Sorting out some family letters, I came across one addressed to my mother in beautiful-
                                                        friend
ly clear Victorian handwriting. It was from an old fxixxnixwhxxxxxnt who, when I was a
              occasionally
little girl, sxxxximxx came to stay with us and sometimes let me accompany her when she

drove about the pleasant Welsh countryside in an ancient vehicle, then called a governess

cart, drawn by a fat and lazy Welsh pony. "I forgot to mention" she said in a post-

script, that when we met that gypsy caravan down by the Clwyd, I let one of the women

tell the child's fortune. Here it is:'She will travel far in distant lands. She will

eat the bread of strangers. She will sit in council with dark people. She will talk with

a King.' What an odd prophecy! A lot of nonsense that can never come true."

                              wildly improbable
RHX My mother's friend was mistaken. The prophecy was to come true even though atxthxxx
                      then
timxxXXXMIXMdxX there was every reason to believe that my life would follow the same
                                              little
conventional pattern as that of other girls who, like myself, were brought up in the
                                   Yet, out of a clear sky,   soon
placid environment of a country vicarage. Buxy xxxxxmxtimxxxhxpxmnx circumstances arose
that   xxmdxx
xxixx brought about an unexpected change. My mother told me about it as gently as she
                out to Canada
cou ld. She was going with my father xxxfxxxxx and I was to stay behind for awhile and

go to boarding school. The desolation that swept over me could only have been experienced

by a child. Children are not consoled by being assured that the pain of parting will

soon be over. To them, it seems that it will never end.   After a few miserable weeks,
                                               went to
father and mother were on their way to Canada and I waxxxx school.   At least
  TXX   and   see
XXSxtHMAIxIXX the landscape was familiar. Over the garden wall, I could lmxkxsxtxxvxr
                                            and
the Vale of Clwyd ix the blue hills, covered with heather, xxxxxxx which the lazy pony had

so unwillingly climbed.
      On the evening of my arrival, I was assigned to a narrow bed in a long dormitory and
    ERXAXXIMAX,xIxxxx shown a little chest of drawers in which my few possessions were to be
                                    grey and
neatly arranged. The building was cold amdxaustxrx   but there was about it an air of
              f
xxxmxxxxx kindliness that sotened its austerity .