

BRITAIN, HERE WE COME!

(Betty Burrow's travelogue about the long trip she and George made to England, Scotland, Wales, & Holland in 1980.)

[This was transcribed in 2008 by Betty's son David from the original that was typed by George Burrow in 1980. It is as close as a modern computer will allow to the original, which was typed on a portable electric typewriter with a bad cloth ribbon and then photocopied. To save pages, nothing was indented, frequent abbreviations were used, and extremely minimal margins were used. I purposely chose Courier 10-point font and did not justify the lines to preserve the feel of the typewriter's elite spacing. To make for clearer reading, however, spacing lines have been added between the paragraphs (which makes for a much longer document). A few misspellings have been corrected, however, and modern font features (like superscripting, true dashes, left and right quotation marks, true exclamation points instead of apostrophes and periods, and eliminating hyphenation) have been automatically added by the computer. Any readers not familiar with the family will want to know that "Pete" is the nickname for Betty's husband George and that most of the other people referred to by name are mostly Betty's longtime British penpals. This was Betty's second trip to England. Four years earlier she had met her daughter Margaret and son Paul (who was studying in Spain at the time) there at Christmas.]

BRITAIN HERE WE COME!

Sunday, May 25, 1980

It's 8:20 now, & in 10 minutes we'll be taking off on our long anticipated England trip. I'm keyed up, but so bone-tired that I can hardly realize that we're really going. It's been a busy spring & an extremely full week for us all. David's baccalaureate was last Sunday—just a week ago??? Graduation was last Monday, & on Tuesday I went up to be with Margaret. That was a busy time, too; but it ended in a perfectly beautiful wedding yesterday afternoon. Margaret made a lovely bride, even if I am a prejudiced mother.

We're off—8:45 P.M.—lovely looking down on the lights of Chicago & Lake Michigan. We're on British Airways—a 747 called the Sir Francis Bacon. It's to be an eight hour flight at 33,000 feet. Odd to think that it's already 3:00 A.M. in London. The plane seems very full, & I vow the seats are closer together than they were four years ago! There's not much leg room, & very little space to store hand luggage. I have my coat with me, too. George, smart fellow, stowed his in his carry-on luggage. My bag was too small—also too full!

9:15 P.M. Over London, Ontario & Detroit—then we go over Bangor, Maine, Halifax, Nova Scotia, & across the Atlantic at the 49th parallel.

They brought around drinks & then dinner about 10:30—not as good a one as we had on the last trip—nor did they give us the little souvenir menus. Prices are skyrocketing everywhere. Dinner was chicken breast, coated & fried—rather like Kiev without the butter. Then very tasteless Duchess [sic.] potatoes, good mixed vegetables, hard roll, & an orange pudding for dessert.

The movie, "Going in Style", came on at 11:15, & George & I tried to sleep—fruitlessly! It was hot, sticky, & most uncomfortable. Finally, around 1:30 George managed to get the recalcitrant air conditioner going. Much better, but just as I was drifting off, the lights came on. So much for that night!

It was a bit bumpy several times during the night, & once we were asked to fasten our seat belts. Mostly though, it's been a smooth ride.

3:30 A.M. (still Central Standard Time) Well, breakfast is over—sweet roll, orange juice, & coffee, tea, or milk. Our seatmate left to go back to the toilet, so I took advantage of the extra space to struggle into my shoes. Moral, don't remove your shoes on a long flight. (editor's note: George is typing this from Betty's notes she pens as we travel. The editor—George—disagrees with that last statement. While it may be difficult getting back into one's shoes after riding for several hours with them off, the alternative of riding all the way with them on is much more painful!)

It's a beautiful day—blue, blue sky & puffy white clouds below us that look like the frozen Arctic. I think we're starting to descend, too. My ears are popping, & it sounds as if they've shut down on the engines. Lands End should be below us. They announced that London is fair & cool—13° C. I have a feeling I should have boned up on the metric system. I can't go around asking "How much is that in real temperature?" And I'm never going to know how fast we're going in kilometers.

We're going down—are down into the clouds. They no longer look like huge piles of snow.

9:00 P.M. (London time), Monday, May 26, 1980

What a long day! We're bathed & in bed, & I'm aiming for some sleep soon. Sounds as if George is already off!

We landed at 10:15 A.M. (London time), but were held aboard for 10 minutes because they couldn't get the door open. Imagine being able to get a plane as big as that across the Atlantic, & then being foiled by a door!

9:30 A.M., May 27: Just ready to leave the hotel & get a cab to Liverpool St. Station. We're going to leave extra luggage there while we go to Holland.

3:20 P.M.: I'm on a park bench in Trinity Square—a lovely little park in memory of 24,000 merchant marines who died at sea. George has gone to take a look at a church—All Hallows By the Tower. It is the oldest church in London, & the one in which John Adams was married. But my aching knees just aren't up to it.

I find, for the 2nd time, that I really don't care much for cities—including London. (The editor strongly agrees!!!) Probably if I were younger & more spry, I'd like it better, but I find it exhausting. What I need is one of these limousine tours to get us around London--& the money to make it a fact.

London is terribly expensive, & we're hoping that the rest of England isn't that bad. Guess I'll quit complaining of the prices in the U.S.! We made the first boo-boo in the choice of our hotel. It was 35.08 pounds for a tiny, not very nice room—called the Pastoria, not far from Leicester Square. We picked it because it was marked "budget" in our hotel brochure; but for a fourth of that price we have stayed in very nice places, & for half that in the nicest hotels. We'll chalk it up to experience, but we didn't like it. I called last night & got us a room for Saturday & Sunday at the Mt. Pleasant Hotel. It's 16.30 pounds a night.

Clearing customs at Heathrow was nothing. They just waved us on through. We got a luggage trolley—did the calling for that d_ _ _ hotel, & then pushed the trolley clear to the underground entrance. It was 1.40 pounds each to ride the underground to Leicester Square station—about 45 min. We sat there like zombies after the flight & no sleep, but so did others who had gotten on with us. I was surprised at how much of the underground is above ground, at least out a bit.

We had T-R-O-U-B-L-E once we left the tube! And Trouble's name was luggage. In the interest of economy, we bought a set of wheels to load our suitcases on. Good in theory, but it didn't work out well. The cases had to be carried up thousands of steps from the subway. It was only two or three blocks from the subway station to our hotel, but finally I sat on a bench in the station & guarded things while George went ahead with

some of the suitcases. Then he came back after the rest & me. We have too much luggage, & I knew it before we left home. It sounded so easy to say, "Once we have the car, the extra things won't matter." But there's a week until we get the car.

May 29, 1980, 6:45 Holland time (an hour ahead of London time)

We're at the Hoek van Holland sitting in the station restaurant. We came over during the night, but our ship docked early, & Rita & Han aren't here yet to meet us. It's a good time to catch up on my diary so back to Leicester Square.

George left me in Leicester Square while he went on to the hotel, & believe me, I didn't realize until then how ultra-conservative I am! I sat and gawked & felt a million miles from my usual environment. There were sex shops everywhere with people streaming in and out. Lots of theaters, & people everywhere. I was fascinated by the clothes, especially those worn by the teen-aged girls. One sat next to me completely wrapped in black "leather" to her ankles, & with a short sheer blouse over it. Every female had on extremely high heels, often with white, yellow or purple stockings. We've seen that everywhere, and such thick make-up! Do I sound like an old fuddy-duddy? I am!

Eventually George came back & tore me away from my fascination with the modern scene. We had a Burger King hamburger (not as good as those in the U.S.) & the ever-present French fries. Then we cleaned up & tried to sleep for a couple of hours. (editor's note: George was so tired that he fell asleep in the bath tub!)

About 6:00 P.M. we went out again into the mob, walked all around & stopped in at the Tennessee Pancake House for supper. Many of the places in London are owned or staffed by Orientals or Indians (from India). I hate to sound prejudiced, but in general I don't care for it. Perhaps we were unfortunate, but they all seem to stand there with their hand out, waiting for tips. At the Pancake House our meal came to just a few pence under an even number of pounds, and the waiter just stood there after George gave him the number of pound notes—obviously waiting for him to dig into his pocket for some change (which, of course, he did). Be that as it may, we had some over-priced omelettes.

Meal pricing around London—or the bit we saw—is different from most of the U.S. In the U.S. we usually get the meal as a unit—meat, choice of kind of potato, choice of vegetable, & salad or salad bar. Drinks & dessert are often extra. In the places we were in in London, each item seemed to be priced separately, & by the time you added up the prices, the total was high!

After supper we walked on down the street & bought an American-style ice cream cone like Baskin-Robbins at home, and sat on one of the benches in the park to eat them. Then back to the hotel to do some repacking, have a bath, & to bed. Sleep was all right. We were too tired to sleep really well. Oh yes, we did take the time to call another hotel so that we'd have a place to return to from Holland.

This morning we called a cab & took all our luggage to Liverpool Street Station & left it in their "left luggage" depot.

Friday, May 30, 1980

I'm so far behind in this diary, but we've been on the go & having too good a time to keep up to date. Maybe I'll do better when we're on our own! But I'm keeping my fingers crossed as I write it!

We were still tired on Tuesday, but we bought tickets to Tower Hill, & spent several hours at the Tower of London. Very interesting & very touristy, but somehow I didn't get the feeling of history that I have at other places. I did enjoy it, & am particularly glad to see the crown jewels. (editor's note: My opinion for the failure to get the feeling of history is that they have not restored the Tower to represent any period in history. Rather they have simply made it into a museum to exhibit the crown jewels and

relics of military conquests. They placed a tablet at the place where Lady Jane Grey saw a scaffold being built for her & her husband's executions. They might better have reconstructed a scaffold there, & identified the window from which she watched it being built and from which she watched her husband's execution. But then, I guess the British National Trust didn't consult with me when they decided to make a museum piece of the Tower.)

We had a sandwich lunch sitting on a bench in a sort of plaza—then finally decided to see St. Paul's Cathedral. Only when we got to Liverpool Street Station, we talked a while & decided against doing anything more. We just went into the station, had a light supper & sat & watched the crowds till time for our train to Harwich (Hare-ish).

Car C was way at the front of the train, but we had our seats reserved. We had just put up our luggage & gotten settled when I heard, "This must be seat 7, honey." The accent and the "honey" could only mean Americans, & sure enough, they were the Walt Hills from Ukiah, California—very pleasant companions for the trip. We compared notes on the woes of being foreigners on our own in London—hotel rates quadrupled over the figures quoted in 1980 brochures, poor food at exorbitant prices, & every person with his hand out for tips.

I thought I'd had a busy week before leaving for England, but Mrs. Hill beat me. She's the California state vice president for the Federated Women's club, & the state meeting was held in her area. She acted as hostess with talks to make & all sorts of organizational details to smooth out. I was tired all over again just listening!

When we got to Harwich, there was a long line for passport check; & then a long, long walk to the boat. Two were leaving—the Princess Beatrix & Prince George. We were on the latter. Another long line for boarding passes, but finally we got to our cabin. I was fascinated with it—my first time on a ship. It was tiny & spotlessly clean. Double deck bunk, wash basin & everything built in & very convenient. I managed to wash my hair—not easy with the European system of no mixing faucets. Then we went to bed, & we both slept soundly. There were children in the cabin next to us, & one was singing to herself when I went to sleep.

The steward brought juice about 5:30, & we landed about 6. It took a while to get through another passport check, but again customs waved us on through. Most people disappeared quickly, but a few of us went into the station restaurant. Two rolls, coffee, & milk cost us about \$3.00. We found that Holland time is 7 hours ahead of the U.S. (Central Daylight Time, that is). I'd thought that it was 6 hours like England.

After about an hour we called to Han & Rita's but got no answer. Then shortly after that, they found George wandering around on the station platform, & so we met. They're grand people, outgoing & warm & so very hospitable. We've had three wonderful days with them, & we really like them & Holland.

It took about 25 minutes to get back to The Hague from the Hoek van Holland, & I gawked through the windows all the way.

The Zandvliets live in an area called Zuiderparklaan, near a huge, lovely park. Their home is up one flight of steps from the street in a nice apartment. We had a tour of the house, & then had coffee & cake & talked.

Evening, May 30, 1980

Well, we have said, "Goodbye" to the Zandvliets, & I feel as if we're leaving truly good friends. What a wonderful 3 days we had with them! I just hope they will come to the U.S. sometime so that we can return their hospitality.

We're on the ship St. Edmond for the North Sea Crossing back to Harwich. We couldn't get a double cabin this trip; so I'm in a 4-woman dormitory, & George is next door with 3

other men. So far only 2 other women have come here—a delightful lady from Derbyshire in Britain, & a pretty Dutch lady.

Back to Holland: We had lunch with Han & Rita—good!—open sandwiches of meat & cheese, eaten with a knife & fork, which was new to us—the style of eating, I mean.

Once lunch was finished, the four of us got into their car—a nice, red, quite new Opel Katette. Han drove us thru parts of Den Haag, showed us the houses of Parliament, & also the imposing international Peace Palace. A great many nations helped build it, & I believe the U.S. contributed the lovely wrought iron gates.

We drove around some more & then went to the lovely coastal resort area called Scheveningen. You try pronouncing it! It seems to be something that only a true Dutch tongue can get around. Rita said that they used the word "Scheveningen" as test for infiltrators during World War II. They would have a suspect say the word, & it seems that no matter how long a German had lived in Holland, he could not say Scheveningen.

Scheveningen is a typical seaside resort with casinos, dozens of boarding houses, a long pier, many souvenir shops, & a beautiful view of the sea. I could enjoy that for a long time. I also liked the dunes that are along the coastline.

Later in the afternoon we came to Rita & Han's summer house, & I really, really liked it; & I can see why Rita has enjoyed it so over the years. The land is owned by the city, but years back they divided it into 200 plots which can be leased. Han & Rita were in there early, & it was their holiday & weekend home while the children were small. It's beautiful there—no parking except on the edges of the area, & lovely flower-bordered paths to the houses. The houses can be no larger than a certain size. The Zanvliet's is one room, cleverly designed with a kitchen, toilet, & living room with built-in seats for storage & sleeping. It has big windows & a porch which is roofed & enclosed. All around are paved paths & the most beautiful flowers, trees, shrubs, some vegetables—& all as neat as a pin without a weed anywhere! George estimates the house is about twelve feet square (probably 4 metres—a little over twelve feet), + the porch which is 2 metres wide & extends across the front of the house. Rita likes to go to the house & sunbathe. There is a lake, & also horseback riding nearby. It is a lovely spot!

From their summer home we went to the ancient city of Delft, and it's a fascinating place. I wish I could have walked all over it. We did go to a shop so that I could get some Delft tiles. I'd like to have had some of the pottery, but it was very expensive, & I don't really need it—plus having to get it home. So I settled for the hand-painted tiles—mine of the Neuw Kirke in Delft. This is an old, old church with a steeple 108 metres high (that's over 350 feet). It was started in 1637, took 100 years to build, burned & was rebuilt in the 1750's when the tower was added.

