JANE ANDERSON: THE NAZI GEORGIA PEACH

PART I

Published in The Athens Observer, p. 5 (May 18, 1995).

The thrill-packed life of a little-known Georgian, Jane Anderson, proves that truth is stranger than fiction.

Anderson led an amazing life filled with exciting adventures, daring deeds, breathtaking escapades, and romantic interludes, a life stranger than the dreams of most people. She changed her name several times. She often traveled across the United States, and lived in Georgia, Arizona, Texas, Colorado, and New York City. She criss-crossed the Atlantic ocean in ships numerous times; in Europe she visited 20 countries and lived in London, Paris, Spain, Germany, and Austria. As a young woman she was blessed with a stunning physical attractiveness. She had two husbands, numerous fiances, and innumerable lovers. She was at one time or another in her life a writer, a journalist, a war correspondent, a gorgeous seductress, a demi-monde, a suspected spy, an alcoholic, a drug addict, and a Nazi propagandist. She hobnobbed with distinguished political and military leaders on the international stage. She was a member of the inner circle of such famous writers as Joseph Conrad and H. G. Wells. Once she was arrested in Spain on a spying charge and nearly shot. On another occasion she was arrested for treason against the United States, becoming one of only four American women charged with treason during World War II, and the only Georgia woman charged with treason in this century.

Jane Anderson was born in Atlanta, probably on Jan. 6, 1888. Her father, Robert M. "Red" Anderson, a close friend of showman Buffalo Bill, was a colorful Western character who served for a time as a lawman and who killed at least 28 men with his six-shooter. He abandoned his wife and only child, Jane, shortly after Jane's birth. Jane's mother, Ellen Luckie Anderson, a very beautiful woman, was from a wealthy and prominent Atlanta family. She was tried for a scandalous murder in 1903 but acquitted, allegedly on account of her good looks; shortly thereafter she died, and Jane went to live with her father in an Arizona frontier town.

Jane Anderson actually was born Foster Anderson; in college she called herself Jane Foss Anderson; later she was known as Jane Anderson; when she married a pro-Franco Spaniard in 1934 she used the name Juana de la Santisima Trinidad (Jane of the Holy Trinity); and after her marriage her writings were published under the name Jane Anderson de Cienfuegos.

After attending college in Texas, Jane Anderson went to New York City in 1909, where she lived until 1915, marrying a music scholar in 1910. The marriage soon ended in divorce. Jane became a successful writer, concentrating mainly on short stories, 14 of which were published in national magazines from 1910 through 1913.

Jane (who spoke French fluently) was then one of the most lusciously beautiful women in the world, tall, slim, with long curly orange hair, blue eyes, high forehead, a lovely mouth and nose, and a lovely soft complexion. One scholar has examined a photograph of Jane taken in 1910 and describes Jane: "Wearing a long dark dress and sitting with her legs crossed at an angle to the camera, she rests her elbow on her knee and chin on her lace-gloved hand, and turns her strikingly handsome face toward the lens as her tawny hair cascades onto her shoulders from under the canopy of an enormous soft black hat." One of her lovers, author George Seldes, accurately described her as a "spectacular beauty."

In September 1915 Jane departed for England. There in London in 1916 and 1917 the girl with the Georgia accent was welcomed into high society and joined distinguished literary circles. She became a famous war correspondent. She journeyed in Royal Navy submarines. She became the first woman to fly (as a passenger) in an English military warplane, which looped-the-loop one and a half miles above London's Hyde Park, and flew her out over the English Channel. With a Gordon Bruce she wrote a book entitled Flying, Submarining, and Mine Sweeping.

PART II

Published in The Athens Observer, p. 5 (May 25, 1995).

In 1916 Jane briefly was the lover of writer Joseph Conrad. A 1991 biography of the famous novelist written by Jeffrey Meyers devotes one chapter, two appendices, a bibliography, and numerous footnotes to the fascinating life of Jane Anderson.

In 1917 and 1918 Jane lived in Paris at the luxurious Hotel Crillon, next to the American Embassy, where she associated with high-ranking military and diplomatic officers, moved in the highest circles of government, and was suspected by some of being a German spy.

After 1922 Jane spent most of her time in Europe.

In 1934 in Seville Jane married Eduardo Alvarez de Cienfuegos, a gigolo and professional gambler claiming to be the Marques de Cienfuegos. Jane also converted to Roman Catholicism from Protestantism, and shifted her political allegiance to the far, even fascist, right.

On Sept. 23, 1936, while covering the Spanish Civil War as a pro-Franco war correspondent, Jane was seized by Loyalist forces in Madrid. She was imprisoned under inhuman conditions, harshly interrogated, and sentenced to death by a revolutionary tribunal. After being forced to watch other prisoners tortured or executed, Jane was released in mid-October as a result of the intervention of the U. S. State Department, which spirited her back to the United States. Miraculously, Jane had escaped the firing squad by an eyelash.

Historian William G. Schofield writes that Jane's horrible experiences in Spanish prison forever destroyed her extraordinary beauty. "She had entered prison as one of the beautiful women of Spain. When she came out she was haggard from scurvy and badly scarred by rat-bite. Her face was deeply lined. Her eyes carried a gleam that was near insanity and near terror ..."

