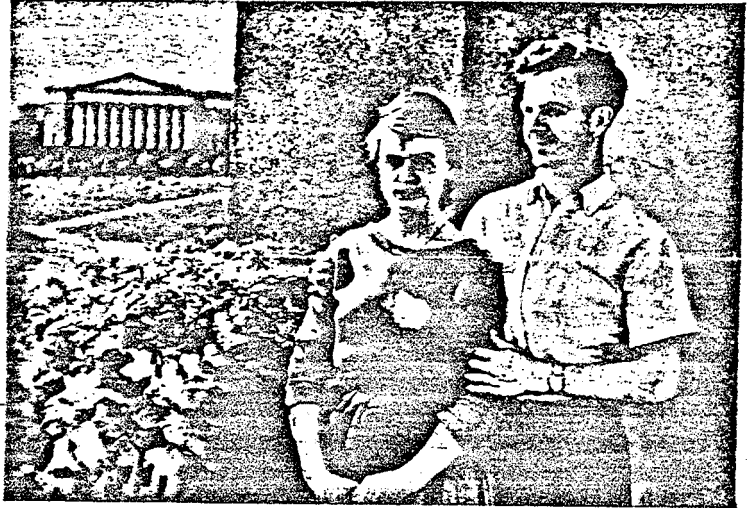


LIFE

[Handwritten notes and diary entries, some legible and some illegible]

Oswald's Full Russian Diary
The full Russian diary of Lee Harvey Oswald, including handwritten notes and diary entries, is featured in this special section.



OSWALD'S FULL RUSSIAN DIARY
The full Russian diary of Lee Harvey Oswald, including handwritten notes and diary entries, is featured in this special section.

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ALEXANDRIA VA 22307

JUL 10 1964

OSWALD CALLED IT MY 'HISTORIC

Here, published in full for the first time as he wrote and spelled it, is the assassin's diary inside Russia

On these and the following pages LIFE presents a fascinating and historic document, the personal diary kept by Lee Harvey Oswald during his months in Russia. It is one of the most important pieces of evidence studied by the Warren Commission in its effort to unravel the character and motives of President Kennedy's assassin. Though Oswald's widow did not provide LIFE with the diary, it is

printed here in full with her permission. At Marina Oswald's request, many Russian names in the diary have been changed to prevent reprisals against Oswald's acquaintances. In a few instances—which are indicated in the text—Oswald's writing is so undecipherable that the editors had to make an educated guess. Other than that the diary is printed exactly as Oswald wrote it, misspellings and all.

HISTORIC DIARY

FROM OCT. 14, 1959
ARRIVAL—LEAVING

OCT. 14. Arrive from Helsinki by train; am met by Intourist repre. And in car to Hotel "Berlin." Reges. as "student" 5 day lux. tourist ticket.) Meet my Intourist guided Olga I explain to her I wish to appl. for Rus. citizenship, she is flabbergasted, but agrees to help. She checks with her boss, main office intour; than helps me add. a letter to sup. Sovit. asking for citizenship, mean while boss telephons passport * visa office and notifies them about me.
OCT. 17.—Olga meets me for Intourist sightseeing says we must contin. with this although I am

too nevous she is "sure" I'll have an answer, soon. Asks me about myself and my reasons for doing this I explain I am a communist. ect. She is politly sym. but uneasy now. She tries to be a friend to me. She feels sorry for me I am someth. new.

SUN. OCT. 18. My 20th birthday, we vist exhib. in morning and in the after noon the Lenin-Stalin tomb. She gives me a present book "IDEOT" by Dostoevski.

OCT. 18. Tourism. Am anxious since my visa is good for five days only and still no word from auth. about my request.

OCT. 20. Olga in the afternoon says Intourist was notified by the pass. * visa dept. that they want to see me I am excited greatly by

this news.