We had soft ice cream cones & drove around Delft. I loved the canals with narrow brick streets beside them, & tall old brick houses. Cars are smaller in the Netherlands than they are in the U.S. (though a few are about as large as the average U.S. car). But how they get around without accidents, I don't know! Han said that he enjoys driving, & he did an excellent job, but what a lot of traffic!

When we got "home" again, the children were there—3 very nice ones. Each greeted us in English, & gave us a firm handshake. Hans is 21, a draftsman, who is saving hard for a car. Ronald is the youngest, 13, interested in sports, & hasn't begun learning English yet. (However, Rita had coached him well on a good greeting in English.) Marja, the daughter, is 15 & a lovely person. As she got to know us better, she tried more & more of her English, which was quite good—she just needs more practice. By the way, Rita speaks excellent English—she worked in England before she was married. Han isn't as fluent, but he had taken classes before we came to improve his English, & he seemed to improve while we were there.

Rita's supper was very good—pork chops browned & steamed, potatoes, cauliflower, lettuce salad, & then pudding for dessert. It was our first hot meal for some time.

On Thursday they had planned a big day so Rita packed a picnic lunch to take with us. First we went to Amsterdam where we saw the present residence of the queen—she plans to move to the Hague. We also saw the church where all the kings and queens have been buried, and the outside of the art museum. Han is so very patient about driving right into all the mass of traffic, both bikes and cars. It scares me! We went on north then into the Polders where the Dutch have reclaimed thousands of square miles of land from the sea and where they are still working on reclamation. We went across one dike that was about 20 miles long with water on both sides of us, but the water on the left was about six feet lower than on our right. That on the left was being dried up to make tillable land, and after some years, they'll be working on drying the other side. We stopped somewhere along there for a rest, and the mosquitoes were thick—like some of our woods at home.

We traveled through a number of small towns that were fascinating, and one of my favorites was Edam where the famous cheese is made. We did some souvenir buying there and also had our evening meal. I'd like to go back again and see some of these villages "in depth".

On Friday we went to Rotterdam—the largest and busiest seaport in the world. Right beside the port there is a tall space tower, similar to the Space Needle in Seattle, for those of you who have seen that. The Dutch one is taller though, I believe. We went clear to the top—in fact, the elevator man took us there twice. We had a glorious view of the area, and since the weather was perfect, with a bright blue sky, it was grand. It was easy to see the parts of the city that had been bombed out during the war. Those places have all been rebuilt as a very modern city. That that escaped the bombing—like most of the small villages—have buildings that date back to the middle ages.

I hated to leave all of this, but we drove on to the windmill country at the town of Kinderdijk, and I wouldn't have missed that for anything. We got on a small tourist excursion boat and went up a canal with perhaps a dozen windmills about. Most of these were built for the middle 1700's to keep the ground dry enough for farming. Some, of course, were built for grinding grain, but most for pumping water. Today most of the windmills are just tourist attractions with electric pumps having taken over the pumping. The windmills though are still a back-up in case the electric pumps should fail.

From Kinderdijk, we drove along the dikes and saw some of the dairy farms. They have what appear to be excellent herds of Holsteins. Each farm consists of a house that is built near the dike, with perhaps a barn attached at the rear. Beyond the barn is a meadow of the greenest grass we've ever seen. It extends back for a mile or so but is only 100 yards wide or even less. The farms are separated from one another by canals that are about 10 - 20 feet wide. These are used for both drainage and irrigation. When it's wet, water flows out of the canals to drain the land, and when it's dry, water is allowed to flow into the canals to be used to irrigate the land.

We spent a pleasant evening back at the Zandvliet's home, and Rita entertained us royally with her spirited organ playing. She's VERY good at it. Then it was time for them to take us back to the boat, and oh how we hated to say good-bye to them. I haven't had time to sort out my impressions of this lovely country and the hospitable people, but we would like so much to go there again. One thing I won't forget—the lovely sparkling white lace curtains that are in almost every Dutch home. They're beautiful. I did buy some valance lace, and I want to use it somewhere in our house.

SOME THOUGHTS AND FACTS AT RANDOM: There are 72 bridges in Delft. The Nieuwe Kerk there is 108 m. high, and the church took 100 years to build. It burned and was rebuilt.

In Volendam, you still see people wearing the old costumes. We stopped there for a cold drink, and I was most impressed in seeing the people.

Let's see—other things that I won't forget are all of the lovely canals, the heavy traffic, bikes everywhere, houseboats on the canals, flowers everywhere, lovely parks, eel traps, swans, and so many, many other things.

London, June 1

We're in London; in, of all places, the Mt. Pleasant Hotel. We'd made reservation before going to Holland, & while this isn't a great hotel, it's clean & quiet—also much cheaper than the Pastoria—at 16.30 pounds. I know that I shouldn't make comparisons, but some are inevitable. Both have nice public rooms, but otherwise we feel they are way behind the times. The service in the rooms is poor, as we know it. The maid eventually made the beds around 1:00 P.M. I could have done it, of course, but I wasn't sure whether we'd get clean linens or not. We didn't—nor did we get clean towels. The maid used one of our towels to wipe out the wash basin, and then wiped out our glasses with the same towel. Yuck! She then re-hung the towel. After she left George went over and used soap and hot water to "properly" wash out the glasses. I wonder if part of this problem isn't the Oriental & Indian help. It seems every place is almost completely staffed with them—from the desk clerks to the kitchen help. They speak very little English, & communication is difficult.

How do we observe that London hotels differ from American hotels? No private bath & toilet, no wash cloths, no ice, no water at meals (that's true all over Britain & Europe, too, I guess), wardrobes instead of closets, no heat in rooms, no mixing faucets, no smiles from the help in the lobby, restaurants, etc. I remember this about London from before, & I liked things better away from here.

But to go back—we had a quiet crossing from the Hoek of Holland to Harwich. Our 4th dormitory mates never did appear. George had the husband of the Dutch lady, and a man from Germany. The ship docked at 6:00, & oh what a mob to disembark! There was no checking at customs—just for passports—and then it was a l-o-n-g walk to the train. We had reserved seats—shared a table with two London ladies returning from a holiday in Germany. They were gigglers, but nice & with mountains of luggage. But then, who am I to talk about luggage?

It was raining in England, & Liverpool Street Station was messy underfoot. (It has a roof over the platforms, but it leaks.) The huge, old, filthy place seemed familiar, though! We didn't stay long, though, but got tickets & tubed down to Victoria station, then sloshed our way over to ride the red double-decker buses. I remembered lots from before, & George was really interested, too! (editor's note: As far as I'm concerned, this is the way to see London for the first time. Also as far as I am concerned, if it proves to be the last time, I'll not be disappointed. I share Betty's dislike of London.)

We had a late lunch at The Shakespeare near Victoria Station, & I didn't like either the lunch or the atmosphere. The music was so loud that it almost blasted us from our seats, & people were very noisy. We had some sort of meat pie with cold potatoes on top, & I was miserable. (The editor shares these observations. I don't recommend the place as being one with a triple A rating!) I hurt so from the walking & the rain, & I was ready to give up.

So we found the tube again, & went back to Liverpool Street Station, got our suitcases from left luggage, where some had been since Tuesday morning, went outside & took a cab here to the hotel. We unpacked some, located a working shower (most are out of order), & I shivered my way to bed to read. George went out after bread, milk, & fruit—I wasn't even going out to eat!

Now all of you can shout at me & wonder why, when I am in one of the world's most exciting cities, that I'm not seeing more. I'm just not!! It's for the young, or at least those who can get around well. Personally, when I come again, it will be as a

millionaire with my limo to meet me at Heathrow, take me to my hotel, & personally drive me to all the sights. My guide would take me to the good restaurants instead of these "hole-in-the-wall" places or train station buffets. (In England you pronounce the "t" in that word "buffet".) I wouldn't worry about the cost of the meat dish, then adding separate costs of potatoes, vegetables, salads, etc. which seems to be customary in London.

The maid just came through again—vacuuming this time.

We washed out some clothes last night, & have things hanging around. They don't dry quickly in this weather, although the sun is trying to shine.

Breakfast this morning was good—"A real English breakfast." It was far more than we usually eat, but we ate it all—it was included in our hotel rate, & when we consider the price of meals, we decided to eat the big breakfast & have a picnic lunch. We plan to do this all through the trip. Anyway, we had bacon & eggs, toast, cornflakes, bread & jam, tea or coffee or milk. It was served cafeteria style in the restaurant downstairs, & it was very pleasant.

A week ago now we were just about to leave Cresco for Chicago. What a long, long time ago it seems instead of just seven days!

George went exploring this morning, & found the Wesley Chapel, built by John Wesley, who laid the first stone in 1777, preached there, & lived next door in a house which is now a museum. We had also seen the last Church of England church where he had been preaching. There was a good choir from Den Haag, Holland singing at the Wesley Chapel today. They are called Feste burg Choir. George taped the service. It is different than ours, but similar, too. Familiar hymns seem to have different tunes—& slightly different words—from what we are accustomed to. There was communion, & George had his first experience using a common communion cup.

June 2.

What a day!! I'm sitting in the car in Dover, watching the cars go by, & the people. George is making a second trip across the street to Woolworths. We were out & bought picnic supplies for tomorrow & a few things from Woolworths, but I forgot envelopes. Might as well get them while we're this close to a shopping area.

As I said, WHAT A DAY! We had a good breakfast at the hotel, & got our luggage together. A cab came immediately, & then THE TRIP. It took almost an hour through traffic to get to East Ham, & then the car hire firm had moved. The cab driver found it eventually, & we paid him off—18 pounds, including tip. It was a long way, & we figured that it saved George driving in real London traffic, so we're chalking it up to the car hire expense.

There were papers to sign about the car, & between not completely understanding the man's accent & the legal gobbledygook of the papers, I hope that we haven't assumed the British national debt.

At any rate, we finally got into our Mini 1000 (it was supposed to have been a Mini 850, but they didn't have that, so they gave us the next larger engine). It is a tiny, red car, but OURS, pro tem. I'm a true American, liking to travel by car, & it was a relief to stow the luggage & take off. This was George's first time driving on the "wrong" side, but while he said he was "as nervous as a cat on a tin roof," he did very well. We had quite a bit of city driving at first heading for the Dartford Tunnel to take us under the Thames, but we managed all right. (editor's note: I couldn't have done it without a right good navigator!) Eventually we got on a motorway leading to Canterbury, & George rapidly gained confidence. A motorway isn't a bad idea for gaining experience since you don't have to worry about cars coming toward you. We drove into Canterbury & had a look around—had originally intended to stay there overnight, but since it was still early, we went down "The Old Dover Road" heading for the famed White Cliffs. They're for real!—

just like all the picture post cards & movies that we've seen of them. The Oceanside was deserted, but I understand that once the schools are out, it's very crowded. Several big ships were out a ways. I had to laugh at myself. I was gazing out at the sea thinking that across all that ocean was America. Then George pointed in a different direction—seems I was gazing soulfully at France.

We went on into Dover—forgot to mention that there is Dover Castle, from the early days—about the time of William the Conqueror. It's ruined, but the cliffs under it have openings from World War II fortifications.

We stopped on Folkstone Road at Westbank—a bed & breakfast place recommended in THE BOOK—our "Bible" for this time—"A Dollarwise Guide to England & Scotland". It's the latest edition, but it's already outdated. Westbank was listed at 4.50 pounds apiece, but it was up to 6.00 pounds, & signs were posted that it's soon to be 6.50. The exchange rate is very definitely against us, & with England's high prices, our American money seems to melt away like snow.

Westbank, though, was a very pleasant Bed & Breakfast—immaculate, quiet on the inside, although with street noise. Our room was a good one, & the shower & toilet were right next door. A very pleasant young man named George was in charge. It turned out that the owners hadn't had a holiday in six years, so they'd gone back to Belgium for a week & were letting George do it. George (British) brought me tea at night.

We took up our two bags—the other things, mercifully, we left in the car. Incidentally, Westbank has its own car park; & in this crowded country, as in Holland, parking is a problem. We'd asked directions for the nearest good shops, & we went to Woolworths & a super market. It offers much more choice in buying & has many of the same items that we do, & displays them in much the same way.

A big difference here is that nothing is bagged for you—or at least it hasn't been so far. Everyone carries his own shopping bag, & in Woolworths I noticed a pile of plastic ones with a 5-p sign above. George was charged 6-p in London at a Green Grocer's. At the supermarket, I waited a moment, out of habit, for the girl to bag the groceries, but she just stared at me. Then I asked if we could have some of the thin paper bags piled on the counter. She grunted, which we took for assent, & bagged our stuff. So much for dum Americans from the land of the big throwaway!

We had TV in our room at Westbank, but there was nothing good. I keep hoping to see "All Creatures Great & Small" or something like that.

June 3:

We're stopping somewhere in West Sussex in a lovely old house in the country (later note: It proved to be just east of a town called Cowfold.) Bread (sic.) & Breakfast places aren't coming up frequently right here, so when I spotted this one, George turned around. We have a big room—all white: bedspread, lace curtains, mantle-piece, etc. The floors are uneven, and there are real dark wood beams on the ceiling. I had George up there checking to make sure! It's an old house, charmingly put together.

As George in Dover had promised us, they "did a grand breakfast," & we enjoyed it—juice, cereal (for George), egg, bacon, sausage, tomato, mushrooms, toast, & tea. They chatted with us while we ate, then we packed & left. They'd given us directions to a launderette, so we spent an hour there. Clean clothes are a necessity even when traveling!

It was midmorning when we left for Hastings, & we drove through some of the loveliest countryside that I've seen. It's green like Holland—lush fields everywhere. Kent is known as the "garden of England," & it deserves its name. The cities have rows of terrace houses, but almost all have a walled or fenced garden, just brimming with beauty. Out in the country there is usually a heavy planting of trees & bushes, but in the breaks

you could look out over undulating hills—just sheer beauty. Kent grows a bit of hops, cherries, & of course, gorgeous flowers. The lilacs are still blooming, roses everywhere, & out-of-this-world rhododendrons!

We also could see sheep in fields along the road—miles of them. This was particularly true when we got to the Romney Marsh area. Remember the stories of old time smuggling in Romney Marsh? The weather was a perfect warm summer day—ideal to enjoy all the beauty. And, of course, there were road repairs going on everywhere. It was true, too, in Holland, & it's this way in the U.S.—all over, I suppose.

We got to Hastings at noon, but went on 9 miles to Battle Abbey where the actual battle of Hastings was fought. Most of the buildings are now a girls' school, but you can walk around some of the ruins & see where the battle was fought. I got no sense of history from being there & felt I wasted my 70-p. But there were toilets—something not too easy to come across. And if you do spot them, it is usually impossible to park.

