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MARY CLEVELAND

Memoir:
Mary Cleveland's Foreign Service 1947-1965

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Memoir: Mary Cleveland's Foreign Service 1947-1965

I, Mary Manning Cleveland, am the wife of FSO (Retired) Robert G. Cleveland. We served together at five Foreign Service posts abroad from 1947 to 1970 with interim appointments in Washington. Robert was appointed to the Service as a mid career officer as part of the Manpower Act introduced in 1947 to fill the vacancies created during the depression of the mid thirties when no officers were appointed. In 2003 we wrote for the family our life stories. From this I have extracted our adventures in the Foreign Service that we shared with our three children plus a few trips from our post-retirement days. Our foreign posts were Romania (1947-48), France (1948-52), Australia (1954-56), Thailand (1956-58), and Yugoslavia (1963-65). During this time our family consisted of Robert and me and our three children, Polly, Francie, and David born in Paris. Robert and I now live in Washington, D.C.

Romania 1947-1948

Assignment to Bucharest

In early 1947 Robert received his first Foreign Service assignment. He would go as First Secretary to the reestablished American Legation in Bucharest, Romania. His job there would be to handle matters relating to the newly signed Peace Treaty. This seemed to be an exciting assignment, and we were delighted. It turned out to be a fascinating experience, but as some people predicted, a "Mission Impossible."

We expected our second baby in early July. With that in mind, Robert asked if he was needed in Bucharest right away. He was informed that in the Foreign Service, as in the

Navy, a man is always present at the keel laying but not always at the launching! Postwar Romania was clearly not the place for “launching” in 1947. Robert would have to go to Bucharest without me, and I would produce the baby, Frances, on my own. After a brief period of indoctrination and language study, Robert would sail for Europe in May 1947. The children and I would follow five months later.

Romanian Intrigue

Soon after we learned of our assignment, we became unwittingly involved in a typical Romanian-style intrigue. It started at the Romanian Legation, where we were invited to meet the new Romanian Minister. There, a handsome lady by the name of Mrs. Gunther zeroed in on us. She oozed with charm! She knew about Robert’s assignment -- and as we soon discovered -- was planning to use him! Her husband was the last pre-War Minister to Romania -- he had died and was buried there. In Bucharest Mrs. Gunther had adopted a Romanian custom. She had taken as her lover, a Romanian grandee, Savel Radulescu -- an adviser to the king. Because of the War, she had to return to the United States -- not only did she leave her dead husband behind, but her “dear friend” Savel, as well! The pieces were in place for her schemes -- we were to become couriers for Savel.

Soon I was deluged with Romanian-made gifts -- mostly beautifully hand-embroidered table linen. Then we received an invitation for a black-tie dinner in our honor at her house in Georgetown. After a fine meal, as the butler was serving coffee, Mrs. Gunther asked Robert into her library -- Here she tried to hand him a large wad of hundred-dollar bills to be given to Savel. In Bucharest, Robert would be contacted -- rather an Alfred Hitchcock spy scenario! Robert didn’t like this at all -- he politely declined -- he pointed out that if the Romanian authorities heard about it -- it would embarrass the US Government and could jeopardize his career.

Later she tried another tactic: the following week when Robert was to sail for Europe. I went to New York to see him off -- eight-months pregnant and very sad to be left behind. We had a farewell lunch with Robert’s father at the Harvard Club. After lunch, Mrs. Gunther appeared outside the Club with several bottles of Portuguese wine for Robert and a big suitcase of clothes for “my dear friend.” In the general confusion, he accepted the suitcase. I took the wine. Mrs. Gunther had won the first battle. Perhaps she had hidden the money somewhere in the clothing. This time, she had hooked us. The intrigue continued in many unpredictable ways over the following months. The plot thickened -- it was our introduction to the Foreign Service!

Summer 1947

Francie

After Robert’s departure, the confusion and irritation caused by Mrs. Gunther, helped me through the pangs of our first separation. Robert and I would be reunited in the fall -- complete with Polly and the new baby -- Francie. We had decided to name her Frances after my father, Francis Manning. Polly and I moved into the Wardman with Mother --

Francie was expected to arrive in July. One reason for staying in Washington was my Rh-negative blood -- it could cause jaundice in the baby -- requiring a blood transfusion. Luckily this problem never arose. Mother was resigned but not enthusiastic about my having another baby. The weather got hotter and hotter -- the temperature rose to the 80s and 90s. No air-conditioning -- to keep cool I wore a thin maternity dress that showed my enormous tummy. Mother found my appearance embarrassing and told me to wear a coat to cover it up. Irene, our faithful maid, came every day to take care of Polly. Polly had a new pair of red shoes -- she loved them so much she took them to bed with her every night.