OCT. 21. (mor) Meeting with single offial. Balding stout, black suit fairly. good English, asks what do I want?. I say Sovite citizenship, he ask why I give vague answers about "great Soviet union" He tells me "USSR only great in literature wants me to go back home" I am studded I reiterate, he says he shall check and let me know weather my visa will be (extended it expires today) Eve. 6.00 Recive word from police official. I must leave country tonight at 8.00 p.m. as visa expires I am shocked!! My dreams! I retire to my room. I have \$100. left. I have waited for 2 year to be accepted. My fondis dreams are shattered because of a petty offial; because of bad plan-

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FAMILY OUTING. On a warm day in Minsk in 1962, Lee Oswald and his wife Marina (right) pose in country



DIARY'—AND IT IS

LIFE

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with her Uncle Vasili Khritinin and Aunt Lubov Axelnova. It was early spring and Marina remembers that

the countryside seemed more drab than usual on this occasion. She also feels that she did not look her best.

PICNIC CHEF. While friends of Oswald (*left, background*) relaxed on the grass outside Minsk, he started a

fire to begin a cookout, Russian-style. This picture was taken several weeks before Oswald met Marina.

AS I WATCH MY LIFE WHIRL AWAY'



so I call her. She drives right over-I give my story, allow pictures, later story is distorted, sent without my permission, that is: before I ever saw and O.K.'ed her story. Again I feel slightly better because of the attention

NOV. 18. A Russian official comes to my room asks how I am. Notifies me I can remain in USSR till some solution is found with what to do with me, it is comforting news. For me.

NOV 17-DEC. 31 I have bought myself two self-teaching Russian lan. books I force myself to study 8 hours a day I sit in my room and read and memorize words. All meals I take in my room. Olga arranged that. It is very cold on the streets so I rarely go outside at all for this month and a-half I see no-one speak to no-one except every-now-and-then Olga, who calls the ministry about me. Have they forgotten? During December I paid no money to the hotel, but Olga told hotel I was expecting a lot of money from U.S.A. I have \$28. left. This month I was called to the passport office and met 3 new officials who asked me the same questions I ans. a month before. They appear not to know me at all.

DEC 31. New Years Eve, I spend in the company of Katerina at the Hotel Berlin, she has the duty. I sit with her until past midnight. She gives me a small "Boratin," clown, for a New Years present she is very nice I found out only recently she is married, has small son who was born crippled; that is why she is so strangely tender

and compelling.

JAN 1 - 4 No change in routine **JAN 4.** I am called to passport office and finally given a Soviet document not the Soviet citizenship as I so wanted, only a Residence document, not even for foreigners, but a paper called "for those without citizenship". Still I am happy. The official says they are sending me to the city of "Minsk" I ask "is that in Siberia? He only laughs; he also tells me that they have arranged for me to receive some money though the Red cross to pay my hotel bills and expensits. I thank the gentlemen and leave later in the afternoon I see Olga "she asks are you happy" "yes"

JAN. 5. I go to Red Cross in Moscow for money with interrupter (a new one) I receive 5000. rubles a huge sum!! Later in Minsk I am to earn 70 rubles a month at the factory.

JAN. 7. I leave Moscow by train for Minsk, Belorussia. My hotel bill was 2200. rubles and the train ticket to Minsk 150. rubles so I have a lot of money * hope. I wrote my brother * mother letters in which I said "I do not wish to every contact you again." I am beginning a new life and I don't want any part of the old."

JAN. 7. Arrive in Minsk, met by 2 women Red Cross workers we go to Hotel "Minsk." I take room, and meet Tamara and Valentina two persons from intourist in hotel who speak English Valentina is in 40's nice married young child, Tamara about 23 blond attractive unmarried excellent English, we attract each other at once.

JAN 8. I meet the city mayor, comrade Shrapof, who welcomes me to Minsk promises a rent-free apartment "soon" and warns me about "uncultured persons" who sometimes insult foreigners. My interputer: Aleksai. Head For. Tech Instit. next door.

JAN. 10. The day to myself I walk through city, very nice.

JAN. 12 I visit Minsk Radio factory where I shall work. There I meet Andrei B., late 40's mild mannered likable, he seems to want to tell me somet. I show him my temporary docu. and say soon I shall have Russ. Citiz.

JAN. 14-16 I work as a "checker" metal worker, pay: 700 rubles a month. Work very easy. I am learning Russian quickly. Now everyone is very freindly and kind. I meet many young Russian workers my own age they have varied personalities all wish to know about me even offer to hold a mass meeting so I can say. I refuse politely. At night I take Tamara to the theater, movie or operor almost every day I'm living big and am very satisfied. I receive a check from the Red Cross every 5th of the month "to help." The check is 700 rubles. Therefore every month I make 1400. R. about the same as the director of the factory! Andrei observes me during this time I don't like: picture of Lenin which watches from its place of honour and phy. training at 11.-11.10 each morning (compulsory). For all. (Shades of H.G. Wells!!)