Once we left there, we had another beautiful drive up south of Maidstone to the tiny village of Sissinghurst. Nearby is a ruined castle (only the gate tower & some walls left). They have what has been described as "the most beautiful gardens in England." They're like a dream in their perfection. There are a number of parts of the garden, each enclosed & each appealing in its own way. The White Garden, which I'd especially wanted to see, wasn't at its height, but there was beauty everywhere—birds and spicy fragrance. The gardens are only 50 years old, but as the specialists say, they look as if they've been there since Tudor days, when the castle was built.

We're headed for Stonehenge tomorrow, & then over to the west country—may have to leave some of this until the first week of July, but we can start now. We go to Frank & Edith Davies' late on Friday afternoon of this week.

It's so peaceful here in this big old room. We're on the second floor here, & as you look out the bay window, you can see a large herd of cattle. George counted 93, & some are back under the trees.

Wednesday, June 4:

Another pretty day, & we're on our way at 8:10. We were up by 6:30, ^ hoped to eat at 7. But mein host evidently over-slept, & he didn't appear til 7:30. Waiting in the dining room was interesting. One wall had an inglenook with an old brick fireplace, beamed ceiling, & settles on either side. There were horse brasses & lovely old china on the shelves all around. Attractive & most livable. Our hosts told us at breakfast that it was an old country house from the sixteenth century, & the beams are from that period. Some things had to be removed, but not too much.

Winchester, 10:30 A.M.

We just shopped Marks & Spencer, looking for sweaters, & bought a few supplies for our picnic lunches—including a tin opener. I know we brought one with us, but we couldn't find it anywhere last night. George is out looking for a bank to cash travelers' checks (oh, how quickly the money disappears!), & then we're heading for Winchester Cathedral.

We drove through more lush green country this morning, & enjoyed it all. It reminds me of Virginia away from the ocean & not yet into the mountains. Kent & the Sussexes are rolling hills called "downs," & these are so green & pretty. Evidently the more forested area is called the "Weald," & we drove through some lovely wooded places. It seemed that we were less boxed in by roadside hedges in West Sussex, & I liked looking away over the hills.

Winchester is in Hampshire, & the city is more than 2,000 years old. King Alfred ruled here, & there's a statue of him in the center of the town. (We know—we kept going round

& round him as we tried to get out from the center of the city.) The cathedral is over 900 years old—very impressive. This is the country Jane Austen wrote about.

We bought our first fasoline on the edge of Winchester—6.50 pounds for 300 miles. Petrol (gasoline to you in the U.S. is 1.32 pounds & up per imperial gallon (1¼ U.S. gallons). That figures out to about twice what we were paying back home. George estimates that the mini is getting around 45 to 50 miles per U.S. gallon—better than any U.S. car will do!

We went on over to Stonehenge after a British couple showed us how to get trough Salisbury. I think George was disappointed in Stonehenge—it's smaller than you would think from the publicity pictures we see. Also, when I was there before, you could wander at will among the stones. Now it's roped off, & you can only go in a circle around them. But it's still an impressive sight as you approach it over the Salisbury Plain. (editor's note: I can't say I was disappointed. It is a bit smaller than I expected, but it still is impressive. I would also like to commend the British National Trust for the way they built their administration buildings at ground level or below so that nothing breaks up the view of the landscape except the stones as one approaches. It's a nice job!)

We drove hard then through Wiltshire, Hampshire, Dorset, Somerset, & Devon. We're in Devon tonight, just short of Exeter, in a most unimpressive farmhouse B & B. After last night's charmer, I think our guardian angel has tongue in cheek tonight. The stairway wall is painted orange to go with a burgundy print carpet. In here, there are 2 kinds of wallpaper, floral print glass curtains, & blue damasky draw curtain, orange carpet, & throw rugs in several floral patterns. Oh, well, as I said, it's clean & four pounds apiece.

Thursday, June 5:

We were up shortly after 6 & had breakfast at 7. Our rather slatternly landlady was talkative as she served us a good breakfast. The house wasn't much, nor the furnishings. We thought she might be a widow trying to supplement her income. She has children 15, 14, 13, & 10.

It was another pretty day. We have been fortunate so far with the weather; except as George reminds me, last Sunday in London, when I told him he wouldn't need an umbrella, & he got soaked.

I like Devon & its patchwork of hedged fields. Looking down on them from a height, they remind me so much of an old crazy quilt, like our grandmothers used to make. They're all shades of green, & the fields are all shapes. Some of these hedges are quite tall & so thick that cattle can't get through them. Regular farm gates are set in for machinery & people to pass through.

Most of the farmhouses & houses in general are of stone, & you know why when you see some of the fields. I keep wondering what Dad or Bill or other Midwestern farmers would think of farming here. But the sheep & cattle look good. The farmhouses are most picturesque, but I wonder how warm they are in winter.

We left the main highway to cross Dartmoor, & while it was slow going, we loved it. The roads sometimes are only one lane wide with very high hedges along them, & it was constant twisting & turning up hills and down again. There were narrow humped bridges over the River Dart. (We learned later they call those bridges "pack-horse bridges." I guess it is because they sort of resemble a pack horse when it is loaded.)

We stopped at a pretty little park for a few minutes, & some of the famed Dartmoor ponies were there. We were to see them all along—often a mare & her colt. There were sheep everywhere, too; often on the road. Some were having their morning naps, & would open a bleary eye as we drove around them.

As we climbed to the top of Dartmoor, there were no trees anywhere—just scrubby grass & a few low-lying bushes (which we later learned was heather). There were rock walls everywhere, & again you know why when you see the rocky land. It all reminded me of parts of Wyoming—green & rocky, bare & bleak. There were a few farms with the usual stone buildings. It must be a lonesome life up there.

As soon as we dropped down to lower levels, vegetation was lush once more. The stone walls were covered with solid greenery. Trees meet overhead on the narrow roads, but they'll be trimmed back to the edge of the road. George swears that the lorries whizzing through keep them shaped, & I must admit there are no branches up to just about the height of a truck.

George can no longer say with Emily Dickenson, "I never saw a moor." He's met two of his objectives now—the White Cliffs & a moor. I tell him that he'll see moors of different personalities before he's through.

We stopped in Tavistock to do some shopping, but soon were on into Cornwall, over the River Tamar. If you remember your geography, Cornwall is the toe of England, surrounded by water. And if, like me, you've read the Gothic novels, you remember that it's known for smuggling in olden days. Some of the towns, such as Penzance, have been sacked by Barbary pirates, sacked & burned by the Spaniards, as well as having been destroyed by Cromwell's troops, and lastly bombed by the Germans in World War II. This sort of turbulent past is common for Cornish towns. Penzance, by the way, is only 10 miles from Land's End, the most westerly town in England. Like many Cornish towns, Penzance is very picturesque. But even better I liked the town of Mousehole (pronounced muzzle), just 3 miles from Penzance. We went there because of the name, & I'd like to spend a week there, just exploring. There are tiny lanes & winding streets & intriguing little shops everywhere. The cottages seem to cling to the sides of the cliffs & fall away to the sea—as in almost all English fishing villages.

From Mousehole we took a winding lane of a road on to Land's End, & I liked every foot of it. It was hedged, of course, & the wild flowers bloomed gloriously—rose & pink, blue & purple, yellow & white. I have no idea what they were, but the rampant effect was lovely. Talk about the blooming hedgerows of England—we've seen 'em. And everywhere you hear birds singing.

On the subject of flowers, I may as well enthuse over the British ones. Compared to the U.S., many homes have tiny front yards, but they garden intensively, & the yards are often a riot of flowers of all colors. Many of the high rock walls in towns are covered with rhododendrons of every shade, & I like them. We don't grow them in Iowa—something about the soil, of maybe it's too cold.

When we wound our way from between the flowering hedgerows, we came to Land's End. It was a bright day, & the sea sparkled, but I can imagine that it's bleak in bad weather. There was a signpost to conveniently point me in the direction of America almost 4,000 miles away.

We walked around, watched the enormous numbers of sea gulls, & finally left Land's End. There's not much there, but I like it that way. Now for John O'Groat's!!

We stopped at St. Ives, another lovely village. No "man with seven wives," though. (Editor's note: Betty should get her directions straight. If she checks out that poem, it states, "As I was going to St. Ives, I met a man with seven wives." Obviously the man was going away from St. Ives, & therefore we shouldn't expect to find him in St. Ives.) Then we got back on the main highway—still winding & pretty--& started back east. We must be at Edith & Frank Davies' near Sheffield late tomorrow—many miles away.

Midlands, June 6, On the M-69 & M-1:

Another nice day, & we're heading north to the Davies. We didn't stop last night until 5:30, at a very nice B & B called Fowley House. We never found out their name, but they were very upright & prim. And talk of a house being neat—that one shone! The bedrooms were small, but pretty, & each was decorated with one color. Ours was blue—coordinating blue stripe paper, floral curtains, blue spread, but then the brown flowered carpet we see so much. I peeked through the open doors of the other rooms as I went to the toilet. One was lavender, one rose, & one yellow. One other was rented, and the door was closed.

By the way, you notice that I say toilet! No euphemisms like the little girls' room, or the sandbox, or heifers or steers, or the can, or the head, or even the bathroom. Everything here is "toilet" usually separate from the bath. Public toilets all have the international figures for men & women, but most likely will also say "Gents" & "Ladies." I haven't had to spend my tuppences for a ladies' since leaving London.

Our hosts served us breakfast at 7:00 in a very attractive dining room. Sparkling white cloth, blue printed cloth napkins, & pretty blue & white bone china in two patterns. We were on our way early—good thing, because it's a long drive.

We took one of the winding roads for an hour or so, & found very little traffic at that time. It was pleasant looking at the patchwork of fields & seeing the flocks of sheep. The soil in Devon is red as in some of our southeastern states. It was 8:50 when we reached the motorway, & of course we made much faster time. But such traffic, all whizzing past!

I have to laugh when I think of some of my fancies about England. I think it is the crowdedness that I notice most. You're seldom out of sight of cars & the sound of traffic. My fancy of having a picnic in a green field or even along a roadside was pure fiction. Parking is difficult right where you want to shop, but there are car parks in every town. With my poor walking, it's usually George who parks & then hikes back to the bank or stores.

It was a long day of motorway driving with nothing too interesting. We pulled off once into Redditch to cash some travelers' checks, & we got into the worst mess of traffic that I've seen. It was even good to get back on the motorway.

Our Mini seems like a nice little car, & George enjoys driving it. It seems to get 45 to 50 miles per U.S. gallon, & with petrol at 1.32 pounds & up, we're glad for the high mileage.

We see a lot of caravans on the road, & even a few motorhomes. Much as we like camping, though, I'm glad we decided against one here. It's enough to manage a car when driving on the left is so strange to us.

I was just wondering how many miles we have gone out of our way. Once I put us on a connecting motorway that took us almost into Birmingham. Then I lost the map that Frank Davies drew for us on how to reach their house, & we went on northwest of Sheffield before turning around & finding an exit to get us to Brinsworth. It was a lot of rush-hour driving, but we did finally arrive at the Davies'—& so glad to be here. (Editor's note: Betty makes one heck of a good navigator. British roads aren't marked like U.S. roads, & finding one's way gets pretty confusing at times. Since we are here to see the country, we don't worry about going out of our way once in a while.)

Brinsworth, June 7

Another day with no rain—yet! It could happen yet, but it's just overcast now. About 10:30 we're going over to Meltham near Huddersfield to visit Edith's brother, Roland, & his wife, Margaret.

We had a very pleasant evening with Edith & Frank, talking & catching up on events. Then we had showers & were in bed before 10:30. We have their room—a very pretty one with a comfortable bed. A good night's sleep!

Later: What a nice day! We left here in Frank's car & drove to Meltham—some teasing about Frank being sure of the way. Evidently THEY can lose their way as well as George & I can. A bit of rain spattered now & then, but nothing serious. Edith's brother, Roland, his wife, Margaret, & their son Graham, are very nice & good hosts. They have a new home, nicely furnished, with just the right size enclosed garden in back. It did rain through the day, so we sat inside. They have all been to the U.S.—Roland several times—so there was a lot of talk about likenesses & differences between our two countries.

Margaret served an excellent buffet lunch in the living room (they call it "lounge" over here). She had quiche with a lovely flaky crust, sausage rolls, sliced ham, lettuce, tomatoes, pickled beets, onions in vinegar, eggs, bread, cheese, & dessert was strawberry flan—excellent! Frank & Roland are wine-makers, so talk of the brew—& lots of the actual thing—went around.

Margaret & Edith left for a while in the afternoon to go shoe-shopping & Edith came back with 3 lovely pairs. Lucky lady! While they were gone, I called Dorothy Hallas, just 2 miles away, but we won't see her and Leonard until Thursday. I also got hold of Andy in Eaglescliffe. We'd tried before, but never found them at home.

It was 5 o'clock when we left. Edith made shrimp omelettes when we got back, & then it was a pleasant evening of talk & another early bedtime. I seem so sleepy & worn out all the time—maybe the throat problem.

Each night at bedtime, I think of the poem, "In winter, I get up at night, etc." It stays light so late at this latitude. It is still quite light when we go to bed at 10:30.

June 8:

I slept late—then down for tea & some bran, & we sent off some letters to the people at home. Two weeks today since we left.

It's another pretty day, & Frank is taking George & me on a trip through the Derbyshire "Peak District." We're high on a hill revising our route to Chapel-en-le-Frith & Bakewell. One of the roads he had planned to take us over is closed for repairs. As you look out you can see gray stone walls everywhere, again forming a crazy-quilt of fields—few trees, & the tops of the peaks are only grass-covered. After winter snows, these roads are closed.

Stone walls line the roads, too, ancient-looking & bare, not greenery covered as the rock walls are in the south. Many houses are of the same gray stone.

As you look out over the peaks & valleys, it's truly a beautiful view. Much of the peak district is a National Park, but within it are villages & farms. The towns are quite touristy, since this is a popular holiday area. The farms are pasture land for grazing sheep & cattle—lots of both.

I was thinking that we haven't seen a wooden house since we left home. Everything is brick or stone.

We went through a town advertising "well dressings." This was a new term to us, and we asked Frank about it. It seems to date from medieval times when they "dressed" their wells as a way of saying thanks for having good water. The significance has long since disappeared, and today it is simply done as a tourist attraction. They place wet clay on large boards, then draw some sort of design in the clay (usually a picture of some sort).

They then use flower petals of various colors to produce the picture. We didn't see any of them, but they say they are beautiful—wish we could have seen some.

We drove through part of the grounds of Chatsworth House, the huge home of the Duke of Devon. Very impressive the way the upper crust lives, but I hope they have a good round of servants. They'd be needed in a house that size.

Edith helped me identify some of the flowers & trees I'd been wondering about. We see fields of yellow buttercups, little English daisies, lots of Queen Anne's lace. I'm glad that we're here when the hawthorn is in bloom. It's everywhere. We also see a lot of horse chestnut, laburnum, wigelia, & the beautiful copper beeches. Lilacs, rhododendrons, roses are all over; & some peonies are starting. Where nothing else will grow, there is the ever-present gorse, which is a beautiful yellow when it is in bloom. Did I mention that palm trees grow in Cornwall?