Francie was born at about 6 a.m. on July 2, 1947; Mother and I had taken a taxi to the hospital a few hours earlier. But this time I took charge -- all went well -- I was out of bed the first day -- no nurses were there to stop me! The weather was awful -- during my week in the hospital a terrible heat wave raged -- temperatures were in the 90s and 100s -- the breeze from the open window could have come from a blast furnace. When I decided to call Bucharest, the floor nurse was very excited -- she'd never heard of the place! It took hours to get through to Robert -- his voice was very faint, but he got the message!

You can make many small mistakes without thinking when you are young and inexperienced. Poor Polly -- I did a lot wrong at the beginning. When I arrived home, I had Francie in my arms and showed her to Polly. She told me to send that baby back to the hospital! Someone else should have carried the baby. My hospital stay was Polly's first separation from me. I should have made a big fuss over HER. Then we put the baby into Polly's room and moved her into the dining room. The next morning she said she had "only the dining room chairs to talk to." Of course I should have taken her into my room to sleep next to me.

The new baby was great fun. But the time had come to start planning for our new life -- to make decisions about moving our children, our worldly goods and myself to Romania. With no previous experience -- I was on my own! Phone service to Bucharest was terrible -- I had to rely on Robert's letters -- they came by diplomatic pouch and took over a week to arrive. It was rather overwhelming -- but help came from many sources. The very nice Mrs. Briggs, wife of a great ambassador, had me to tea with other wives who had lived in Romania. They gave me much useful information. Most important was the feeling of being a part of the Foreign Service -- where everyone helped everyone else. I was no longer living in limbo -- I belonged. The newly appointed Minister to Romania, Rudolf Schoenfeld, invited me to lunch. The Minister was a strange character -- more about him later. At this lunch I met Coy and John Hill. Coy would become my closest friend in the Foreign Service. John was assigned to the political section -- they would go to Romania in the fall.

Packing the lift vans

Our possessions had to be shipped. Some food supplies would have to be included -- a major headache was the food. Owing to post-war shortages of nearly everything in

Europe, we were advised to take along a year's supply of essentials. This included canned meats, vegetables and fruits -- soups and jams -- cereals and bread mixes -- condiments, dairy products and fruit juices -- paper products and soaps -- of course baby food. It was just as well disposable diapers hadn't yet been invented -- they would have filled a lift van. It became my job to estimate the amounts of every item we should take. Odd items -- sewing thread and needles -- nails and screws -- light bulbs and batteries, picture wire -- antifreeze and extra inner tubes -- padlocks for the gas tank and locks for the car hood -- drug products, and cosmetics. My black notebook contains fifty-five pages of lists and inventories. Most items had to be ordered wholesale. There were a few problems -- we didn't need a case of cinnamon powder or tomato paste or a dozen bottles of milk of magnesia! For a year's supply, how much of the following was needed? A -- coffee beans; B -- powdered milk; C -- mayonnaise; D -- sugar; E -- dry cereal; F -- toilet paper; G to Z, et cetera -- et cetera! My list said: A: 100 lb., B: 7 cases (210 lb.), C: 2 cases, D: 80 lb., E: 6 cases, and F: 100 rolls. All had to go in the lift vans with our furniture. How much insurance on all this? Lloyds of London refused insurance -- a bad risk -- the freighter with our vans would go through the Mediterranean to the Black Sea -- there still were mines from the war in the shipping lanes. A local company agreed to cover the shipment. Robert received it undamaged in Romania.