MARCH 10. I receive a small flat one-room kitchen-bath near the factory (8 min. walk) with splendid

view from 2 balconies of the river. Almost rent free (60. rub a mon.) It is a Russians dream.

MARCH 17- APRIL 31. - Work. I have lost contact with Tamara after my house moving. I meet Vladimir G. A young man my age friendly very intelligent a exalant radio technician his father is Gen. G. twice hero of USSR in W.W.2.

MAY 1- May Day came as my first holiday all factories ect. closed after sptacular military parade all workers parad past reviewing stand waving flags and pictures of Mr. K. ect. I follow the Amer. custom of marking a holiday by sleeping in the morning. At night I visit with Andrei's daughters at a party thron by them about 40 people come many of Argentine origin we dance and play around and drink until 2 AM. when party breaks up. Natasha oldest dau. 26 formally married, now divorced, a talanted singer. Galina 20 very gay, not so attractive but we hit it off. Her boy-friend Boris is a Hungarian chap, silent and brooding, not at all like Galina. Andrei advises me to go back to U.S.A. Its the first voice of opposition I have heard. I respect Andrei, he has seen the world. He says many things, and relats many things I do not know about the U.S.S.R. I begin to feel uneasy inside, its true!

JUNE-JULY Summer months of green beauty, pine forest very deep. I enjoy many Sundays in the environments of Minsk with the B's who have a car "Mosovich" Boris always goes along with Galina. Natasha seems to have no permanent boy-friend, but many admirers. She has a beautiful Spanish figure, long black hair, like Galina. I never pay much atten. to her shes too old for me she seems to dislike my lack of attention for some reason. She is high strung. I have become habituated to a small cafe which is where I dine in the evening The food is generally poor and always exactly the same, menus in any cafe, at any point in the city. The food is cheap and I dont really care about quality after three years in the U.S.M.C.

AUG-SEPT. As my Russian improves I become increasingly conscious of just what sort of a society I live in. Mass gymnastics, compulsory afterwork meeting, usually political information meeting. Compulsory attendance at lectures and the sending of the entire shop collective (except me) to pick potatoes on a Sunday, at a state collective farm: A "patriotic duty" to bring in the harvest. The opinions of the workers (unvoiced) are that its a great pain in the neck. They don't

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seem to be especially enthusiastic about any of the "collective" duties a natural feeling. I am increasingly aware of the presence, in all things, of Lebizen, shop party secretary, fat, fortynish, and jovial on the outside. He is a no-nonsense "Party" regular.

OCT. The coming of Fall, my dread of a new Russian winter, are mellowed in splendid golds and reds of fall in Belorussia Plums peaches apricots and cherries abound for these last fall weeks I am a healthy brown color and stuffed with fresh fruit. (At other times of the year unobtainable)

OCT. 18 My 21st birthday see's Tamara, Vladimir, Anna at a small party at my place Anna a very attractive Russian Jew I have been going walking with lady, works at the radio factory also. Tamara and Anna are jalous of each other it brings a warm feeling to me. Both are at my place for the first time. Anna and Vladimir both give ash-tray's (I don't smoke) we have a laugh.

NOV. Finds the approach of winter now. A growing loneliness overtakes me in spite of my conquest of, Sarra a girl from Riga, student at the music conservorie in Minsk. After an affair which last a few weeks we part.

NOV 15--In Nov. I make the aquitance of four girls rooming at the For. lan. Dormitory in room 212. Larisa is very interesting, so is Nina, Alisa and Svetlana. I usually go to the insitute domatory with a friend of mine who speaks English very well. Ivan 22: is in the fourth year at the medical insitute. Very bright fellow At the domatory we 6 sit and talk for hours in English with Larisa.

JAN 1 New Years I spend at home of Anna. I think I'm in love with her. She has refused my more dishonourable advances, we drink and eat in the presence of her family in a very hospitable atmosphere. Later I go home drunk and happy. Passing the river homewards, I decide to propose to Anna.