Now we're back home about 11:30 to the fragrance of a good dinner. Stephen, Sybil, & Rebecca came at 1:00 o'clock, & that good dinner materialized immediately. We had delicious turkey, potatoes, tiny peas, corn, Brussels sprouts, gravy, luscious Yorkshire puddings—then a Sara Lee cake for dessert.

Unfortunately, Frank didn't feel well, & he went to lie down. The rest of us talked a good part of the afternoon, & were entertained by Rebecca, who is a bright & fascinating 4-year-old. Stephen & Sybil went off later to work on their car, & the rest of us had a turkey sandwich—more talk till bedtime.

June 9:

George was up & took Edith to work at 7:00 so that Frank could sleep later. Then after breakfast George & I did our laundry at a launderette. We were the first ones there, so zipped through in record time. We were in a little shopping area, so we bought a few things & went to the bank.

We hadn't planned to stay at Davies' tonight, but they very kindly asked us, & so we're here another night. After the laundry, though, we drove east through Lincolnshire. It's very flat & green, not too many trees, & lots of farms. The traffic lessened as we approached the Wolds; & when we drove through that area, there were very few cars. Nice & restful!

The Wolds are rolling chalk downs—up & down hills. There are a lot of farms there with narrow roads almost completely lined with Queen Anne's lace. But eventually we turned around, & it was down to the flat land & much more traffic.

We were near the town of Cheshire. The main attraction there seems to be the twisted church spire. It is undoubtedly warped because of green lumber in the framework, but the story is that it twisted as it bent down to see the last virgin bride enter the church; & that it will straighten when another virgin enters. Not a nice story, but I didn't make it up!

Brinsworth, June 10:

A cloudy morning as we get ready to leave Frank & Edith. George took her to work at 7:00. There's a bus strike in Rotherham. Frank is going to drive us to Marks & Spencer's to look for sweaters for Alaire & others. Then we'll go on to Edith's school so that George can have a quick look at a church in action.

Oldham, Wednesday, June 11:

We're at Tom & Audry Mills' in Oldham—a drizzly morning outside, but bright & pleasant in. We arrived before 4:00 yesterday afternoon, & they've been so good to us. We're

going out into the Ribble Valley after a while—sort of waiting to see what the weather will do.

It was half sunny most of yesterday. Frank very kindly drove us into Sheffield to Marks & Spencer's, & we bought one sweater there. Then we went on to Newman School where Edith works as secretary. Frank & George were taken on a tour, but I stayed in the office, & watched Edith in action. She's a very busy lady who seems to love her job!

We went back to Davies', said goodbye to Frank, & set off again in our Mini. I do hate to say goodbye to Edith & Frank—we just got well-acquainted, & then had to say goodbye. They've been so very good to us.

We got on the M-1 motorway, & went south almost to Chesterfield, then cut off & went through the Peak District again—it's such a lovely area! We stopped at Castleton, the only place in the world where they have Blue John stone—a fluorspar, which is a semi-precious stone. We "did" the gift shops, looking at the Blue John jewelry with Margaret & Nancy in mind; but even the simplest pieces were out of our price range. We ended up with a thimble for my collection, & a post card. We back-tracked about 3 miles to take the Snake Pass over the Peaks to Glassop—a very scenic drive, although not a high or difficult pass. Then it was soon into more heavy traffic as we went on into Oldham.

Finding Oldham was one thing, & finding Upland Road was quite another. We went well out of our way, & finally stopped at a British Petroleum station. The attendant drew us a map, & while it wasn't perfect, it did get us into the right part of town. We were cruising, looking for Upland Road, when two policemen, on foot, came by, and they gave us explicit directions—which worked!

Later

We had a very nice afternoon—a drive out on the busy motorways and then a turn off into another world. It was raining slightly and darkish, but it was a lovely drive—narrow roads, green everywhere, and beautiful old houses and towns. Audrey says that some of the old cottages cost the earth—they've been bought up and modernized but in keeping with the period. So many had spanking white doors and impressive wrought iron hardware. Quite a contrast to the old mill towns of Haslington and Accrington which Audrey dislikes immensely. Some of the pretty little towns were Whalley, Great Mitton, Hurstgreen, Knowle Green, Longridge, Ribchester (with old Roman ruins), Salesbury, Wiplshire—then back to Haslington and the motorway.

When we visited Tom and Audrey four and a half years ago, they took us to our first fish and chips place, a Berni Inn. So this time they took George and me to another one called Mother Hubbard's. We were there early, shortly after five, so we very quickly had piping hot plaice, good chips, and peas. It was a most attractive place, and we had a good time. At home we watched "Coronation Street", had talk and tea, and listened to a country and western record.

Thursday, June 12

Up to a prettier morning than yesterday. George went down to say goodbye to Tom as he left for work, and then Audrey gave us a cooked breakfast. We're going to be spoiled! It was good of Tom to take yesterday off from work, and Audrey is taking today off too.

They gave us their room—a big and very pretty one—and they went into the second bedroom. Tom slept on the "put you up"—a most descriptive term. I enjoy some of the different expressions, and they seem to have some good ones in Lanc.

George and Audrey went off to a launderette to do some washing, and I had a lazy morning, mostly writing to people in the U.S. Tom came home for lunch—Audrey DOES make good sandwiches—then we said goodbye to him and soon to Audrey. As Margaret said four years

ago, "You do pick good penpals." I think so too, and we enjoyed thoroughly seeing the Mills again.

We took the M-62 over to Huddersfield, heading for Netherton, which is where Dorothy and Leonard Hallas live. Unfortunately, we had located another Netherton, nearer to Wakefield, and we went there. I told George that it didn't look right, and sure enough, when we asked, we were in the wrong town. We laughed our way across the moors, through some very pretty roads and villages, just heading in the general direction of the Netherton that we wanted, and all of the sudden, we were there. It was fun and interesting going this way—MUCH better than the motorways which I don't like. Too busy and too fast for my taste!

As soon as we found the street, I recognized the house, and Dorothy waved and came out to greet us. It was like coming home again. They have made some changes in the house and garden, but it all seemed very familiar. George and I have the downstairs bedroom that Margaret and I had before.

York Minster, June 13

I'm sitting in a draft and admiring the stained glass windows and waiting for G. to come from parking the car.

And that's as far as I got. George came and we toured the Minster. I thought that it was the first cathedral that G. had seen, but I forgot about Winchester. Anyway, once we'd seen the Minster, we walked over to Stonegate St.—a very nice pedestrian area. When we were here four years ago, Margaret bought her Spode china at Mulberry Hall on Stonegate St., and I got some very nice bone china coffee mugs which I like very much. I got two more today and also a thimble for my collection. I found the quiche dish in the quince pattern that Nancy Thuma wanted too, at Mulberry Hall's Wedgwood shop, so I got that too—one more thing out of the way.

It wasn't a good day to be out, but we did some more looking around, and then we had lunch in a café and bakery called Betty's. We had our first English milkshakes and found them good but much thinner than the American variety. After lunch, we looked around some more—the Shanbles and G. took a walk on the city walls. It wasn't raining, but it was drizzling unpleasantly, and it was good to get back into the Mini and leave York. At that, we went round in a circle and found ourselves back at the Micklegate Bar in all the city centre traffic.

We decided against going back to Dorothy's by the M-62, and instead wandered off onto some of the by-ways and liked it very much. It was about 5:30 when we got back—to a warm welcome and delicious fragrances from the kitchen. Dorothy is an excellent cook, and she has some beautiful china and glassware and silver.

The first night Dorothy served a delicious soup, steak, potatoes, spring cabbage, gravy, etc. Dessert was a bowl of mixed fruit and then cheese and crackers. Last night we had grapefruit for starters—then roast lamb, potatoes, peas, cauliflower, onion sauce, and a good strawberry dessert—sponge cake, cream, and strawberries.

June 14

It's gray and rainy today, and all of us slept late. G. and Leonard walked down to the village for a few things, but by 10:40, we were grouped in front of the TV to watch the Trooping of the Colours. It's the queen's official birthday, and this is an annual event. Nice to sit here with a cup of coffee and enjoy the pageantry.

Later

Lunch is over, and some neighbors of the Hallas' have come and gone—good, friendly people named Eric and May. He works for David Brown tractors which are Case. We liked them, and it was no effort at all to talk with them.

Eaglescliffe, June 17

I've got some catching up to do, so while Chick gets breakfast, I'll get on with this. I feel as if I should be helping, but sometimes it's easier for the cook to be on her own. I don't seem to be able to help much anywhere we visit.

It's raining this morning, so we're not going out until afternoon. All of us need to pack to get ready to go to Scotland in the morning so this is a good chance to do it. Andy and G. want to take a look at the car too.

To backtrack——We finished out a rainy but pleasant Sat. at the Hallas' and it was good to be inside and not sightseeing. Dorothy had an excellent meal for us all, including Yorkshire puddings which we like VERY much, and also fresh raspberries for dessert.

On Saturday morning, we said goodbye to Dorothy, and she went off to her church at 9:30. G. and I had planned to go to the local Methodist Church, but Eric, the neighbor from across the street, appeared and asked if we would like to go with him and May to their Baptist Church in Huddersfield. We set off about 10:15, and we found it a good service. A woman was substituting for their regular minister, and she gave an excellent sermon. We enjoyed the children too singing "I cannot come to the wedding." The minister's son is deaf and is a very undisciplined boy, about 10, but then we don't know all the circumstances.

After church, we went on through Huddersfield, looking for a laundromat which we never did find. It was a sunny day, and we had a pleasant trip northward to Yarm. Things are bigger and less compact here, fewer hedges and walled fields, although there are some.

We got into Yarm and looked around for a while. Chick had said to call and Andy would come and lead us in, but we decided to try and find their house by ourselves. We did, after asking for Carnoustie Drive. These are new houses and very nice, and Chick and Andy have an attractive and comfortable home.

Chick had dinner ready, and we were soon having turkey, dressing, potatoes, vegetables, and a beautiful cream-laden trifle. We had quite a bit of mail waiting for us, including Father's Day cards for G., and it was surely good to hear from everyone. Steve and David had planned to call us on Sunday evening, but it didn't work out.

Yesterday, Monday, we had a later, cooked breakfast, and then Andy and G. took our little Mini into Middlesborough and turned it in. Then we all set out for a day over the moors. The weather wasn't perfect, but we still had good views. I particularly liked seeing Hutton-le-hole, a lovely little village where sheep wander up and down the street and over the green. We had lunch there and looked around the gift shops. Later, in the rain, we saw Chick's favorite cottage, a beautiful thatched roofed one on Thornton-le-Dale. I wouldn't mind having it myself!

We came home along the coast from Scarborough—stopped at Whitby to see the whalebone arch and the abbey. It was late when we got home, but Chick whisked on a very good meal in about 15 minutes—a delicious homemade soup, salads, cold turkey, and trifle. G. and I went off to bed by 11:30, but Chick and Andy washed up.

We were all up late this morning and were still eating breakfast when Maxine (daughter) came by to leave her son, Mark. We sat over tea and talked with her, and then I washed up while Chick got Mark to sleep. Everyone went upstairs then to sort and pack for

Scotland. I wrapped some things to leave for Christmas and dug out the gifts I'd brought in general. It kept raining most of the day.

Evening

We went out to Preston-on-Tees Park and Museum, and it's a lovely place. The museum is an old manor house. There's a pewter room, toy room, sewing machines, conservatory, a period street of old shops, etc. I wish the beautiful china in one period shop could really be bought for the prices shown! There were lovely tea sets in Wedgewood, blue flow, Royal Doulton, and many others.

Wednesday, June 19

We're off, up the A-19, heading for Edinburgh. It's a pretty day which makes it extra-nice to start a holiday. No one was up early. We had a big breakfast, washed up, did all the last minute things. It was 10:50 when we set off. Andy is having a bit of trouble with his car which bothered at first but then smoothed out.

We went through the Tyne Tunnel into land that was pretty and green—lots of sheep and dairy cows. The A-19 bypasses most of the towns, but we did drive into Alnwick. Then it was on up the coast to Holy Island—Lindisfarne. Luckily the tide was out so we were able to drive over the long causeway to the island. We had lunch in the car—hot pies that Chick bought, coffee, and Kit-Kats. There's an old abbey on the island, the inevitable gift shops, etc. It was very pleasant there, and I thought of how it must have been earlier without cars and tourists.

People were picnicking along the causeway. We saw big black "paddles", and when we read a sign about them, they turned out to be for beating out beach grass fires.

It was after 5 when we got to Edinburgh. We drove around for a while and then found a phone to get definite directions to the Balfour Hotel on Pitrig St. It's an old, deceptively small place from the outside. Our room was up three flights of stairs—only our two rooms and a bath in our area.

We went down right away to our dinner in the basement dining room—an attractive, pub-like cellar. We had a very good minestrone soup, lamb, roast potatoes, carrots and broad beans. Mixed fruit for dessert, and tea.

Afterwards we went out to see the castle. It was closed, but very impressive. We were lucky to see a bagpipe band playing there. Chick isn't fond of bagpipes. She says "The Irish gave them to the Scots, and the Scots haven't yet discovered the joke."

We went slowly along the Royal Mile, the old churches and the exclusive shops. Holyrood Palace is at the opposite end from the castle. Then we went to see the Sir Walter Scott monument, then back to the hotel and baths and bed for G. and me.

Scotland, June 20

It stays light so much longer here—was light when we went to bed before 11 last night and was light when we first noticed at 4 this morning. The wind was blowing hard this morning too, and it's keeping it up.

We loaded up after meeting for breakfast and reluctantly left Edinburgh. Sometime I'd like to go back and see more of it. I think we paid 15 pounds for our bed and breakfast last night, but Chick paid downpayments on all our B. and B. places, so I'm never sure of the complete cost. She refuses to let us pay that part.

With the strong winds, Andy wasn't sure about going over the Forth Road Bridge, but we did. It's a high, long suspension bridge. Andy didn't add to our confidence when he

said—jokingly, I hope—that he didn't trust bridges because his company built some of the parts. He's said the same thing yesterday about the Tyne Tunnel.

The weather was mostly good with a spatter of rain for a minute, then warm sun. We stopped in the cathedral city of Dunkeld, went to the bank, had coffee and cookies, went to a couple of shops, and toured the cathedral.

From there it was on to the Pass of Killiecrankie, site of a famous battle in the 1600's. We bought hot meat turnover pies and coffee and had lunch, then toured the National Trust gift shop and a tiny museum. After leaving the Pass, we climbed to the barren, rather bleak country—hills covered in heather. Just wish it had been in bloom! There were very few trees and only an occasional isolated farm, and only gorse in bloom. Quite a contrast to southern Scotland where earlier today we'd seen wild roses, poppies, buttercups, Queen Anne's lace, and other flowers.

It got rainier in mid-afternoon—a hard one for a time, but it lessened so that we could see the scenery. We had a good stop in Aviemore, a popular tourist and sports area. It reminded me some of Aspen or other such towns, especially since there were patches of snow on the Cairngorm Mountains. We saw some dry skiing—new to me.