S.S. Mauritania

When I wasn't nursing the baby, I was on the telephone. I soon found that Tattie Leverich, an old Foreign Service hand, was also headed for Bucharest. We agreed to travel together. Tattie was the wife of the Deputy Chief of Mission, Henry "Butch" Leverich; she planned to bring her two children, 8 and 10 with her. She was a great help and moral support to a neophyte like me. We booked passage on the SS *Mauritania* in late September to Cherbourg, France; our husbands would meet us there. Before departure we needed immunization shots: typhoid -- typhus -- tetanus -- cholera -- bubonic plague -- yellow fever -- and smallpox. I was afraid all the shots would make the baby ill. Then I made a grave mistake -- I hired Lillian Perry as the children's nurse. I didn't think I should go to Romania with two babies and no help. Bucharest seemed such a forbidding place, with strange languages and people. Mother encouraged me to take Lillian and offered to pay for her. Lillian, a middle-aged spinster, had taken care of Dr. Cleveland in his last years, and later Peter and Caroline Abel (Recently Bubbles told me they had both disliked her) -- more about Lillian later. During this period Mother was not much help -- she was unhappy to be losing her daughter. I was excited about my new adventures -- secretly happy to get away from my family in Washington -- I didn't even think to be sad at saying good-bye to my very old poodles, Milo and Cham. Mother drove us all to New York to board the *Mauritania* -- Polly, aged two, Francie, two months, and Lillian -- already an albatross around my neck. After sailing -- sure enough -- packages from Mrs. Gunther for Savel came to my cabin. I didn't want to check their contents. Ignorance is bliss. This saga will continue!

Family reunion

After almost five months separation, I was so happy to see Robert in Cherbourg! We took

the boat train to Paris; I had to nurse the baby on the train -- I was embarrassed, but Mother would have died if she had known -- how mores have changed! We stayed at the Hotel Crillon -- not too expensive then. Robert and Butch Leverich, had flown from Bucharest on our Air Attaché's plane. We were to take this plane to Bucharest -- train travel to Bucharest was difficult. Col. Bob Emmons, the pilot, had been on the famous Doolittle raid over Tokyo. He had bailed out over China, and with the help of the Chinese, he reached Russia and safety. We spent about ten days in Paris. The city was still recovering from the War, but it had not been bombed. Most buildings, although a little shabby, seemed the same as I remembered them. While business was slowly returning to normal, there were still many shortages. Tattie and her children came down with the usual intestinal upset. The doctor prescribed cooked rice -- told her she should have brought rice with her -- none could be found in Paris. At the time, the dollar went a long way -- while the French franc was officially 300 to the dollar, there was a better unofficial rate. The great restaurants were open and affordable -- but with limited selections. At one dinner, we had a bottle of pre-war Chateau Haut Brion Bordeaux wine, one of the great vineyards, for only a few dollars -- the waiter said they had hidden good wine from the Germans. I had to find slacks for Lillian and me to wear on the plane, an Air Force regulation. We found some ill-fitting khaki slacks at the Army PX. Lillian huffily said she had never worn pants in her life -- already she had become a problem. Perhaps I should have sent her home then.

On to Bucharest

Wearing my first slacks -- how fashions have changed! -- we drove to Le Bourget Airport for our flight. The Attaché plane was a two-propeller DC-3. The standard commercial model was in common use at home. Our plane was the military version, used in the Normandy invasion to drop paratroopers behind the German lines. The interior had no Air Force One luxury, but two rows of metal bucket seats facing each other -- of course, no food. It was the second airplane flight in my life and Lillian's first -- you can imagine how scared she was -- she complained all the way. But we both appreciated wearing pants when climbing in and out of the plane on its metal ladder. I was still nervous about nursing the baby in public. There was no rest room aboard -- the gentlemen could use a primitive funnel attached to a hose -- nothing for the females! We flew to Vienna, and spent the night at a US military base. The next day we flew across Hungary and on to Bucharest. We avoided flying over Yugoslavia -- we had no clearance, and might have been shot down.

We landed at the Bucharest airport -- a small, unpaved airfield at Baneasa, a village north of the city. A new life awaited me. When the Attaché plane touched down on that October day, I was astonished that we were surrounded by a large welcoming delegation! All were from the Legation -- all talking at once -- offering advice and invitations to lunch, tea, dinner, and so on. It was the first taste of life at a small isolated post -- where the greatest excitement was the arrival of someone new from the outside world. In the months to come I would often join the crowd of well wishers to say welcome or farewell. The airport was then very primitive -- the terminal building was just a shack -- the runway was grass.

