after Adolf's birth. Actually he often moved from a decent dwelling into a poorer one. The house was not the important thing; rather the moving. How can one explain this strange mania?

Perhaps Alois Hitler simply hated to remain in one spot, and as his service forced on him a certain stability, he at least wanted some change in his own sphere. As soon as he had got used to certain surroundings, he grew weary of them. To live meant to change one's conditions, a trait which I experienced in Adolf too.

Three times Alois remodelled his family. It is perhaps true that this was due to outside circumstances. But if so, certainly fate played strangely into his hands. We know that his first wife, Anna, suffered very much from his restlessness, which eventually led to their separation and was partly responsible for her unexpected death. For while his first wife was still alive, Alois Hitler already had a child by the woman who became his second wife. And again when the second

It is often a reflection of the conflict of interest in men, who are not interested in their own interests, but in the interests of others.

1863-1903

1901

see * Hitler's mania for change that declared him to be a man of high position + we should not be afraid to change.

Alois moves around each house again and again. He is always moving. He is always moving.

which he still and died, Klara, the third wife, was affecting a child of his. Just sufficient time elapsed to be born in wedlock. Alois Hitler was not a husband. Even more than from Franz Hitler's occasional lack of inner harmony was perhaps partly due to the fact that Alois Hitler never married a woman his own age, was fourteen years older, Franziska twenty-four years younger, and Klara twenty-three years younger.

The strange and unusual habit of the father's, always to be in circumstances, is all the more remarkable as those of a comfortable life without any justification. I see in the father's character an explanation of the strange behaviour of the son, whose constant restlessness puzzled me for so long. When Adolf and I strolled through the familiar streets of the good, old town — all peace and harmony — my friend would sometimes be in a certain mood and begin to change everything he saw in the house there was in a wrong position; it would be demolished. There was an empty plot which should have been built up instead. That street needed a correction to give a more compact impression. Away with this completely bungled tenement block! Let's have a new one built. Thus he was always rebuilding the town. It wasn't only a matter of building. A beggar, before the church, would be an occasion for him to think on the need for a State scheme for the old, and do away with begging. A peasant woman coming with her milk cart drawn by a miserable dog — he would criticize the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for their lack of initiative. Two young lieutenants marching through the streets, their sabres proudly clanking — he would reason for him to inveigh against the short compulsory service which permitted such idleness. This is to be dissatisfied with things as they were, always

to change and improve them, was ineradicable in him.

And this was by no means a peculiarity which he had acquired through external influences, by his upbringing at home or at school, but an innate quality that was also apparent in his father's unsettled character. It was a supernatural force, comparable to a motor driving a thousand wheels.

Nevertheless, father and son were affected by this quality in different ways. The father's unruly nature was bridled by one steadying factor — his position. The discipline of his office gave his volatile character purpose and direction. Again and again he was saved from complications by the hard exigencies of his duties.

The uniform of the customs official served as a cover for anything that may have gone on in the stormy sphere of his private life. In particular, being in the service, he unreservedly accepted the authority on which the service was built. Although Alois Hitler was inclined to liberal views — an inclination not uncommon in the Austrian Civil Service — he would never have questioned the authority of the State, epitomized in the person of the Emperor. By fully submitting to this accepted authority, Alois Hitler was able to steer safely through all the dangerous reefs and sandbanks of his life, on which otherwise he might have foundered.

This also throws a different light on his obstinate efforts to make a civil servant of Adolf. It was for him more than a father's usual preoccupation with his son's future. His purpose was rather to direct his son into a position which necessitated submission to authority. It is quite possible that the father did not himself realise the inner reason of his attitude, but his determination in insisting on his point of view shows that he must have felt how much was at stake for his son. So well did he know him.

With equal determination Adolf refused to comply with his father's wishes, although he himself had only very hazy ideas about his future. To become a painter would have

all too often, this quality of himself by Dick gifts of creativity produces artists and builders.

Same Alois style as his son.

145

1903

been the worst possible insult to his father, for it would have meant just that aimless wandering to which he (the father) was so much opposed.