There was a "Tartan Centre" which we visited, and I enjoyed it thoroughly. The others went on to the other shops, but I watched an excellent slide program on tartans. I always thought that the clan plaids developed from cottage weaving, using the dyes and all of their surroundings. This program though said that family patterns didn't come about until after the 1822 visit to Scotland of King George IV. Scotland went tartan crazy after that, and families would order a certain weaver's pattern by number—something that appealed especially to them. They'd get it for themselves, children, servants, and so on. Eventually instead of a weaver's number, it became known as the tartan of a certain clan.

Tartans were also popular in the U.S. at that time, usually bought for slaves' clothes. The material was inexpensive, wore well, and the bright colors were clearly recognized if a slave ran away.

Inverness, June 20

I'm bathed and in bed, and it's only 9 o'clock. We're at Kintail at 71 Cilduthel Rod., a very nice home with a lovely garden, both flowers and vegetables. We got here about 6:30, and our pleasant landlady had a meal ready for us—creamed soup, roast beef, onions, boiled potatoes, peas, and Jello and fruit and ice cream for dessert.

After that, we drove around for awhile, and now Chick and Andy have gone out for a drink. We decided to get an early bath so that the Andersons could have the bathroom later on.

Our landlady has relatives in Seattle and hopes to go over there soon. At the Tartan Centre this afternoon, I talked with a nice young man who has been to the U.S. twice—all over the country. He talked very knowledgeably about the U.S., but he's never been the 160 miles on to John O'Groats from Inverness.

The scenery improved later today as we went through the Spray Valley. Inverness is nicely situated on the Ness River. There's a castle here, high on a hill. Well, Mrs. Cummins has made tea and given us biscuits so I must quit writing. She's so nice—has been doing bed and breakfast since 1974 and is really like a friendly hostess. It cost us 10 pounds tonight, plus whatever Chick has paid. Chick booked bed, breakfast, and the evening meal while we're in Scotland—nice to come in and have dinner soon after we arrive.

June 21

A bit damp this morning but at least the rain isn't sluicing down. Breakfast was very good, and we talked a while with Mrs. Cummins. Then Chick wanted to stop at a brass shop to buy a wedding gift for Margaret and Brian, so that was the first thing on the docket.

Inverness is a nice town near the Moray Firth. I must look up firths to be accurate, but I think they're like the Scandinavian fiords—a drowned river valley. As far as I know, the term firth is only used in Scotland.

We still notice the long days. Mrs. Cummins told me that it's light till 11 or more, and then an early dawn. Midsummers Day!

Chick got her gift bought—lovely!—and we left Inverness. We toured for several miles along Loch Ness. It was beautiful, but Nessie didn't rear her head to pay us a visit. From there we took the coastal road to John O'Groats, and it's been beautiful driving despite the alternating showers and sun. We're into the real highlands, and the mountains loom dark around us. They're low, compared to the Rockies, but they have a real beauty. Some are quite heavily forested, and then there will be a farm with fields on the steep hillsides, and sheep everywhere. Then we'll come to slopes bare except for heather, gorse, or broom. The last two are in bloom all over. We'll see hillsides that are solid gold, and sometimes it will be along the road for long stretches. The rhododendrons are blooming here too, and we see masses of them at times.

Andy drove along steadily until 1:30 when we stopped in Bonar Bridge to have a pub lunch. We all had soup, and George and Andy and I had a "ploughman's lunch"—hard breads usually two or three kinds of cheese, pickled onions, lettuce, and tomatoes.

Later

We're stalled—north of Brora, south of Melmsdale, with the North Sea just on our right with a beautiful rainbow over it. On the left, a hill covered with broom—lots of ferns by the side of the road. It's a lovely view in any direction but especially so out over the sea. It sprinkles once in a while, then the sun shines, and a chilly wind blows constantly.

There seems to be something wrong with the gas line or carburetor—as if the car isn't getting enough gas—this according to G. and Andy. Oddly, it goes for a long while, then develops this trouble. I feel sorry for the men, and for Andy especially. He had the car gone over before we arrived and expected it to go well all the time.

Wick, Scotland

It's 10 P.M., and we still have 17 miles to John O'Groats. We expected to be there by 6. The men worked over the fuel line and carburetor, and I don't know what all. We'd start out, go just a bit, and the whole thing would start over again. Andy finally inched it into Helmsdale and went off to call the AA. G. almost followed him but instead got into the car. I could almost see the wheels turning inside his head, and then suddenly he jumped out, opened the bonnet, got the tools from the boot (don't I sound veddy, veddy British?), and after a bit he came back to announce, "I think I've got it!" When Andy came, they worked some more, and both seemed sure that they finally found the trouble. Something about a hidden screen in the carburetor that didn't show in the diagrams in the manual.

We waited for the AA man who had us drive four or five miles up a long hill with him following. All seemed fine with the car so on we went on our way. It was rainy when we got here to Wick, but G. and Andy spotted a fish and chips shop so we're having that for supper.

Forgot to mention that we stopped at Dunrobin Castle for an hour or so—home of the Countess of Southerland. At one time the family owned 1,300,000 acres of land.

John O'Groats, June 21

Well, we've made it from Land's End to John O'Groats, finally! It was 11 last night when we got here, rainy, and the tiny town was mostly dark. Chick went to the door of a lighted house to get directions to Ceol-Na-Mara, all of the address that we had. It was out of town about a mile, looking warm and welcoming as we drove up, and so it proved to be. Mrs. MacGregor is a young woman, very nice with an outgoing personality. She showed us to our rooms, and then we went down to the lounge for tea and sandwiches. Oddly enough, this is the only overnight stay where Chick had not booked the evening meal—good thing since we arrived so late after the car trouble.

Mr. Mac is away working on the oil rigs, making more money than he could at home as a mechanic. With the extra money, they're fixing up the house to accommodate more bed and breakfast people. It started as a two room cottage, and now they have very nice accommodations for 12 or more. The dining room is an added-on room with a table built around the edge of three sides of the room so that everyone faces the sea as they eat.

Mrs. M. told us that everyone around John O'Groats heats with peat, including them. Each family has its own section where they cut the peats. I'd like to see them actually doing it, and see just what peat is.

It was still light when we went to bed—then bright sunlight much too early. Breakfast was at 8:30, and by then it wasn't as bright out. We went out to the point of John O'Groats where the "last house", last hotel and all are. We looked around, took pictures, went through a gift shop, and we'll soon be on our way westward when everyone finishes writing postcards. It's raining a little, but the sun is shining too.

Ullapool, Scotland June 21

It's midsummers day, but a chilly one here. We're at Essex Cottage here in Ullapool, right on the water—only a narrow street and a bit of grass between us and the loch or firth or whatever the water is. Our windows look right out on it. It's bright out, but then every little while we're battered with rain.

It's been alternate rain, sometimes quite heavy, and sunshine today. Almost all of our roads were very narrow—single lane ones with pullout places for meeting oncoming cars. When we left John O'Groats, it was flat country for a ways, but then we got into the highlands again. We followed the North Sea all morning, through Thurso where Britain built their first nuclear plant, and on through rather desolate mountains with very few towns. About one o'clock we stopped in Tongue for something to drink. It's pronounced Ton-ga.

I was interested in all of the peat that we saw stacked in piles. You could also see where they'd dug it out of the hills. Most of the moors were rocky, but they seem to find peat "deposits" too. There were almost no trees, but we saw ferns growing all over. And wandering everywhere were the black-faced highland sheep—on the flats, the steep hills, along the roads, and on the roads.

The big lochs are beautiful, but I also liked the little un-named ones, which often had clouds of birds above them. Occasionally we'd see a small croft—an isolated farmhouse with a few stragglng buildings around—all stone, of course. We also saw a lot of old crofters cottages, roofless and caved in.

I really liked the drive through the highlands and thought of all the Scottish stories and poems that I'd read. The mist and clouds would come down near us, but looking away, you could see the sun shining on a distant mountain. We would go up one set of hills, but still another would rise before us, dark and purplish. We met very little traffic all day. It was really isolated country. I always wonder what life would be like during the winters. It's dark then by four, and daylight comes late.

About mid-afternoon we had to pay a pound to cross a tiny loch on a car ferry. It was the Kylescu Ferry over Loch A Chairn Bhain. The boat was called the Maid of Glencoe.

It was a lovely drive coming down the mountain to Ullapool. It's a picturesque little town—used to be a fishing village, but it looks quaint and touristy to me. Cafes and bed and breakfast places are all over. By the way, it seemed that a lot of the homes in the isolated country that we went through today had B. and B. signs in front. It's probably a way for the housewife to earn a little extra money.

Back to John O'Groats for a minute. It's the most northern inhabited place in Britain, although I believe that Ducansby Head is still further north. A Dutchman, Jan de Groot, gave his name to the area. In order to settle quarrels over precedence among his 7 sons, he built an octagonal house so that each could enter by his own door, and he furnished it with an octagonal table so that each could sit at the head of the table. Jan ran a ferry across the Firth to Orkney and gave his name to the little silver coin which was the fare—a groat worth about 1½ p.

We thought of calling my penpal, Ruby Craigie, on Orkney, but the phone book didn't show a listing for their name.

Well, it's suppertime, and we're hungry. After our big B. and B. breakfasts, we don't eat lunch usually—just a snack. Dinner is at 7:30 tonight, but more often it's 6:30.

Dinner is over, and the rest have walked into the village. There's a gorgeous sunset over the water just outside my window—chilly out too.

Supper was delicious—about the best that we've had. Roast beef, Yorkshire puddings, browned potatoes, mashed potatoes, Brussels sprouts, corgettes, very good gravy and hard bread. Starters were either egg mayonnaise or an excellent lentil soup which I had. Dessert was fresh fruit salad with whipped cream. We had coffee in the lounge—lovely china on which to serve everything.

Mr. McFadden is a young man with a 6 year old daughter. No woman is in evidence, and Chick said that it was he who answered the phone and made all arrangements when she called. He's an outstanding cook and has an eye for attractive table settings. He told us that the house is 240 years old, built from stones of a ruined castle that was on this spot. He's remodeling and doing a fine job—antiques and old bits and pieces.

Our two rooms are at the top of curving red-carpeted stairs. There are just the two rooms and a pretty bath in between. Our double windows look out over the loch, as I mentioned before, and walls are in an orange sherbet color, all built-in furniture is white and so is the woodwork. The carpet in here is a teal blue, and the sill length curtains are white with patterns of flowers in shades of green and blue. The washbasin is teal blue and so is the velvet headboard of the bed—all most attractive.

Getting clothes dry, other than a laundromat or home dryer, has been a problem. Rooms are chilly and dampish so that even drying pantyhose poses a problem. I just did some—hope I can wear them tomorrow!

Ullapool, June 22

A half-overcast day but no rain as yet. I watched sailboats go down the loch earlier—a very pretty sight. Breakfast was very good. Chick and I had porridge—oatmeal, but very smooth and also in need of salt. Then there are always eggs, the excellent English bacon, sausage, and often a grilled tomato. Toast, bread, marmalade, and tea. By the way, there IS a mommy in the McFadden family. Chick brought up some tea to me last night and said that there was a wife in the picture. I don't know what their arrangements are, but he seems to be in charge of the bed and breakfast part.

Later

We've just crossed on the ferry from Kylean on the Isle of Skye to Kyle of Lochalsh on the mainland. Chick just called our B. and B. place for tonight, in Ft. William, to say that it will be 7:30 before we get there. The lady is still going to give us a meal when we get there. Nice of her!

It's been a pleasant day of traveling—cool weather but a lot of sunshine. We drove through Ullapool along lovely Loch Carron, with ranges of mountains riding one after the other around us.

Much of our traveling today was like that—lochs and mountains, and lots of forest. The mountains are very rocky, and time and again we'd see torrents of water gushing down the hillsides.

The wild flowers are still with us—not as much broom and gorse as before, but lots of foxglove, wild roses, rhododendrons, and those that we can't put names to. Soemthing that Chick and Andy call "ling" on the hillsides—a heather-like plant with a purple blossom. It blooms before the heather does.

We drove out of our way—about 100 miles!—to cross over to the Isle of Skye. A car ferry runs frequently, and since it was Sunday, the price was raised from a pound, sixty-five to two pounds. Plus 20 p per passenger. We wanted to at least buy a postcard on Skye, but good old Scottish Presbyterianism was at work, and NOTHING was open. Good thing we had enough petrol.

We drove up as far as Portree, the capital of Skye. It was lovely in spots, but there is a lot of barren moorland with no scenic views. We got $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way back to Kyleakin and suddenly decided to try another ferry which would save us a lot of mileage. Ha! We drove 17 miles down there to find—guess what? It doesn't run on Sunday! So back to Kyleakin and the first ferry to the mainland—just caught it too!

One good thing came from the extra mileage—we saw some lovely coastal and forest scenery. The mountains on the other islands were a purply-blue, and it really was lovely.

Fort William, Scotland

I'm in bed at Melby, our B. and B. place. We got here about 7:45 after a truly beautiful drive through Glen Garry and other lovely places. I'd be hard-put to choose my favorite part of Scotland ,but that would come close. I do think that I like the western highlands better than in the east, although all are beautiful. These remind us of the Rockies sometimes, and then again of Oregon.

As I mentioned before, Chick booked all of our bed and breakfast places in advance, and she told me that we would have to take pot-luck—that some might be palaces and some hovels. We haven't hit palaces, nor hovels either, but this place is the lowest on the scale so far. It's on Cromarty Crescent with some nice houses nearby. Here they're remodeling, and it's really not very pleasant. We all share the family bathroom (with the tub full of toys), and there are no washbasins in the rooms. The whole house is really dirty, but I guess we'll survive.

Our landlady had kept a meal for us, even though we were late, but it wasn't a very good one. Chick ate almost nothing, wondering, I think, about the cleanliness of the kitchen. We had a clear vegetable soup, and then a heaped plate of some sort of pork, almost like boiled ham not smoked. The potatoes were in jackets, which neither of the Andersons care for. There was cauliflower and green beans. Dessert a sort of molded mousse.

Fort William, June 23

Up to a partly cloudy morning after a not-too-restful night. Our bed wasn't very comfortable, and we had nylon sheets and a nylon puff, and everything kept slipping off the bed. The room was far from clean, too—the wardrobe absolutely crammed with junk. There were all sorts of papers on the desk, including the man's charge card and the bills from it. I believe Chick said that every wall in their room had different wall paper. All together, not our favorite place.

Oban, Scotland

We're parked beside the harbor in the lovely little town of Oban, and the others have gone for a walk. The sun is bright now, but we've come through rain this morning.

Breakfast was okay back in Ft. William, but nothing to brag about. When we left there, we spent an hour and a half downtown doing some shopping. George and I got gifts for some of the family. I'll be relieved when we can get something bought for them all. Things are very price-y, and I'm redoing some of my ideas on what we'll buy. I had thought to get Marks and Spencer's sweaters for all our gang for Christmas, but the prices are much higher than when we were here before. I can get better buys on them at home. I think we'll settle for a gift for each, just as a memento of our trip.