Our new home

Our new Buick stood at the edge of the airfield. Beside it was our driver, Alexandru -- all smiles. It was only a short drive to our new home -- also in Baneasa -- on a hill above the main highway leading to Bucharest. We drove up the hill -- through wooden gates and stopped in the courtyard of our large Mediterranean-style house. It stood alone in its own grounds -- there were no other buildings nearby -- only a tiny Eastern Orthodox Church at the foot of our garden. At the door stood Maria, our cook. Smiling broadly, she welcomed us in the traditional way -- offering us bread and salt, an old Slavic/Oriental custom. Polly jumped out first -- then with Francie in my arms, I stepped out and took the bread and salt from Maria. Inside I found a large hall furnished with the typical heavy overstuffed Eastern European chairs and dark massive carved tables. A white marble staircase led to the upper floor. Near the front door was a smallish room -- lo and behold - - in it was the furniture from our Washington living room -- very strange -- it felt like a wacky dream. In the large dining room, the walls at each end were covered with mosaics of ancient Greek sailing vessels. The house had been built by a Greek shipping magnate. Our delicate English Hepplewhite chairs looked out of place around the long, narrow carved refectory table. The heavy leather chairs looked better -- but we would need all the chairs when we gave a large dinner.

The bedrooms were at the top of the marble stairs. The master bedroom was very large, with enormous round-arched windows overlooking the garden. At one side, doors opened onto a balcony. Our own twin beds seemed strangely out of place in an alcove. There was a small room for Francie's crib -- Polly would now have a grown-up bed -- children, alas, do grow up. Robert had done very well to arrange our meager possessions around the house. In the attic, he had had shelves made to hold our foodstuffs from America -- all this had to be under lock and key -- it would become my daily job to supply the cook with the necessary goods. Maria's kitchen was fairly primitive -- except for the lovely new GE refrigerator we'd imported. The stove was wood burning. It was kept in the cellar. In the morning Maria would fetch the wood and start the fire. It would take a while for enough heat to boil the water for coffee. At the center of the kitchen was a white marble-top table. On it every morning Maria rolled out dough for three loaves of bread. She baked these in an oven also heated by wood -- she would cover the loaves with newspaper to keep them from burning.

Our elegant staff

We had quite a staff -- it included Elise, a Hungarian, our general housekeeper and waitress -- Alexandru, our driver, an ethnic Hungarian from Transylvania -- Regina, his wife, the upstairs maid, an ethnic Saxon also from Transylvania. Regina spoke German. Maria, the cook was red-faced and hot-tempered -- pure Romanian. There was a laundress -- Romanian, I think -- Iacob, the gardener, was in charge of the very large garden with its 2500 rose bushes. He fed the turkeys, ducks, and the hen that provided the daily eggs for the children. There was also a special white turkey -- that story later -- and a cow. Elise was very experienced, and knew how to manage this mélange of ethnic

types. She also spoke French. This was crucial as we spoke no Romanian and certainly not Hungarian. Elise was able to settle the daily clashes -- yelled in languages that I fortunately didn't understand. She was Chief of Staff, household arbiter, and referee. Nearly the first Romanian word I learned was *razboi* (Turkish for "war") -- *razbois* there were, small and large, oral and sometimes physical (more later). This ethnic antipathy prepared us for our later exposure in Belgrade to Serbs, Croats, Bosnians, and Albanians! The total wage bill for all these warring characters was less than \$100 a month. My serious immediate problem was Lillian -- she was nothing but disaster. Only the laundress and Jacob were no trouble -- we just smiled at each other.

A new life

This was to be the scene of a new life. The next fifteen months would be the most amazing and fascinating of our Foreign Service career. How inexperienced and naive we both were! First -- the cultural shock of Eastern Europe. We had never actually lived abroad -- had traveled only in civilized Western Europe. We had never experienced the aftermath of war, much less lived in a hostile country. We had much to learn.

Our very first night really impressed on us that we were in a new world. Our bedroom doors onto our balcony were open. Before dawn, at about three a.m., we were awakened by strange noises from the street below. Out there was much snorting and stamping of hooves and bursts of laughter. I went to the balcony. Looking down, I could just make out in the dark a line of open carts -- each hitched to a small horse. A lighted lantern hung on each wagon. The carts were loaded with produce for the markets. As we lived on the main road into town, this was a convenient resting place for the peasants to gather, to exchange gossip, and have a snack along with a swig of *tsuica* before heading into the city. This would be the scene early every morning. On cool mornings a small fire was often built in the gutter. At dawn, each peasant would take a quick pee against our hill -- turn out the lamp -- climb on his cart -- cluck to his horse and walk down the road single file to town. Afternoons, the carts, now empty, would head out of the city for their villages, the little horses trotting fast.

