

Dear Occupation Museum family
Beloved Sylvia, Andrew, Isabelle, Philippa, Robert and Christy
Honourable president of the Republic of Estonia Toomas Hendrik Ilves
Beloved relatives and guests

Today I would like to remember thankfully my only and the dearest aunt, Clarissima Domina of Ordo Altaria Mariana, Olga Ritso Kistler, my father's sister, who was born during the civil war in Kiev on the 26th of June 1920, in the family from her father's side Estonian origin frontline doctor and from her mother's side nobility, whose documented written history goes back to the year 338 before Christ.

Due to the complicated times aunt Olli, with this name I have always invited aunt Olga, and my father became orphans before aunt Olli became two years old and my father was only six years old. Mother of the children died and their father who was the leader of the Estonian community was arrested and was sent to a prison camp in Siberia for 10 years. Miraculously children remained alive during half a year independent life and reached happily to Volmre, Estonia thanks to their uncle Juhan. Uncle Juhan found the children thanks to the letter from his brother Eduard with the description from where to find his children in Moscow. The letter reached uncle Juhan coming through China.

From childhood there has remained only one photo from the children together, which was taken in 1923, on the day while the family members were going to meet with the future foster family of Olli, director of the Agriculture School, Vironus Sirk at Jäneda Manor.

My memories about aunt Olli are as old as I remember, because always had been talk about my father's sister, who lives in America and from whom now and then came letters to my grandfather and father through the Red Cross. The first time I heard voice of aunt Olli, uncle Walter and Sylvia in 1967, when she phoned us from the vocation trip to Switzerland and when all our family members could talk to each other. This emotion was this extremely strong that I remember this extraordinary feeling until today. We were writing with aunt Olli and Sylvia, letter in the mailbox caused big exhilaration always. Who found the letter sang to the addressee "Dance-dance, swirl-swirl, do not break the stove" and the addressee made some dance steps before getting the letter. We always read the letters from aunt Olli and Sylvia to each other.

The first time we met in 1976, while aunt Olli, uncle Walter and Sylvia came to visit us in Estonia. I had the feeling like we had lived the whole life side by side with aunt Olli and her family. The meeting was this direct and lovely.

I remember the trip to Tartu, to visit Tartu University, which aunt Olli graduated as a doctor in 1944. On the way, the Inturist microbus with what we travelled, lost a wheel and the diver had to repair the car. This way we got plenty of free time between fields and meadows. Sylvia had not seen hay piles before and never before frolicked in them and this way we had lots of joy climbing up the hay piles and gliding down from them. In Tartu we also visited the road leading to the Raadi Estate, as the entrance to the estate was prohibited. From a hill we looked with the binoculars towards the Raadi Estate, were uncle Walter's mother used to be a French teacher for a year in her youth.

Especially brightly I remember meeting with aunt Olli's family in the motherland of uncle Walter - Switzerland – at the wedding of Sylvia and Andy in 1990, while we spent together for two weeks getting acquainted with the Swiss life all over the country.

It is interesting to read the memoirs of my grandfather, the first part of which is written by aunt Olli, dictated by her father after he had reached back from his exile in Russia. The printed Memoirs book is also available in the Occupation Museum.

Admirable was the proximity and hankering of sister-brother to each other. Aadu and Olli talk with each other for hours with closed eyes on every meeting.

In faith that my father and his sister are again close to each other in the heavenly existence.

I would like to thank once more everybody, who have gathered here today to reverence my kind aunt Olga Ritso Kistler.

Marika Katarina
July 7th 2014.a.D.