When we left Ft. William, we made a "diversion" and visited a pottery shop somewhere along our way. They had nice things, but I wasn't tempted to buy. We had visited a Scottish craft exhibit in Ft. William, and I liked that better. Got myself a coffee mug for my collection.

We went into a restaurant this noon to eat, near Barcaldine.

Loch Lomond

It's VERY easy to see why Loch Lomond is the basis for all the songs and stories. It's absolutely beautiful, and we're lucky to see it in bright sunlight. There are green mountains all around, lots of trees, high cumulous clouds, and a mountain top or two hidden by a bit of cloud. The wide loch is shimmering and placid now. Gulls are everywhere, and there are some boats on the lake.

Crateroch Guest House
Balmaha, on Loch Lomond

The full address of our guest house is Rowardennan Rd., Balmaha, Drymen ny Glasgow. It means "high on a hill", and that's just where we are. It's where we're staying tonight, and you couldn't imagine a place with a more beautiful view. It's right on Loch Lomond, high on a bluff overlooking the loch, with islands and mountains. I can count 23 little boats in the foreground. George walked down to the dock and puffed his way back up. Chick & Andy have gone into the village for a little while.

This is a lovely house and nicely decorated. The dining room is big and square with windows on two sides to appreciate the view. Another side is mostly stone with a fireplace—and a round clock that wags its whole self back and forth.

Dinner was much better than last night—an excellent soup, and then cubes of beef and gravy, peas, potatoes in jackets, and dessert was ice cream and fruit.

Our room looks out on the loch too. We're going to miss the lakes and mountains of Scotland!

It was a lovely drive along Loch Lomond today, and even when we left it to find Balmaha it was one of the pretty wooded roads that I like so much—almost lanes with trees meeting overhead.

Ayr, Scotland June 23

We arrived at our guest house early today—one of the shortest routes and no diversions. It was supposed to rain, but we woke up to bright sunlight over Loch Lomond, and it's been sunny all day.

It was after 10 when we left this morning. We talked with our hostess and a pleasant couple from Cheshire. They had two huge dogs—Sean, an Alsatian, and Lady, a greyhound. Our landlady was something else again—very capable, but a bit scattly. Chick and I went into her beautiful huge kitchen to fill the flasks with coffee and milk, and she told us to help ourselves. She hopped onto her motorbike and sped away down the hill to get some cigarettes. She tells us that she likes a bit of a "blather" with the postman or anyone else who comes up there.

Breakfast was excellent, and we had the addition of "black pudding" this morning. Andy tucked into it, but I must admit that I left mine after a bite or two. It must be one of those acquired tastes.

We drove into Ballah and shopped for awhile, then drove around the edge of Glasgow along the Clyde. It's very wide and scenic, in most part. We stopped about 1:30 at Largs and had coffee and biscuits and ice cream cones, sitting and looking over the Clyde. From there we went on down the coast, past Prestwick Airport, and it wasn't 3 yet when we got to Ayr. We thought for a while that we couldn't get in that early. No one answered the door, and the front yard was crammed with cars. Then our hosts came running up—seems that there had been a family funeral which accounted for all the cars. They cleared out in a hurry, and we were able to park. It evidently wasn't a close relative—an aunt perhaps.

Our home for the night is a huge old stone affair, right on the main drag. It's not too good-looking from the outside, but inside it's bright and cheerful with a peppy little landlady named Kathy. She's been to America once—to Arizona "ugh" and to California "lovely". She's going back in November when her second grandchild arrives.

Our room is a good-sized one on the main floor, with the bathroom next door. How lucky can I get? The room has a deep purplish carpet, turquoise spreads, one papered wall in blues and greens, and 3 very light green walls. Curtains are off-white with blues, greens, and purples.

Dinner was good—a nice tomato soup, either fish or chicken, peas and French fries. Ice cream and fruit for dessert. Besides the four of us at our table, there was a youngish Irish couple from Northern Ireland. Their two boys were at a smaller table. They were chatty and friendly and a bit on the defensive about the "troubles". This is the fourth time that they've been back to this house, so there must be something to recommend it. It was interesting—a Scottish home, and English, Irish, and Americans.

Well, Chick and I have been sitting here talking, but now she and Andy have gone out for a bit. George and I had baths at 30p each, and we're in bed.

The beds in these B. & B. places vary, of course, from excellent to not-too-good. Almost all have knit nylon sheets in all sorts of colors, and ruffled pillow cases to match. I'm not at all fond of these sheets, and luckily tonight we have regular ones. We do have a continental quilt, or duvet. Everyone here seems very fond of them, but we're just gradually getting used to them. They're very warm, and I'm too hot blooded to really appreciate them. Still, on some of the se British summer nights, you do need a good warm covering! Last night, believe it or not, there were 5 blankets on our bed. I kicked them off, one by one, and then I was chilly. Tonight is warmer, but still jacket or sweater weather if you go out.

You can tell that this is a warmer climate in this part of Scotland. We saw quite a lot of palm trees growing in gardens as we drove along. The Gulf Stream flows by the western coast.

Ayr, June 25

The others have gone looking for Souter John's cottage, but I'm resting my legs and back. We've done quite a bit of sightseeings, and it's 140 miles on to Keswick where we're staying tonight. I suppose dinner is at 6 - 6:30, and since it's three now, we'll have to make some time.

Another Irish couple came to our B. & B. in Ayr last night—all very pleasant. I had to laugh when the Irish man offered Andy a box of Irish matches to light his pipe. From what they told us, it seems that incendiary bombs are sometimes put into match boxes, then slipped into a bag with something bought at a store.

We talked quite a lot with everyone this morning, and it was 10 before we were on our way. We drove to the humped bridge "Brig O'Doon" where Tam O'Shanter was chased by the evil ones. There's a monument to Robbie Burns there too. Then we toured his birthplace—a tiny white-washed place, very dark and humble. There's a museum there, too, and I enjoyed reading some of his letters. One wrote of the savage hospitality of the highlands where the purpose was to send every man to bed drunk each night.

We drove on a few miles to Culzean Castle (pronounced Kil-ane). There are some lovely gardens and woodlands including such things as palms, bamboo, etc. It's a beautiful summer day—just right to see gardens and castles. This castle was built in 1777 by Robert Adams, and it incorporated part of an old stronghold. It has a beautiful staircase, and the plaster ceilings are lovely. The furniture is massive, of course, but some of the smaller pieces, and the china are lovely. It looks out right over the Firth of Clyde, and the views over to Arran are truly magnificent. Someone wrote about the castle, "It's not an old, old castle, nor was it built for defense. It combines the traditions of an ancient family (Kennedy), the wealth of a vast estate, the taste of two or three highly civilized minds, and the genius of the greatest of Scottish architects, Robert Adams."

The upper floor of the castle was given by the people of Scotland to General Eisenhower as a thank you for his service to them. His desk is there and lots and lots of other memorabilia.

Keswick, Lake District

Again I'm writing while the others are having a walk along the Derwentwater. I've walked enough today and will see it in the morning. We're just three houses from it.

We were late getting to Keswick. After seeing Culzean, we drove on to see Souter John's cottage. It was probably 3:30 or later when we left, and still the 140 miles to go. Andy stopped in Dumfries, and Chick called ahead to tell our landlady that we'd be late. It was 7:30 when we got here, and she'd kindly kept dinner for us—roast pork, roasted potatoes, gravy, tiny peas, cauliflower, and tiny carrots. Dessert was strawberry ice cream, strawberries, and whipped cream. The soup was oxtail.

This is a huge old house called _____(sic.). They can have 26 staying at once. Our room is up 10 steps—big and square with a double and two single beds. Wallpaper is a pretty lavender and white, spreads white, and deep purple curtains. We have real sheets tonight and not the nylon ones—also a blanket and not an eiderdown.

It was a pretty trip down here from Ayr—mostly inland but with several lochs. It's much more gentle scenery here in the south of Scotland and northern England—rolling hills and every shade of green imaginable in fields and trees. And of course the hillsides are

dotted with sheep. We ran through rain and saw a magnificent double rainbow. It was fair when we got here, and I hope it stays this way.

Our landlady was telling us that she lost her mother five weeks ago. Then a month ago, her brother, nephew, and niece's husband went out in their boat saying they'd be in on the next tide. They weren't. The body of the 14 year old brother was washed ashore, and later the nephew. That's three funerals in a month and possibly a fourth.

Keswick, June 26

It's a nice day, at least so far. The Lake District has the reputation of being rainy, and with the high clouds, we're likely to have showers. We go on back to Chick and Andy's tonight, but we'll do some sightseeing first. Chick wants to do some shopping for her grandchildren before we leave here. There seems to be some trouble with the car, too. I can hear it grinding but not starting.

Eaglescliffe, June 27

Back at Anderson's after a VERY pleasant trip. No one else is up yet this morning, so it's a good time to catch up on this diary. G. and I are going out to a laundromat after awhile. Everything we have is dirty, and since Chick will have their washing to do, we decided to get ours done in one bash.

Yesterday was a very nice day with good weather until just before we got here. It was about 11 before we set off through Keswick and along Derwentwater. The Lake District is truly beautiful—mountains, lakes, lovely villages, and everything in a relatively small area. We didn't see it all by any means, and we'd love to go again. We did see Grasmere, Ambleside, Windermere, and Kendall. I'm sure there were more places, but I don't have my map here. It's a shame to condense the Lake District into just a paragraph!

We stopped for a pub lunch somewhere along the way, and I had my first steak and kidney pie in England. Good, but I always wonder why they don't just make it steak pie? But then, who am I to change English tradition. My first such pie was in Canada some years ago in Victoria.

From there, we drove into the Yorkshire dales for one of the prettiest afternoons of driving we've had. I REALLY like it there and again would like to go back. We were through the James Herriot country, for those of you who are fans of "All Creatures Great and Small," and it looks just as it does on the TV series. Everything is so green and fresh now, but I can imagine it in winter. The villages are small, and many of the farms are very isolated.

We went on through _____(sic.) and took some photos of what is used as Skeldale House. It's to be turned soon into an abbey house for old people. It began to sprinkle while we were there and kept it up all the way home. We'd had a snack in _____(sic.), but it was great to come in and find that Craig had a meal already for us all—goulash, boiled potatoes, peas, carrots, and coffee.

G. and I went up to our room about 9:45 and spent an hour sorting—or unsorting, looking for some Catherine Cookson books that Edith gave me. I wanted to read them on the rest of the trip.

Sunday, June 29

I'm behind again so now for some catching up. Pete & Andy are downstairs, but I think that Chick is still sleeping. We're really going to be spoiled by these late hours.

To back-track. We slept late on Friday and had a lazy morning. About 11:30, G. & I went out to do our laundry at a launderette. We'd accumulated a lot of dirty clothes on the

Scottish trip, and this let us get them done in one fell swoop. Chick kept her machine busy with her own washing.

Jill and the two kiddies, Michele and Nicole, came in the morning, and I did enjoy visiting with them. Then in the early evening, we went over to their house. Bill wasn't there. His dad had a stroke in San Trope, in the south of France, and Bill was going over to drive them and their car back. His brother, David, had gone first since Bill's passport had lapsed, and Bill had to wait to today to renew it. Anyway, we talked awhile with Jill—then went on to Carol and Andrew's. Claire was in bed, but we went up to see her. Paul, 5 weeks old, was up and is such a nice baby.

We'd called in first at Maxine and Kevin's. They have Mark, 14 months old, and he's a delightful baby—blond very curly hair and dark eyes. Chick and Andy have five very nice grandchildren.

We had tea and goodies in the living room when we got home. Chick had fixed a big dinner earlier, including Yorkshire puddings, which we really like.

And that finishes Friday! We had another lazy morning yesterday, and about 11:30 started for the caravan park near Runswick Bay. It was a pretty day, and I enjoyed the drive. We went to the Grinkle Park Hotel near Saltburn-by-the-Sea, intending to have lunch there. But there was a wedding party there, and the hotel was only doing sandwiches for droppers-in. We had a drink and looked around. There is a long, curving drive from the road, lined with the most beautiful rhododendrons. All around the hotel are lovely grounds, trees, shrubs, pond, statuary, and all. It was once a private home—lucky the ones who lived there!

We drove on a bit to Elderby to the pub there—a long, low stone building with roses climbing everywhere. I had steak & kidney pie again—better than the other. When we finished lunch, we went on to the caravan for the afternoon. Chick is one of seven sisters and three of them were using the caravan for a week or so. Eva is 82, Olive 80, & Lily 78. They certainly don't look or act their age, and they made us very welcome so that I felt very comfortable with them. The other sisters are still living too, and Chick is the youngest of them. Two brothers have died.

We had a cup of tea when we first arrived, and then late in the afternoon they brought us sandwiches, cakes and biscuits, and more tea. All very good, and it saved Chick cooking when we got home.

It was bright sunlight when we left the caravan, but it started to rain as we drove home. The changeable English weather! Chick and Andy were going to Ingleby Green to meet her friend Renee who had emigrated to Australia. George and I debated about going along, wondering if Steve and David might call, but in the end we did go. I'm glad because we had a most pleasant evening.

It was a fairly long drive there, and Renee and her sister Edna were waiting in the village to direct us to Edna's home where Renee and her friend Connie were staying. It's a lovely home, just out in the country—big and low with the hills all around. Beautiful views! There's a circular drive in front, and you go up broad steps to a terrace with tables and chairs, big tubs of plants and all. The inside of the house is spacious, and I especially liked the lounge—deep comfortable seating, fireplace, enormous picture windows that looked out in two directions to the hills.

Edna and Stan were excellent hosts, and we had a good evening of talk. Edna and Renee's mother was there too, and I enjoyed her. I especially enjoyed talking with the two Australian women. They're from Adelaide, and I have two penfriends there.

Oh, the spread that they put on for us in the evening! Ham sandwiches, paté sandwiches, crackers and paté, chips and cakes and sweets so delicious that it made it hard to choose. It really was a grand evening.

Monday, June 30

Up, packed, and G. & I have been sitting in the lounge. Chick just got up, and I hear teacups rattling. G. & Andy are going into Middlesborough soon to pick up our Mini. Andy has taken the day off just to get G. in there. We'd figured that he'd go by public transportation or taxi. Anyway, G. will come back for me, and we'll start off on our own again. Actually first though, we're heading tonight for Peggy and Hal Edwards' in West Bromwich. It will be mostly motorway driving which we don't like too well, but it's much quicker!

Sunday was another pleasant day with the Andersons. I think they stayed at home because we were expecting a call from Steve & David. Chick and Craig and G. & I went to the Methodist Church in Yarm, and Chick's friend, Mary Smith, met us there. It's her church, and she usually sings in the choir, but she sat with us instead.