JAN. 2 After a pleasant hand-in-hand walk to the local cimima we come home, standing on the doorstep I propose's she hesitates than refuses, my love is real but she has none for me, her reason besides lack of love; I am american and someday might be arrested simply because of that example Polish Intervention in the 20's. led to arrest of all people in the Soviet Union of polish origin "you understand the world situation there is too much against you and you don't even know it" I am stunned she snickers at my awkwarnes in turning to go (I am too stunned too think!) I realize she was never serious with me but only exploited

my being an american in order to get the envy of the other girls who consider me different from the Russian Boys. I AM MISARABLE! JAN 3. I am misarable about Anna. I love her but what can I do? It is the state of fear which was always in the Soviet Union.

JAN. 4. One year after I received the residence document I am called in to the passport office and asked if I want citizenship (Russian) I say no simply extend my residential passport to agree and my document is extended until Jan 4. 1962.

JAN 4-31 I am stating to reconsider my distre about staying The work is drab the money I get has nowhere to be spent. No night-clubs or bowling ally's: no places of recreation accept the trade union dances I have have had enough.

FEB. 1. I mail my first request to American Embassy, Moscow for reconsidering my position. I stated "I would like to go back to U.S!"

FEB. 18 - I recieve letter from Embassy. Richard E. Snyder stated "I could come in for an interview any time I wanted."

MARCH 1-11 I now live in a state of expectation about going back to the U.S. I confided with Andrei he supports my judgement but warns me not to tell any Russians about my desire to return. I understand now why.

MARCH 17 - I and Ivan went to trade union dance. Boring but at the last hour I am introduced to a girl with a French hair-do and red-dress with white slippers I dance with her. Than ask to show her home I do, along with 5 other admirares Her name is Marina. We like each other right away she gives me her phone number and departs home with an not-so-new friend in a taxi, I walk home.

MARCH 18-31. We walk I talk a little about myself she talks alot about herself. Her name is Marina N. Pruskova.

APRIL 1-10 We are going steady and I decide I must have her, she puts me off so on April 15 I propose, she accepts.

APRIL 31. After a 7 day delay at the marraige beaure because of my unusual passport they allow us to registra as man * wife two of Marinas girl friends act as bridesmaids. We are married. At her aunts home we have a dinner reception for about 20 friends and neborilos who wish us happiness (in spite of my origin and accept) which was in general rather disquiting to any Russian since for, are very rare in the soviet union even terrorist. After a evening of eating and drinking in which uncle Mooser started a fight and the fuse blow on an overloaded circite we take our leave and walk the 15 minutes to our home. We lived near each other. At midnight we were home.

1ST-MAY DAY 1961. Found us thinking about our future. In spite of fact I married Marina to hurt Anna I found myself in love with Marina.

MAY. - The trasition of changing full love from Anna to Marina was very painfull esp. as I saw Anna almost every day at the factory but as the days * weeks went by I adjusted more and more my wife mentally. I still hade'nt told my wife of my desire to return to U.S She is maddly in love with me from the very start. Boat rides on Lake Minsk walks through the parks evening at home or at aunt Valia's place, mark May

JUNE - A continuenec of May, except that; we draw closer and closer, and I think very little now of Anna. In the last days of this month I revele my longing to return to America. My wife is slightly startled. But than encourages me to do what I wish to do.

JULY - I decived to take my two week vaction and travel to Moscow (without police permission) to the American Embassy to see about getting my U.S. passport back and make arrangements for my wife to enter the U.S. with me.

JULY 1 - I fly by plane to (he means "from") Minsk on a IL-20, 2 hrs. 20 m. Later after taking a tearful and anxlou parting from my wife I arrive in Moscow departing by bus from the airfield I arrive in the center of the city. Making my way through heavy traffic I don't come in sight of the Embassy until 2:00 in the afternoon. Its Saturday what if they are closed? Entering I find the offices empty but mange to contact Snyder on the phone (since all Embassy personal live in the same buiding) he comes down to greet me shake my hand after interview, he advises me to come in first thing Mon.

(see - July 8-13.) JULY 2. Interview July 9 recive passport, call Maria to Moscow also.

JULY 14. I and Marina return to Minsk.