Family life evolved into a kind of routine. I was still nursing Francie -- that took a lot of time. Lillian cared mainly for Polly. The rose bushes in our large garden bloomed until the first snow in December. Most of our time was spent in the garden. Francie began to sit up in a big British pram loaned by our Romanian friend Mme. Nacescu (more about her later). Polly rode around on her new tricycle. A nursery school, as Lillian had planned, didn't work out -- there were no other small children around. There was no school for older children. The four school-age children at our mission were taught by the Calvert correspondence system -- fairly satisfactory. Our Western European colleagues sent their children home to school.

For me, the first order of the day was to improve my communication skills. I took French and Romanian lessons as did Robert at the office. As mentioned, Romanian is a Romance language -- the vocabulary is easy, except for a smattering of Turkish words. The difficulty was the grammar -- nouns were masculine, feminine, or neuter and declined

rather like Latin. Simple words for house -- *casa* -- could have ten different endings according to its usage. Not being a linguist like Mimi, I found the grammar difficult -- but the vocabulary was fun. The word for "finished" or "done" I learned early on -- *gata*. This later became the key word in the story of the gypsy and our white turkey. As I already knew a little French, this helped me talk with Elise.

After taking Robert to work in the morning, Alexandru would return for me -- but there was no place to go! While there had been little bombing of Bucharest, the city was in a terrible state of disrepair -- frightful poverty was visible everywhere. Shopping was hopeless -- nothing in the wretched stores. I tried the only hairdresser -- every other month she would take three days off for an abortion -- probably without anesthetic -- it was not used in childbirth. She was using up all my shampoo; I decided I'd better do my own hair. Alexandru drove Maria to do the marketing for fresh food and other items not on our shelves. She probably charged me four times what she paid -- that was normal in Romania -- no way I could check the prices. Everything was so cheap it didn't matter -- imagine -- caviar was so inexpensive we ate it by the tablespoon!

Romanian society

Before the King abdicated on New Year's Day 1948, and the Iron Curtain descended, we met quite a few Romanians -- mostly well-to-do families of the old regime. They entertained us in style. Of course they spoke in

French or English -- never Romanian. They seemed personally very attractive, but not entirely to be trusted. We never got beyond superficial, pleasant communication. Goodness knows what their real thoughts were. They were survivors of centuries of Balkan history. They had learned to accommodate to whatever power occupied Romania. They had to live by their wits -- practicing *shmekerei* -- the Yiddish word used for manipulative, devious, and opportunistic methods to get what they wanted -- in short, bribery of all sorts.

To give them credit, they had lived through the War -- German, and now, Soviet occupation! They had endured a lot. By being agreeable they hoped to gain our favor and perhaps help. A good deal of skullduggery and intrigue was going on. Some wanted cigarettes or nylon stockings to sell on the black market -- these items had more value as currency than the worthless local money, the *leu*. Major deals to transfer money out of the country went on. An Argentine diplomat -- himself rather a *shmeker* -- carried out gold bars in the trunk of his car! How much did he keep for himself? We knew of several cases where women married in order to gain a passport. A Romanian friend asked us to pack her family silver among our effects when we were packing up to leave. We had to refuse -- we've always felt unhappy about it -- we knew the Romanians had an inventory of our goods and wanted a chance to trap us. Perhaps one of our staff would have noticed the additional silver and reported it to the secret police. Perhaps a little *baksheesh* (bribe) might have done the trick. *Baksheesh* was part of the system -- nothing happened without it. We heard stories of what -- with an appropriate bribe -- might be stowed in a departing lift van. We even heard of one plan where a woman would hide in the lift van!

During the early months, I called on several Romanian ladies. I was served thick sweet Turkish coffee in tiny cups. It was good, but I had to remember to be careful not to drink to the bottom -- it was covered by a half inch of bitter coffee sludge. Served with the coffee would be a small plate with a dab of rose petal jam -- eaten with a tiny spoon. It tasted like the smell of roses. A man would probably be offered a small cup of *tsuica*, the strong plum brandy.

At one black-tie dinner given by a leading Romanian family, I made the mistake of saying I played bridge. I learned an old diplomatic lesson the hard way -- never admit playing bridge until you understood the situation. I found I had to play in French using Swedish cards. I couldn't tell the King from the Jack, since both showed a K (for Knave or King) on the card. My partner, the Romanian host, was quite nice about it and suggested we play in English, but our American Minister also in the game, said, "certainly not!!"