This church was built in 1764 for John Wesley, and it's octagonal in shape. It's had extensions built on to enlarge it. The pulpit is up a curved stairs so Rev. Bruce preached from high above us. He wore the backwards collar and rove—a far cry from Dr. Robinson in his jumpsuit at our early summer service in the park. Rev. Bruce preached on carrying the mission of Christ—a very good service.

Chick cooked a delicious lamb dinner with a steamed pudding and custard to follow. Something that you would seldom have for a meal in this country. Then G. & I spent part of the afternoon packing and getting ready to leave.

Bill & Jill, Michele & Nicole came over about 6 and stayed till close to 9. They're such a nice family, as are all of Chick & Andy's children. We all gathered around the table for a scrumptious tea—fruit cup and whipped cream, sausage rolls, scones & cream, bramble pie, éclairs, & tiny strawberry pies.

Steve & David called during this time, and it was GOOD to hear from them. Evidently all is well. They said that it had been in the 90's for several days. Odd to imagine it when we are wearing sweaters to go out and are sleeping under blankets each night.

West Bromwich 6 P.M. June 30

What a day! Not much to be said for it except it's wet—very wet. It was sprinkling a little as we loaded up and left Chick & Andy, and it has poured all the time. G. hasn't had the windshield wipers off since we left Yarm. We haven't seen much scenery either what with the rain, plus the splashing of cars and trucks. It was mostly motorway driving anyway. Right now G. has gone to find a phone to call Peggy & Hal—we haven't a clue as to where they live here in West B. other than their address. I was here 4½ years ago, but there have been lots of cities and towns since then.

Later

Peggy & Hal came after us in no time and led us to their house. I don't think that we'd ever have found it. We talked and had some tea. Both Roy and Ann were there—they've matured into two nice adults since I last saw them.

Roy went on to his flat, and after awhile the 5 of us piled into Hal's car & went to the Manor House. It's an old 13th Century building, now converted into a fine restaurant and bar. We had drinks and looked around—it's a lovely place. I remember visiting here the last time and enjoyed it then too.

We went on then to the Crooked House Pub, and it's really something to see. It's built over an old mine, and now nothing about the place is straight with the world—including my stomach. I got a queasy feeling just walking across and up to the door. Balls roll uphill, a grandfather clock looks as if it's at a 45° angle, windows aren't straight, but the curtains are. All in all, it's an odd and most interesting place.

I recognized American voices while we were sitting there—turned out to be a couple from Ohio, now living in West Brom. After 13 years in France.

July 1 West Bromwich

We decided to stay an extra night with Peggy & Hal in order to see Stratford on Avon, and I'm glad we did. We left here about 9:30, left the M-5 soon, and ambled our way across to Stratford. It was cool and windy, but it never did rain on us.

We came to Anne Hathaway's cottage first, in the pretty little village of Shottery, so we toured that first. We also saw much of the town, Shakespeare's birthplace, New Place & Mary Arden's home as we left. I know I've forgotten one! We liked them all, and with some discreetly hidden plumbing and heating, I would like to move into them. Oh yes, and a good kitchen stove and fridge, hidden behind ye olde worlde fronts. I was tickled by some ladies who poked their heads in the door of one home, swiveled their necks around and said, "Well, I guess we don't need to bother seeing this place. It's just like all the others." Each to her own, I suppose!

We "did" some gift shops, all with the same souvenirs, plus some very nice price-y items that I would like to have had. Then as we were leaving Stratford, I was thinking of looking for a place to have a late lunch. We decided to turn west and go over to Worcester, which we did.

It was a pretty drive through flat farming country. We drove through Worcester and had no trouble finding the Royal Worcester Porcelain Works. There is a two hour tour, plus a shorter one, but we missed those. On your own, you can see a big display room, a museum shop for buying first class items, and two "seconds" shops. We couldn't afford the first class pieces, but I loved wandering through the seconds. I ended up with a large and small flan dish and two coffee mugs—all the R. Worcester that I possess. Sometimes it's only the printing on the bottom that's blurred, and sometimes I can't tell at all why they're seconds. At least I'm happy.

We left Worcester about 3:30 and took the M-5 back to West Bromwich to save time. Ha!!!! We got up in W.B. all right, but spent almost one hour trying to find where Peggy & Hal live. We kept coming back to the same place. Finally George studied out a map, and once we'd gotten that straight, we drove right to it. Worcester Green is only a couple of blocks long, and no one that we asked for help could aid us. It was good to see Peggy standing in her front door—about to send out a searching party, I think!

We had pizzas and chips for supper, washed up the dishes, & then drove over to Peggy's folks' home for the evening. They were very nice, and I enjoyed our visit with them. Peggy's mum has a sister in Birmingham, Alabama, and they've been to the States several times to see her. I believe they plan to go again next year. They travel in Europe a lot too—lucky people!

July 2

Llanberis, Wales

A very nice day, weather-wise and travel-wise. We said good-bye to Hal & Ann, and to Roy who had come around earlier, and then we had some breakfast, said good-bye to Peggy and were on our way by 8:50. We had no trouble getting on the motorway but left it after 3 exits to go up the A-5, which goes clear up to the northwest of Wales, to Holyhead on the Isle of Anglesby.

Before we left England, we drove mostly through Salop. It used to be Shropshire of Houseman's "Shropshire Lad" fame, but the old Anglo-Norman name of Salop was restored. It was the scene of a lot of border fighting years ago, but it's peaceful farm country now. It seems to have a lot of rocky ridges, but farms too. We can mark the passing of time by the colors of the fields. Five weeks ago, they were all green, and now they're golden. We still see rhododendrons in bloom, but not nearly as many. Elderberries are blossoming all along the roads—also white & yellow daisies, and foxglove.

We crossed into Wales before 11, into Clydd—at least I think that was it. You could see the mountains coming up from a long ways away, and gradually we drove into them. We stopped for a while at the lovely picturesque, and very famous, village of Betwsy-Coed. It's pronounced roughly Bettos-uh-Koyl. Now you know why we just look at the place names and don't try pronouncing them.

We had lunch at a tea shop in Betwsy but didn't have time to do much more than drive around the area. There are some beautiful lakes and waterfalls there—also LOTS of souvenir shops. It's a touristy place, but very pretty.

We went on to Bangor and crossed to Anglesey on the Menai Bridge. It wasn't far then to the village of Llanfair, better known as Llanfairpwllgllgogocherchwynbrowll-llandysiliugogoch. It means "The Church of Mary of the Hollows near the white hazel thicket, the rapids, the whirlpool, and the Church of St. Tysilio near the red cave." Don't you think that I'm bright to know all of this? Again, this was a place mainly for tourists, at least what is visible from the road.

We didn't go further on to Anglesey although it's supposed to be a very pretty island—125 miles of beaches and bays. Once we'd crossed back to the mainland, we headed for Caernarvon and its famous castle. I just asked George what I should say about it, and he said "It's an old relic." Do you get the idea that he's faintly fed up with the old and historic? Still he climbed thousands of stairs, took pictures from the ramparts, and we called it a day. It was a very hot and sunny day—good time for sightseeing. I was glad to get out in to the country again and the lovely Welsh scenery.

We drove on as far as Llanberis, a pretty town with a good view of Mt. Snowdon which is the highest mountain in England and Wales. Ben Nevis tops it. None of these are high mountains, when we think of the Rockies and Cascades, but they're rugged and beautiful.

We're stopped for the night at a big guest house called "Bryn Gwyddfán" which means "Sylvan Hill." It's a big old place, and at the back they have added a couple more rooms, rather like a motel. Our room though was upstairs, big and a bit chilly, but with a nice view of the mountains. 5 pounds apiece.

July 3—evening
Near Erwood, Wales

I'm stretched out on the bed in our B. & B. place, listening to a "symphony" from outside. We're in a farmhouse, up a long, narrow lane—the place reminds me of something that James Herriot visits on "All Creatures Great and Small." I've been wanting to stay at one of these farm B. & Bs that we've seen along the roads, and this is really very nice. There are flowers in front of the house. Dogs came bounding to meet us—a boy was riding his bike—and the front door stood invitingly open. We've noticed that almost no windows and doors are screened in this country—must be that they don't have the insects that we do. At home you'd be eaten alive by flies and mosquitoes without all our screening.

Our room is just up a carpeted flight of stairs. It's a narrow room with a dormer window that opens out. Walls are white, carpet brown pattern, curtains an open weave white with brown stripes, and the spread is a dark brown nylon. It's clean and attractive with the bath across the hall—4 pounds each. I'm going down to the lounge in a few minutes for a cup of tea, but I want to catch up here first.

The symphony that I mentioned is produced by a bunch of calves. The farm and animals are right near the house, and the calves have been bawling constantly—all degrees of loudness. There was a faint smell of manure as we got out of the car, but it's not noticeable in the house.

Back in Llanberis this morning, breakfast was at 8, and we sat and talked with our landlady for awhile. She said that her customers are down a lot this year, mostly because not so many Germans have been coming. It seems to me though that we see and hear a lot of them.

We drove around Llanberis a bit and mailed some letters, and then set out to meander our way through Snowdonia. We're good at meandering. Well-meaning people plot routes for us on motorways and A-roads, but we soon leave them to follow the wiggly white lines on the maps. They're often one lane roads, but they've taken us through some lovely scenery and to some tiny villages.

We climbed over Llanberis Pass—not high as in the Rockies, but steep and beautiful. It was very rocky on the north side of the pass, but once over it was much greener. There were a lot of people out walking—also a lot of sheep along and on the road.

Outside of the moors—and we went over many of them—the vegetation is lush and mixed. You'll see trees of all kinds, rhododendrons gone wild, shrubbery, and acres of ferns covering the hillsides. We've noticed rank growth of ferns from the very south of England clear up to northern Scotland.

We saw some burned-over areas from fires, and also places on the moors where they had ploughed deep furrows up the hills, later to be planted with pine trees. Some of the pines have matured and one day, they just may have forests where the moors are, years from now.

The farms are barren—just a stone house, stone walls, & sheep. It all makes Iowa seem tame and very cultivated—which it is!

All the signs along the road are in Welsh. If they are in English too, often the English words have been blanked out with spray paint. There's a strong feeling of Welsh nationalism, and you hear Welsh spoken everywhere.

Many of the Welsh villages are absolutely beautiful, and there are a lot of them. We saw one glorious scene after another today. When I was writing of signs, I meant to mention too that on both main and secondary roads all over Britain you see signs indicating public footpaths. Great walkers, the British, and I admire them for it. Wales has the same public footpath signs, but in Welsh, of course.

We stopped for lunch in the pretty little village of Llanrhaedr-Ym-Mochnad. A very nice couple from Suffolk came into the hotel too. They'd been in America for seven weeks and liked it very much, including our slower speed limit on the highways. They had driven a motorhome from Calgary, Canada, through most of the western U.S. & had left it in Los Angeles to fly home again.

It was about two when we got to Powys Castle, and we spent a couple of pleasant hours there. The castle is fascinating, and the gardens are gorgeous. They're terraced, with lovely statuary, and with the castle backing it all, it's like something from a fairy tale. I wonder if the ones who live there appreciate what they have. It's all in the care of the National Trust now, as are many of Britain's famous places.

We drove on south after leaving Powys through more lovely valleys and hills. I'd thought to stop around Llandrindad Wells, but we got through there and ended up here at our farmhouse B. & B.

July 4

Another Independence Day outside the U.S.! And a bit of a gloomy one, too. It rained in the night and has been alternating sun and clouds since early morning. We're in the lounge here at the farm, waiting for breakfast which isn't till 9—late for many B. & Bs, and late for us early risers.

As it turned out, our stay here has been only so-so, mainly because of a poor bed. It had definitely seen better days, and we both got a poor night's sleep. We've been up since the calves first started bawling again—could have been up earlier as far as our backs were concerned.

We like an earlier start than this although we don't have a special destination for today. We must do some laundry if we can find a handy launderette.

Mid-morning now, and we're stopped at a very nice Welsh craft center called Llyswen. I finished up all of my buying except for David and Brian, and I'm stuck with what to get them. G. is still getting some heather perfume to take home to his office girls.

Wingate Farm, near Lynton, Devon

Another farmhouse B. & B. and a nicer one this time. It looks lots better, and Margaret, the landlady is much pleasanter. It's another old stone house in the hills of North Devon, and the sea is just over a hill. Evidently they take in a lot of guests, although you can't hear anyone else. There's a car from Holland outside—also a youth hostel just over the hill closer to the sea.

We have some more calves wandering around outdoors, but the symphony tonight is much more muted. Our room is bare and pleasant. I particularly like the big, deep windows that open out. Wallpaper is a cheerful orange pattern, spreads are orange, and the carpet and curtains are a deep green. The bath is right next door, and we have a hand basin in our room tonight. We prefer it that way.

I forgot to mention that a very nice Dutch couple stayed last night where we did in Wales. We talked quite a lot over breakfast. Their English was good, and they didn't hesitate to use it. They come from between Dordrecht and Rotterdam.

Today started out to be rather gloomy, but the weather got steadily better. This afternoon was bright and sunny and warm. We stopped toward noon in Abergavenny, Wales to do our washing—had a dickens of a time finding the only place in town until a kindly shopkeeper directed us. It seemed strange in that sizeable town to have only one launderette.

From there it wasn't too long until we got to the M-4 which took us across the huge Severn Bridge which connects Wales and the Bristol area. We joined the M-5 which leads to the S.W. of England, but we left it for a less-traveled road, heading in the same direction.

It was lovely driving through Somerset and north Devon, and I especially liked it when we came along the sea. I'd thought of stopping near Minehead for the night, but I'd also told George of Porlock Hill—a 1:4 grade—and when we realized that it was just beyond Minehead, we went on. Porlock is a pretty place with winding, narrow streets, and then the hill goes up abruptly and steeply. There was a Rolls Royce behind us, but our little Mini outdistanced it. Even up in the north of England, Porlock Hill is known. When Margaret, Paul, and I were here four years ago, they told us of it before we started out on our own. That time it was misty and wet when we got there, so we took a private drive around the hill.

We tried one farm B. and B. down a narrow, rocky road, but the whole farmyard was so junky and cluttered that we drove out again. Unfair to judge the house by the yard,

perhaps, but it was really bad. Again tonight, this farmhouse looks as if it could have come from "All Creatures".

G. is standing by the window, counting cars and estimating how much money our landlady is taking in tonight. A lot, it would seem, but there's a good deal of work connected with this kind of job, too.

July 5 - South Molton, Devon

We're parked right in the middle of this town. There's a fete going on today, and the place is CROWDED. We're headed for Exmoor and hopefully a good B. and B.

East Quantoxhead, Somerset

We're through Exmoor and in a nice old house for a B. and B. We stopped about 6 tonight and are just having a lazy evening. It's been a beautiful day for weather, good for the sightseeing kind of day that we had.

We had the usual good English breakfast at Wingate farm, about 8. We talked quite a bit with Margaret Phipps, our hostess. She keeps a world map, and each guest sticks in it a colored pin to mark his home. She hasn't had too many from America, but lots from Germany, Australia, and S. Africa. She's very interested in people and their countries, and we enjoyed talking with her.