With his refusal to enter the Civil Service, Adolf Hitler's path diverges sharply from that of his father; it takes a different course, final and irrevocable. It was, indeed, the great decision of his life. The years that followed it I spent at his side. I could observe how earnestly he tried to find the right path for his future, not merely a job that would provide a livelihood, but real tasks for which his talents were fitted.

Alois Hitler died suddenly. On January 3, 1903, he was sixty-five and still strong and active—he went, as usual, punctually at ten o'clock in the morning to have his drink. Without warning he collapsed in his chair. Before a doctor or a priest could be called, he was dead.

When the fourteen-year-old son saw his dead father he burst out into uncontrollable weeping.

Love for a father that had never been expressed for it lay beneath a cloud-bank of animosity, and now could now be expressed for that man, and so much wonder with all the disorganization of a mind through his soul for years to come was the force behind the grief. Waited for a parent when it is not complete can arouse more tears at their death than love that was able to express itself.

CH

WHEN I FIRST knew concerned, already still attending the te came home, usually sake had he—as he attempts.” His repor school in Linz had in been advised to let school. To put it bl moted only on the c the school in the cap satisfactory pupils by the smaller towns. A method and from the fourth form of the tec this time he knew all and had come to the plans for his future, so

which he stuck to everything he had once accepted. The Nationalist ideology became his political creed, an unalterable element of his nature. No back would change him. He remained till his death as he had been at sixteen — a Nationalist.

And firmly fixed before his eyes, he observed and existed in existing political conditions. Nothing was too trivial for him; he gave his attention to even the most trivial details. He took a stand in regard to everything — the less it was, the more heatedly. He made up for the lack of his own existence by taking an interest in the affairs of others, thus giving aim and direction to his life. With all his all-embracing interests, he was much against him, and he saw everywhere only hostility. And yet, nobody had ever heard of him. I was even sorry for him. With his unconscious, what a happy life he could have led; and how much he had made things for himself! He was always up and at odds with the world. Just that free spirit which distinguishes most young people is alien to him. I never saw him take anything but a thing that had to be thoroughly studied and tested before he would fit into his great political design. Traditional sense, meant nothing to him. To sum up, he had to be radically changed in all its aspects. It would be wrong to conclude that the young Hitler had a heart and soul into the political struggle of the time, a pale, sickly, lanky youth, quite unknown and out of the ways of the city, shy and reticent rather than bold. He carried on this intense activity all on his own. He had the most important ideas and solutions, that he would propound in the evening to his solitary and lonely figure. The young man's on-ship to politics is similar to his attitude to anything that was permitted this rather indelicate comparison.

son. The more intensely he was intellectually occupied with politics, the more did he refrain from taking part in practical, political activity. He did not join any party or organization, did not take part in party manifestations, and took care not to spread his own ideas outside of our friendship. What I noticed then in him in Linz — to stick to my metaphor — may be described as a first ogling with politics, nothing more, as though he had had a presentiment of what politics would come to mean to him.

For the time being, politics remained for him only an exercise in the realm of ideas. This striking reticence shows a trait in his character that seems to contradict his impatience — his ability to wait. Politics remained for him for some years a matter of watching, of criticising social conditions, of study, gathering experience; it remained a matter private to himself, and consequently without any importance for the public life of that day.

It is interesting to note that the young Hitler in those years was strongly opposed to everything military. This seems to be contradicted by a passage in *Mein Kampf*.

While going through my father's library, I came across several books on military subjects, among them a popular edition of the history of the Franco-German War, 1870-1871; two volumes of an illustrated magazine of those years now became my favourite reading, and before long this heroic struggle had become my greatest intellectual experience. From now on, I grew increasingly enthusiastic for everything that had anything to do with war or soldiers.

I suspect that this recollection owes its existence to the circumstances of his imprisonment in Landsberg, where his book was written; for when I knew Adolf Hitler, he was utterly averse to "anything to do with war or soldiers." Of course he was annoyed by the young lieutenants who flut-

1924

sure politics, they can bring to the truth.
* Passion than

1902

* D.T. The mark of our people is that they live with more conviction, more elegance, and with more, yes, 'honour'.