After the Iron Curtain fell, we never saw any of these people again. We sometimes wondered what had happened to them. Many possibly bought their way out of the country by giving up their property. The rich families always had money in Swiss bank accounts. Others escaped clandestinely -- called "going black" -- always at night over the border, first into Hungary and then to freedom in Austria. Land mines and sentry towers were installed to guard the borders of all the Iron Curtain countries. Most refugees left with just the clothes on their backs -- many didn't make it. The large Jewish population of Romania had fared almost as badly during the War as the other Jews in Europe. Along with many gypsies they were sent to concentration camps. Those left behind went prison for years if they didn't support the Communist government or failed to report a dissident. Most political prisoners were from the educated class. We knew two sisters -- Jewish -- who ran the library of the British Council -- like our USIA. They were arrested and sentenced to twenty years at a woman's penitentiary on charges of spying on the state. One of the sisters, Annie Samuelli, now living in Paris, recently wrote a book of the horrors of her prison life.

We had no social relationships with members of the Soviet or Romanian governments. We were considered the enemy. For them, contact with us would be dangerous -- risking accusations by their own colleagues of spying or other heinous acts! A normal function of the diplomatic corps had always been to call on the wives of diplomatic colleagues and of local government officials. However, when Tattie Leverich and I left cards on the wife of the new Soviet ambassador -- instead of being welcomed with Russian hospitality, it caused a minor diplomatic flap. The Legation received a phone call asking for the meaning of this activity. The new Romanian Foreign Minister, Anna Pauker, a lady with good Communist credentials -- straight from living in Moscow -- rode around in a black Czech-made Skoda with its shades pulled down. I don't think our Minister was ever able to see her on business.

The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps was the Swedish Minister. After I called on his wife, there was a completely different reaction. We soon were invited to a very posh black-tie

dinner for eighteen. Around the enormous dinner table stood about ten footmen in livery - knee britches, ruffled shirts, striped vests, and white gloves. (No white wigs!) Between every course -- there were many -- each footman stood with bottle in hand, poised to pour schnapps into any empty glass. The Swedish Minister stood up with his glass and "skoaled" each guest in turn around the table -- you were expected to empty your glass in one gulp -- it was then filled immediately. The Minister, de Reutersward, a Swedish noble, took his diplomatic duties as Dean very seriously. For us it was the first and also about the last time we experienced the grand life-style of an old-time diplomat. It was a startling contrast!

Savel Radulescu "Dear soul"

A Romanian family -- the Nacescus -- maintained contact with us at great personal risk. They were friends of Mrs. Gunther -- the greatest *shmecker* of all -- and were intermediaries for Savel Radulescu -- Mrs. Gunther's old boyfriend. At first they entertained us royally with a five-course dinner including caviar and homemade pâté de foie gras. They gave us presents -- the usual Romanian embroidery, the British pram for Francie, and Savel's ice cream freezer. Mme Nacescu said, "He, Dear Soul, isn't up to entertaining any more." The packages Mrs. Gunther had sent to Robert on the *America* were mostly nylon stockings, probably to be sold on the black market. There were certainly other things slipped in among the stockings! The Nacescus did not risk coming to our house. Alexandu delivered packages to them. We didn't know if he reported this to the police -- Maria, our cook, certainly would have. It turned out we weren't the only people used by Mrs. Gunther. Another officer, Bob Creel, also new to the Foreign Service, was trapped as well. He brought a sack of tulip bulbs for Savel's garden! "The Dear Man loves flowers -- the war has damaged his garden." We later concluded that something else must have been hidden in the bulbs. After the items we brought were delivered to Mrs. Nacescu, we expected that would be the end of the matter. But that was not to be!

The Legation never used the Romanian postal system -- it was inefficient and corrupt -- certainly used by the Security Service, the *Sigurança*. Legation mail was sent via diplomatic pouch. Couriers brought the pouches from Vienna on the Orient Express to Bucharest and returned to Vienna with the outgoing mail; from there, it moved by US military planes. There was no commercial air service. Mail service was very slow -- transit to or from Washington took a week to ten days. Packages from the States also came by pouch. The arrival of mail was an important event in our lives. We were so isolated that the pouch was really our sole contact with the outside world. When Alexandru drove to the house with packages, we were delighted. Mother was always sending us things. But, we soon realized that many of the packages addressed to us were to be passed on to Mme. Nacescu. At first we thought this was harmless. One day we opened a letter from Mrs. Gunther to Savel in which she mentioned in a roundabout way some white powder. This confirmed our suspicions that Savel was on drugs. If the State Department heard of this, we would be in serious trouble -- we might be considered diplomatic drug-lords! Had drugs been inserted into the tulip bulbs? How ingenious! Or slipped into the other gifts? We remembered that a Romanian woman doctor, Dr.

