

It was not easy reading. I struggled with its technical language and its difficult content until slowly, painfully, I worked my way through it. When I reached the middle of the book, I found the reason for the congratulations Enrico had received at our party. On the afternoon of that day, December 2, 1942, the first chain reaction was achieved and the first atomic pile operated successfully, under Enrico's direction. Young Leona Woods had considered this feat equivalent to the sinking of an admiral's ship with the admiral inside. The atomic bomb still lay in the womb of the future, and Leona could not foresee Hiroshima.

*The "Council Tree" beneath which scientists held a highly secret discussion in April 1942 that was vital to the success of the first pile. It stands in front of Eckhart Hall on the University of Chicago campus. The meeting was held outdoors so the scientists could talk freely without being overheard.*



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