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Came the revolution . . .

NOVEMBER

The life of East Kentucky's Arkady Webers is a far cry
from their experiences in Russia under Bolshevik rule

By GERALD GRIFFIN, *Courier-Journal East Kentucky Bureau*

A BEAUTIFUL month is November in the Eastern Kentucky hills. The air is crisp, the mornings frosty and the forests lavish with nature's gay and lively colors. The harvest has been bountiful.

But to the fugitive Czarist Webers, who live in Pikeville now, November is a nightmarish month they would like to forget.

For the Webers—Arkady and his wife Marguerite—are Russians who lived through the Bolshevik revolution of November, 1917, which saw Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin overthrow the provisional Government of Alexander Kerensky.

During that bloody crisis Arkady, in World War I, was a prisoner held by the Germans, and Marguerite was a nurse in a military hospital at Petrograd, which both had known as old St. Petersburg and now is called Leningrad.

Although classed as aristocrats and members of the intelligentsia, both went through the revolution unharmed; but they risked their lives escaping from their unhappy native land. Many harrowing adventures they had and most of them stick in their minds.

Now, 41 years later, they are prospering while bringing Old World culture to the Kentucky highlands. Arkady teaches piano lessons along the Big Sandy River Valley and Marguerite teaches art classes at Pikeville College.

Born in St. Petersburg, Marguerite was

graduated from the famous Smolny Institute, which became a Bolshevik stronghold. For a few months after the Czarist Government was overthrown in March, 1917, it had served as headquarters for the provisional Government. When Marguerite was a student there, it was an exclusive school for the daughters of noble families.

Although Marguerite was not a member of a noble family, she had noble connections. Her mother had come from Switzerland to teach French to the children of Grand Duke Constantine. Her father, a member of the Russian diplomatic corps, had been stationed in Paris. Those factors made Marguerite an enemy of the revolution.

Arkady was born in Moscow. His father, a German, had gone there to teach music in the Marian Institute, a school similar to Smolny and also for noble girls. His father became a noted composer and professor of music. His mother, he recalls, was a beautiful Tartar princess who fell in love with her music teacher at the institute. She bore the exotic name of Chan Chin and was a descendant of a Mongol khan. And those factors did Arkady no good when the Bolsheviks came to power.

It is history that Lenin arrived in Petrograd November 6, 1917, and events of the next 24 hours shook the world. The Russian Congress was meeting in Smolny Institute but the Bolsheviks were able to take over when Ke-



Courier-Journal Photo by The Author
Mr. and Mrs. Arkady Weber, photographed recently in their home in Pikeville, are teaching East Kentuckians now—Arkady, piano, and wife Marguerite, art.