Popovic, lived with Mrs. Gunther in Washington. We speculated that with typical Romanian intrigue, she might have acquired the drugs to be passed on to Savel. We felt this was serious. We suspended handing over these packages -- they piled up at the Legation. When Mrs. Gunther was notified, she evidently hit the roof -- she felt she had every right to use the diplomatic pouch. Her last ploy was to have her sister, wife of the American Ambassador to Canada, send packages by pouch from Ottawa to Bucharest. We still declined to pass them on. Her final effort was to call on the Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, stating that she had the right to use the diplomatic pouch. He turned her down. After the King's abdication, Savel was arrested and jailed. The King had tried to bring Savel with him into exile -- the Communists would not let him go! He died in prison several years later. He was a charismatic white-haired gentleman of the old school -- he probably deserved a better fate. Perhaps the drugs might have eased his last days. I always felt Mrs. Nacescu was also in love with Savel. We never learned what happened to the Nacescus. They had a lovely teenage daughter, Nadia. I hope she has had a happy life somewhere, but not if she had had to stay in Romania. The packages were sent back to Mrs. Gunther -- our contact with the Nacescus ceased -- we were no longer of use.

Even before the King left, we all felt we were living in limbo. It was clear that Romania was fast developing into a Soviet-style police state. Being Romanian, it was probably pretty inefficient -- but we couldn't be sure. We could tell that our telephones were tapped -- for years afterward I felt it stressful to talk on the phone. We knew our servants had to report our movements to the *Sigurança*. Of special interest, would be any visitor to our house. We believed Alexandru was expected to report every place we went -- whom we picked up -- and any conversation overheard. The CIA officer in the Legation must have had an interesting time meeting his "assets". One couple we knew rather well never came to the house. They were of titled Austrian descent. Niki had gone to Rollins College. He represented IBM in Romania. Niki's family had owned property in the Banat -- originally part of Austria-Hungary -- he claimed Austrian citizenship but was considered Romanian by the Romanian Government. Some people thought he worked for the *Sigurança*. He was probably forced to, so to save his skin. He did work for IBM that during the War was actually a German subsidiary. Most thought of him as an enemy alien! Robert met him at the office on IBM's problems. We saw him and his wife, Lisl, occasionally. We would pick them up in the car, Robert driving, and drive around. Lisl said they were afraid to have children -- they were afraid of the future -- they were refused exit visas. Later Niki was arrested and spent nine years at hard labor digging the Danube Canal near the Black Sea. When he was arrested Lisl was pregnant. For those nine years she and her child lived with another family in two rooms. Finally IBM was able -- probably with a handsome bribe -- to have Niki released and to have his Austrian citizenship recognized. He was permitted to leave the country. He went back to work for IBM in New York, and later in Brussels. It was their silver we had refused to pack in our lift van. Perhaps we should have. We have kept up with each other over the years. Lisl died some years ago -- Niki remarried but is again a widower. Their daughter has a successful art business in New York.

Most of the houses of diplomats were bugged -- microphones could be placed over the beds, in chandeliers over dining room tables, or elsewhere. That could work both ways --

“disinformation” could be passed on. The Bucharest diplomatic colony was a rumor mill. We generally would gather for drinks at someone’s house and exchange the latest stories. We got some world news from the short-wave radio. Our isolation created bonds among our diplomatic colleagues we did not experience at any other post. The Foreign Service friends made in Bucharest, including many British, remained close over the years. After fifty years, not many of us are still alive. Coy Hill is one of the last few -- only with her can I still talk about the gypsies, leeches, and *kaçulas* (fur hats).

