



Photos by the author  
Arkady and Marguerite Weber in the home at Pikeville. Mrs. Weber is wearing a Chinese gown. He is an excellent musician, and she has become quite popular as a lecturer.

## Far From Home, But Free

The Webers fled Russia when the Communists took over, and wandered in many lands before settling in Pikeville

By GERALD GRIFFIN  
The Courier-Journal Staff Kentucky Bureau

ANCIENT Muscovite ikons gleam from the timber walls. There are landscapes of snow and birch. Exotic objects of art from many a foreign land vie for space—a Chinese god of luck with a ludicrous long head, a slant-eyed porcelain goddess from the land of Buddha, a silken tapestry embroidered to illustrate a legend of old Russia.

The conversation could be in Russian, or in Chinese, or French, or German, with an occasional phrase of Portuguese or Nihongo, the language of the Japanese. But it will be in English—flavored with good humor.

This could be an evening in an upper-class Russian home if the wings of time could flutter backwards to the days of the Tsar.

But it is thousands of miles away from Russia. It is the quaint log home of a stateless couple, Mr. and Mrs. Arkady Weber, high on the steep campus of Pikeville Junior College at Pikeville, Ky.

His mother was a countess bearing an ancient title from far Tatars. Her mother was a governess in the palace of the Grand Duke Constantine, cousin of Tsar Nicholas II.

They lived through the bloody revolution of 1917 in Russia. They have lived in many places since.

They have come to rest in these mountains of Eastern Kentucky. Here they are content to remain. They have no desire to return to their homeland. They couldn't even if they wanted to. Politically they are White Russians. They despise communism and all that it stands for.

For a year and a half, now, the Webers have been members of the Pikeville College faculty. Arkady, an accomplished musician, teaches piano. Marguerite teaches art appreciation.

That the soft-spoken Webers are appreciated for their cultural contribution to the community is attested by the constant demands for their public appearances and the many complimentary letters they have received.

Arkady has given piano recitals throughout the Big Sandy Valley. Marguerite, whom he calls Margaretta, appears in public as a speaker. Sometimes she discusses art. Other times she talks of the wonderful sights she has seen in Europe, Asia and South America. She is not at all sensitive about her unusual pronunciation of lengthy English words.

IN HER home, Marguerite excels in the kitchen where she composes epicurean symphonies. Even Cissy Gregg might be amazed at the Chinese dishes she prepares.

The Webers are kind, hospitable people eager to make friends in their adopted land so far away from the Volga.

The gold-crusted ikons and the photographs of their people are about all they have to link them with their homeland. The ikons—paintings of Christ—are sacred to them. They remain true to the faith of their fathers, the Greek Orthodox Church.

The lives of Arkady and Marguerite, which  
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