A friend who saw Jane after Anderson's release "said that Jane was big and fat and pop-eyed ... [S]he had degenerated into a cold, soulless creature completely without feeling or consideration for others. It was very evident that she used drugs. How supremely awful!" Jane's drug abuse consisted of excessive use of barbiturates, which had first been prescribed for her to treat shell-shock acquired when as a war correspondent in 1916 she visited the soldiers at the battlefront in their trenches.

When Jane began to abuse alcohol is unknown. However, there are indications that even before the Spanish Civil War alcohol and drugs had wrecked Jane's legendary pulchritude. In 1934 or 1935 an old friend agreed to meet Jane in a London hotel. The friend went and found Jane and was shocked at what he saw, later writing: "[A]long the corridor came, not the lovely creature I had known, but a raddled, blowzy woman, very, very drunk. A tragic sight." A photograph taken of her in the early 1930's shows, according to one scholar

who has seen it, that "Jane has completely lost her beauty and become a dumpy matron."

In the entry in his diary for Oct. 21, 1939, the infamous Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels mentioned Jane Anderson favorably, and on May 10, 1941 Jane had an official meeting with Goebbels. From April 1941 until March 1942 and occasionally in 1944 Jane Anderson, who was referred to as "the Georgia Peach," broadcast Nazi propaganda via short wave radio from Berlin to the United States. Her programs on German State Radio's U. S. A. Zone were designed to justify Nazi aggression and to weaken the American war effort by dividing Americans.

There is an excellent account of Jane Anderson's work for Nazi Germany in John Carver Edwards' book <u>Berlin Calling: American Broadcasters in Service to the Third Reich</u>, published in 1991. (Edwards is a University Archivist at UGA.) He believes Anderson had a "commitment to nazism ..."

Jane's radio program was broadcast two or four times a week. Each broadcast began and ended with the inane slogan, "Always remember progressive Americans eat Kellogg Corn Flakes and listen to both sides of the story," while a band played a tune called "Scatterbrain"! On the program Jane lavished praise on Adolf Hitler, once referring to him as "an immortal crusader, a great lover of God," and asserting that Hitler "had reached to the stars"!

PART III

Published in <u>The Athens Observer</u>, p. 4A (June 1, 1995). There is a bibliography at the end of the article.

As Jeffrey Meyers' biography of Conrad notes, Jane Anderson's broadcasts for German radio were remarkable, not only because they defended Nazi atrocities and the Nazi cause, but also because of Anderson's "astonishing vocabulary, her long, complex sentences, and the crescendo of her diatribes." She also used "mixed metaphors and hyperbolic logic." Jane's soft Southern accent had vanished. An FBI agent who was monitoring the broadcasts wrote: "As [Anderson] reaches the climax of her presentations she gradually works herself into a white heat, her words now tumbling over one another like logs shooting over a waterfall." Here are two samples of what has been called Jane's "overheated prose":

"Roosevelt has pulled a brass band out of his hip pocket, and a concentration camp from under the coattails of the brain trust ..."

"Roosevelt consolidated with Churchill in the simultaneous declaration of war upon Japan ... so the American people have gone to war to save Stalin and the international banker which are one and the same ..."

Jane's most famous broadcast was on Nov. 21, 1941 when the topic of discussion was the horrors of democracy, and her guest was William Joyce, better known as Lord Haw Haw, an Englishman turned traitor who broadcast Nazi propaganda to England from Germany. Not surprisingly, as early as January 1942 the American press (including <u>Time</u> magazine and <u>The Atlanta Journal</u> newspaper) had begun referring to Jane as Lady Haw Haw. (After Germany's surrender, Joyce was returned to England, convicted of treason, and hanged.)

In July 1943 Jane Anderson was, for having broadcast from Berlin, indicted by a federal grand jury on charges of treason. In the ancient, majestic language of the law the indictment charged the Atlanta native with "knowingly, intentionally, feloniously, traitorously, and treasonably adher[ing] to the enemies of the United States [and] giving to the said enemies aid and comfort."

A warrant for Anderson's arrest issued. When Nazi Germany surrendered in May 1945, American authorities tried to locate and capture Anderson, who with her husband eluded pursuers and hid out in various places in Germany and Austria. Finally, on April 2, 1947, Jane Anderson was arrested in Austria and delivered over to American military custody. In October 1947, however, the treason indictment was dismissed by a federal court under mysterious circumstances, and Jane was released.

Jane then went to live with her husband under the friendly skies of Franco's Spain. In 1951 she was assumed by a friend to be living then in Spain. Jeffrey Meyers' Conrad biography tells us that someone who knew Jane had "a vague recollection of someone writing to him in the 1950's and saying that Jane was in a boarding house somewhere in Europe." To this day nothing else is known about Jane Anderson after 1947. Despite diligent investigations by historians it still has not been determined when or where Jane Anderson died.

Somewhere, presumably in Spain, lie the ashes of an Atlanta-born woman who drank the cup of life to the full but nonetheless suffered a tragic fate. Born a Georgia peach, she died the Nazi Georgia Peach.

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