We kept following coastline roads to the beautiful villages of Lynmouth and Lynton. Lynton is perched 1500 feet high on cliffs above the Bristol Channel. Lynmouth is 500 feet lower. In 1953 there was a torrential flood in Lynmouth, caused by a freak storm on Exmoor. The town was devastated and 31 people killed.

The roads for a good part of today have been very hilly. We started out with the Countisbury Hill with a 1:4 grade, and there were several more later on, and many steep ones with lesser grades. Beyond Lynton and Lynmouth, we paid toll (5 p on our map, but actually 20 p) to take a private road that wound through the woods and then came out high above the sea. It was a pretty day, & the views were lovely—and there was practically NO traffic!

We drove through many of the pretty towns such as Ilfracombe, Woolecombe, and Barnstaple. Then in the afternoon, we came to Clovelly, a MOST interesting and lovely place. The streets to the water starts high on a cliff, and you have to park up above & walk down. The street is really steep, & the old cobbles are polished smooth with constant use. So many women had on high-heeled sandals or else clog-like shoes, and they were certainly having trouble on the cobbles. Even the young and able-bodied were panting as they slogged their way up again. Some also came up by land rover! They use a sort of flat sled to slide supplies down the cobbles, & there are also donkeys that carry things. By the way, there's a doctor's office half way up the hill, and I'll bet he's been summoned a number of times for heart attacks or exhaustion.

This is as far west as we went this time, & we headed back on some of the little pathlike roads through the late afternoon. Finally though, we had to come back on a more traveled road to find a B. & B. They weren't too frequent, but all of a sudden G. braked to a stop, backed up to this house—it's right flush on the road. It didn't look too prepossessing from the outside, but its charms were hidden. G. kept picking a handful of red raspberries as he carried in our luggage—very good.

Bath - July 6

A rainy Sunday, but it's been a good morning. Our bed wasn't the best, but we had a fair night's sleep back in East Quantoxhead. The house was from the early 1700's. Two cottages had been put together in 17675, and then pieces were added to that. It was a

big place—right smack on the road that went by. So many of the old places are like that—the house's wall is even with the road.

Our room was big with sloping floors—walls were orange sherbet, curtains purple and white floral, and spreads bright purple nylon. Not my favorite color scheme! There were lovely flower and vegetable gardens around the house, and our landlady surprised us with a big bowl of freshly picked raspberries for breakfast. A great way to start the day!

We signed the guest book, of course. They haven't had too many Americans, but they have surely had a lot of Australians. We've found that true all over. The dining room and front hall were delightful. Dark, hand-hewn beams, enormous furniture, including a big old hunt sideboard. The landlady had very nice old bits and pieces around, including some beautiful deep blue glass. Covetousness reared its head!

We drove on to Glastonbury—not much traffic on a Sunday morning. We thought we'd go to church if we could find one, and a Methodist Church appeared practically in front of us. The service was good and informal. It amuses me the way the ministers dress so formally in the long, black fitted robes and turned-around collars, and then they have an off-hand way of preaching and conducting the services. At least this has been true of the three that I've heard.

The minister confused Iowa and Ohio—very often done by easterners in the U.S. And they often get Idaho mixed in too. As we were leaving, someone asked where in America we came from, and we told them. Then another couple stopped and said, "We're neighbors." They came from Muncie, Indiana, not too far away.

Wells Cottage, Broadway

It sprinkled as we drove on from Glastonbury and was gloomy as we toured Bath. Bot of us really liked Bath, and I would like to go back again. It's an attractive town, and being Sunday, it wasn't crowded. We saw the famous old homes designed by John Wood, the elder and younger. The Circus is a huge complete circle of three and four story houses, Georgian. It was very impressive, but my favorite was the Royal Crescent. The same type of homes in a huge, sweeping crescent. Now all of you Georgette Heyer fans can envy me seeing Bath. Her heroines "hung out" in the Royal Crescent, the Assembly Rooms, the Pump Room and all.

We ate Kentucky Fried Chicken and barbecued ribs for lunch, in pouring rain. It cleared though as we went on—no sun, but no more rain either. We spent the afternoon touring the Cotswolds—a lovely, lovely spot on this great earth. It's one of the main places that I would like to see again, if ever we get back to England. The villages are charming with all of the buildings made of the honey-colored Cotswold stone. Many have thatched roofs, and flowers are all over. Every place in England seems to have roses climbing everywhere.

We went from Bath up to Stroud in Gloucestershire and on to the village of Painswick. We had to go down and down a steep, winding hill on a very narrow wooded road. The town climbs the hills, and at the top was a beautiful old church with sculptures clipped from the yew trees filling the church yard. The story goes that the townspeople wanted to plant 100 yews, but they could only get to 99 because the Devil would pop up and pull out the 100th tree. Somewhere along the line, he got tired of this because there are well over 100 now.

We couldn't see all of the Cotswolds and certainly not in depth, but we saw a lot. I think I mentioned that it had stopped raining in Bath, and while we didn't have much sun that afternoon, the weather was pleasant enough. We tried to drive through a lot of the villages, and not only the famous ones. One of the best known is Bourton-on-the-Water, and while it was pretty, it wasn't my favorite of the villages. That "honor" goes to Lower Slaughter—a horrible name for one of the prettiest places I've seen. It ties equally with Croyde in Devon as my favorite. There is also an Upper Slaughter where our

mini forded a small stream to get from one part of the village to the other. And as well, there's an Upper and Lower Swell.

It was getting time to find a B. & B. so we didn't linger long in Stow-on-the-Wold. We drove on to Broadway, a real charmer of a town—it ranks right up with my favorites. The main street curves, all of the buildings are in character, and most have lovely mullioned windows.

Finding a place to stay wasn't easy—too high priced, filled up, or no parking space anywhere nearby. The appeal of these picture postcard villages isn't pragmatic, and parking is often difficult.

We finally stumbled onto Lovely Wells Cottage, and it's one of the nicest places that we stayed, at 12 pounds for the 2 of us. Mrs. Wells has been here a year and has completely renovated the cottage. There are just two bedrooms and a big bath upstairs. All of the doors are like barn doors, painted spanking white with black wrought iron fixtures. A Dutch couple has the other room. Our room looks out over the street and over the lovely walled-in flower garden. Carpet here is fawn, curtains and headboard are deep brown velvet, and soft yellow walls. The wash basin is hidden behind another door. Continental quilt and sheets and pillow cases are a soft moss green floral.

Windsor July 7

We're in Windsor tonight, and we were beginning to think that we might not find a place to stay. We were beginning to think we might have to send an SOS to the queen to beg the use of a spare cubbyhole.

But to begin back at the beginning. Our Dutch couple was noisy last night, in Broadway, but we finally got to sleep despite them. Breakfast was at 8—just wish you could have seen the room where we ate. The living room was like a doll's house, but the dining room really took my fancy. It was small, and Mrs. Wells had 2 round tables in there. Each had a floor length deep wine cloth with a set-in border of flowers. Over the maroon cloths were old white ones—very fine and embroidered, and many times washed. The kind that our grandmothers had. The walls were a faint moss green and so was the carpet, & she had plants and fine china on display all over the room. It's the prettiest room we've eaten in, & the food was equally good.

Have I mentioned before the "proper English breakfast" that we always have? Fruit or juice—this morning's was freshly squeezed oranges with half an orange slice, and the whole jazzed up with a wee bit of something to give it some kick. Then you can usually have cereal if you like. Up in Scotland this included porridge, but usually it's dry cereal—mostly corn flakes. Then you could get a nicely fried egg or two, a couple of pieces of excellent bacon, sometimes a sausage or two, and sometimes a broiled tomato or sautéed mushrooms. There's usually a choice of tea or coffee and a rack of toast—cold. All of this is very good, and the big breakfast saves a lot on lunch costs. But it will also be good to get back home to my customary juice, some Bran Buds, and some milk. At home, big breakfasts, if we have them, are more often weekend affairs.

I'd spotted a sign at the Edinburgh Woolens Store—in Broadway—saying that the summer sale was on. Summer—what's that? Sweaters are in order here the year round! But we were parked in front before 9, waiting for the shop to open. I got 3 pullovers for Alaire, and one for Brian. Those gifts have been hanging on my conscience, & I was glad to get them out of the way. In a nice china shop, I was also lucky enough to find another of the fine china mugs that I have been buying. This was strawberry patterned, and so I now have 7 of them.

We drove on then through Moreton-in-Marsh and Chipping Camden to Woodstock where Blenheim Palace is. I went in and through it for almost two hours, but I can't say that I really enjoyed it. It's too big and too formal—has many lovely things, but you have to keep moving with the group so there's no time to enjoy it all. To me, the palace isn't

beautiful, but probably I'm being picky. I did finish up the last of our gift buying—a Toby mug for David.

We get a laugh out of the gift shops. Usually the "Way Out" after visiting a famous place leads through the gift shop. Good tactics!

I was intrigued when we drove through the gates of Blenheim to find a big herd of cows, roaming across the roads—sheep further on. When we parked on the grass near the palace, you had to be careful where you put your feet. The cows had been there too! There's a beautiful lake where Capability Brown did the landscaping.

So much for Blenheim—I wish that we'd gone on to Woburn, but it was down to a choice between the 2. I was tickled by one of the Marlborough duchesses (American by birth) who produced her 2nd son and then declared she had done her duty—she now had an heir and a spare.

Blenheim is Churchill's birthplace, as you know, and after leaving there, we went to the lovely church in Bladon where he's buried. Not many were there, so it was very peaceful, but 30 girl guides came in as we left. Everywhere we go, there are coaches of children making tours. Schools weren't out yet for the summer, so it probably is a good way to fill in those last long days.

The afternoon was rainy, but we were just driving closer and closer to London. We kept looking for B and B signs and never saw a one. We were about to decide on finding a hotel, but while G. was buying gas, I read that in Windsor you can go to the police station to find the B. & B. listings, so that's what we did. George got some names of B. & B. places, just across the street from the station. Two were full, but we got into the 3rd.

This is an enormous house with 5 bedrooms on this floor and a 3rd floor above this. Our room is huge—soft green walls and carpet, white ceilings and woodwork, expensive lace curtains, and turquoise draw curtains & turquoise patterned spreads.

Our landlady works at the college, but evidently she has free time during the year. These people have had 2 exchanges of houses and cars with 2 American families. They take over the others' home and car, and the American couple comes here. This summer, they're going to Michigan.

We got all the gifts packed tonight, in one suitcase, plus packing everything else. Now to get it on and off the plane! By the way, this house is in direct line of planes arriving at Heathrow, and they surely fly low and loud over our heads.

July 8 Windsor

We're up and with the last things crammed into our luggage. Mine was crammed tight last night and taken to the mini. Let's put it this way—everything is jammed into the same pieces of luggage that we left home with 6 weeks ago. But as to weight—well, they're lots heavier. I didn't buy all that I'd intended, like sweaters to take home for everyone for Christmas. Prices are just plain too high. But of course everyone in the family gets a gift just because we've been here, plus little things too for friends. I wanted to get English gifts for all "down under" Christmas presents too, but they'll have to settle for American things again. My mug collection has grown, and I'm going to be surprised when I unpack, and I find out just how many I've bought. English china is very nice, and the pottery too, and I've no resistance.

Heathrow noon

What a morning! It started out nicely with the usual good breakfast—our last "proper" one for awhile. Our landlady was pleasant too, and it was fun to talk with her. You could feel the American influence—washcloths along with the towels in our rooms. That's

the first time at a B & B that we've had them. We also had hot toast from a toaster right there in the dining room, and water on the table.

We left there and found a store that sold Blue Mt. Coffee—something that we'd been looking all over for for Brian. I hope he enjoys it at 4 pounds, 4 p a pound. Our landlady was able to direct us to the coffee shop that imports it.

After that, it wasn't too much trouble finding the Skyline Hotel near Heathrow—just nuisance driving with lots of traffic.

On board the Sir Francis Drake - 3:50 P.M.

Well, we've finally taken off at 3:30, more than an hour late. The captain announced that it was "paper work" that caused the delay, but my suspicious mind suspected mechanical trouble. It's going to be very late, probably early in the morning, when we get to Mt. Pleasant. Our inner time clocks are six hours ahead of Iowa time right now.

They've just served drinks & lunch is to follow soon. G. says that this is the same plane that we came over on. (editor's note: It wasn't. That was Sir Francis Bacon.)

Back to my "oh what a morning!" We turned in our mini at the Skyline Hotel, and then took a free bus to the airport. The driver told us that we wanted Terminal 3 for overseas flights. So off we got there, only to find that British Airways flights to Chicago and Miami were leaving from Terminal 1. So onto an airport shuttle bus with all our luggage loaded into the rear compartment, and off to Terminal 1. Everyone got off there, & G. started for the outside rear compartment to get our things when all of a sudden the bus took off. G. yanked my suitcase out, but 2 were still in there, including the largest one, packed full of all our gifts, etc. Everyone around yelled and waved their arms—porters, passengers, & anyone else in the vicinity. But off went the bus! I don't think I'll ever forget George half in and half out of that rear compartment and how he shot out of there when the bus took off.

We really didn't know what to do, but a porter took over. He set wheels in motion and came back periodically to report to us. Eventually he told us that the bus directors had been informed and that the bus would be back. I went inside to sit down, and finally G. came in, carrying our last 2 suitcases. That porter earned—and got—a really good tip, although he tried to tell us that it was all in a day's work.

From there we got the luggage checked through to O'Hare, all but our coats and one small zipper bag. We needed our coats this morning, but I'm sure that we will find it very hot in Chicago.

It seemed like a long, long wait before boarding, even with the passport and hand luggage checks. We're going to be late arriving. Poor John & David will have an extra wait for us at the airport.

2:30 P.M., Iowa Time

Still 3 hours till landing, but time does pass. Lunch was good—better than when we came over. We had baked chicken breast, tiny potatoes, mixed lima and green beans, a roll, paté, and crackers, and fresh strawberries and whipped cream for dessert.

Back in Iowa

We were over an hour late arriving at O'Hare, and boy did we ever land with an awful bump. Even the stewards were complaining about it. However, we eventually got in the terminal, and it was so very good to see John & David waving from up above. It took an awfully long time to get our luggage and get through customs, and at that we were lucky. So many people were being searched very carefully, but we didn't have to open anything. The only question we got concerned the farm B. & B's. One question was: have you been

on a farm in the last month? They asked us about staying there, whether we'd been in the farmyards, etc. I suppose it concerned cattle diseases.

It was really hot when we got outside, but John's van is air conditioned, so we had a pleasant ride home. George & I slept a lot—didn't think that I did, but time passed fast. I'd hear John & David talking, but I think I slept a lot too. G. went back to work the next day, and I started in settling back to normal living.

And so ends our once-in-a-lifetime trip! There is so much more that we keep thinking about, but goodness knows, this is enough of a travelogue. I wonder if it's longer than the Alaska trip?