JULY 18. Marina at work, is shocked to find out they everyone knows she entered the U.S. embassy. They were called at her place of work from some official in Moscow! The bosses hold a meeting and give her a strong browbeating. The first of many indocrinations. JULY 18 - AUG 18. We have found out which blanks and certifikats are necessary to apply for a exit visa they number about 20 papers; birth

WIFE AND CHILD. En route to the U.S. 18 months before her husband assassinated President Kennedy, Marina Oswald paused in Poland to quiet their daughter, June, with a pacifier --and Oswald snapped this picture.

I REVELE

certificates affidavite photos ect. on Aug 20th we give the papers out they say it will be 3 1/2 months before we know whether they'll let us go or not. In the meantime Marina has had to stade 4 differant meeting at the place of work held by her boss's at the direction of "someone" by phone. The young comm. leauge headquarters also called about her and she had to go see them for 1 1/2 hrs. The purpose (expressed) is to disauade her from going to the U.S.A., net effect: make her more stubborn about wanting to go. Maria is pregnat. We only hope that the visas come through soon.

AUG 21 - SEPT 1 - I make repeated trips to the passport * visa office also to ministry of for. affairs in Minsk, also min. of Internal Affairs, all of which have a say in the granting of a visa. I extrakted promises of quick attention to U.S.



MY LONGING TO RETURN TO AMERICA'

SEPT-OCT [seems to be "28"]. No word from min. ("they'll call us.") Marina leaves Minsk by train on vacation to the city of Khkov in the Urals to visit an aunt for [seems to be "7"] weeks. During this time I am lonely but I and Ivan go to the dances and public places for entertainment. I haven't done this in quite a few months now. I spend my birthday alone at the opera watching my favorite "Queen of Spades." I am 22 years old.

NOV. 12 Marina arrives back, radiant, with several jars of preserves for me from her aunt in Khkov.

NOV-DEC. Now we are becoming anxious about the delay Marina is beginning to waiver about going to the U.S. Probably from the strain and her being pregnant, still we quarrel and so things are not bright esp. with the approach of the hard Russian winter.

DEC 25th XMAS DAY Tues. Ma-

rina is called to the passport * visa office. She is told we have been granted Soviet exit visa's. She fills out the completing blank and than comes home with the news. Its great (I think?) New Years, we spend at the B's at a dinner party at midnight. Attended by 6 other persons.

JAN. 4. I am called to the passport office since my residenceal passport expires today. Since I now have a U.S. passport in my possition I am given a totly new resid. pass. called "Pass. For Forin." And since they have given us permission to leave, and know we shall, [word unclear, probably "good"] to July 5, 1962.

JAN 15-FEB. 11. Days of cold Russian winter. But we feel fine. Marina is supposed to have baby on March 1st.

FEB. 15- Dawn, Marina wakes me. It's her time. At 9:00 we arrive at the hospital I leave her in care of

nurses and leave to go to work. 10:00 Marina has a baby girl. When I visit the hospital at 500 after work, I am given news. We both wanted a boy. Marina feels well, baby girl, O.K.

FEB. 23 Maria leaves hospital I see June for first time.

FEB. 28 I go to registra (as prescribed by law) the baby. I want her name to be June Marina Oswald. But those beaurecrats say her middle name must be the same as my first. A Russian custom support by a law. I refuse to have her name written as "June Lee." They promise to call the city ministry (city hall) and find out in this case since I do have an U.S. passport.

FEB. 29. I am told that nobody knows what to do exactly. But everyone agrees "go ahead and do it, "po-russki". Name: June Lee; **MARCH.** The last commiques are exchanged between myself and Em-

bassy. letters are always arriving from my mother and brother in the U.S. I have still not told Ivan who is my oldest existing aquaitance, that we are going to the state, he's O.K. But I'm afraid he is too good a young Communist leage member so I'll wait till last min.

MARCH (seems to be "24") - Marina quits her job in the formal fashion.

MARCH (seems to be "26") - I receive a letter from Immigration * Natur. Service at San Antonio, Texas, that Marina has had her visa petition to the U.S. (approved!!) the last document. Now we only have to wait for the U.S. Embassy to receive their copy of the approval so they can officially give the go ahead.

MARCH (seems to be "27") I receive a letter from a Mr. Philles (a employ. of my mother, pledging to support my wife in case of need.