Rudolf Schoenfeld for tea

Rudolf Schoenfeld, the American Minister, was a strange character -- bachelor, martinet, perfectionist, quasi-intellectual, social snob -- a kind of “old woman”. He was a vanishing breed of Foreign Service Officer. Personally, he was rather slight -- thus he was referred to among the Legation staff as the “Little Man.” He felt himself a teacher whose chief objective was to mold perfect diplomats. Robert had told me of the problems he had at the office -- the drafting of cables -- the writing and rewriting that often took three days before the Minister was satisfied! This did help Robert become an excellent drafter and editor -- he loves to correct my writing! However, Robert sometimes came home upset because of an unpleasant argument with the Little Man. The latter had a strange sense of humor of which I became a victim. One day, after lunch, Robert had returned to the office and I had gone upstairs to nurse the baby. There was a knock on the bedroom door. Maria, the cook, said the American Minister was downstairs and wished to see me. I was thunderstruck -- it was only 2.30 in the afternoon -- why would he come all the way out to Baneasa to see me? I could only think of one reason. Robert must have had a bad argument with him -- the Minister had come to tell me he didn’t think Robert was Foreign Service material -- he was going to ask for his recall! I frantically dumped poor Francie into her crib -- she started to cry -- I threw on a dress, and descended the marble stairs. I greeted the Minister with a smile, escorted him into our small living room and offered him Robert's easy chair. Then I remembered he liked tea. Would he like some tea? I rang the bell. Elise happened to be off -- Maria appeared in a dirty apron. I knew the Romanian word for tea -- *chai* -- she got the message. Very nervous, I tried to make small talk -- waiting for the bomb to explode. Tea took forever to come. It arrived. The teapot was filled with hot water -- the cream pitcher was full of tealeaves carefully removed from about five tea bags. Instead of the nice little pastries Maria could make, was a plate of the children’s graham crackers. I felt this proved I hadn’t trained the help. Then the sun broke out on this dreadful afternoon that had started in such a disastrous fashion! I remembered a story the Minister had told at luncheon back in Washington when I had first met him. John Hill had asked Mr. Schoenfeld what Foreign Service Officer in his career had most impressed him. He said that person was a Mr. Morgan, his boss and mentor on his first post, back in the twenties. Among Morgan’s many stellar qualities was one Mr. Schoenfeld admired and continued to follow. Morgan, a Consul General, thought it very revealing to call on wives unannounced, and see how they reacted! I relaxed -- walked the Minister into the garden, picked a rose, and put it into his buttonhole! I had passed my first Foreign Service test!

Marshal Tito

As winter came and the first snow fell, political tensions seemed to grow as the weeks went by. One of the first large Communist-organized demonstrations occurred on December 15th, when Marshal Tito, dictator of Yugoslavia, came on a state visit. Just beyond our garden was the small former Royal railway station where special trains arrived with VIPs. There, visiting Communist dignitaries were welcomed. The station was bedecked with Romanian and Yugoslav flags. Several hours earlier before Tito's arrival, buses and trucks began to arrive early in the morning -- they were filled with peasants from the outlying regions. They parked beside the road below our house. Hundreds of men and women carrying flags assembled and stood around waiting as the snow fell. We watched from our windows. After lunch when I was about to nurse Francie, my bedroom door burst open, and in stomped a *Sigurança* agent in a black leather coat. He carried a rifle with bayonet and yelled at me in Romanian -- of course I couldn't understand him. He stationed himself at my window overlooking our garden. It was rather frightening. I rushed to the phone and called Robert SOS! The servants were scared -- they had disappeared. I knew help was coming when I heard the continual honking of our car, as it made its way through the waiting mob -- Robert had come to the rescue. Our diplomatic license plates had helped his progress. My door was again flung open -- in strode a *Boyar* -- Romanian nobleman -- wearing my father's big old fur-lined coat and a black *kaçula*. He shouted English at the agent, taking him by surprise. Robert just took him by the scruff of the neck and dropped him outside the door -- both he and his rifle clattered to the floor. Robert was either brave or foolhardy -- he said he was so angry he didn't think. Fortunately, the man picked himself up along with his rifle and ran down the marble steps and out the front door. Suddenly, the crowds outside began to sing and wave Yugoslav flags. A band struck up the *Internationale*. I still rather like that tune -- it brings back my youth when I hear it. The Great Tito had arrived in the first snowstorm of the year! The Legation made a strong protest to the Foreign Office -- it apologized the next day for the intrusion, saying that at stake was the security of an honored guest, and that from the bedroom window there was a good view of the station. That first snowstorm covered the shabbiness of Bucharest, but also killed the last blooms of the rose bushes in our garden.

Christmas 1947

Christmas seemed strange. We had plenty of presents from America for the children, but nothing was to be found locally except a toy wooden Romanian village with typical peasant houses and Eastern Orthodox Church. Most of it was lost over the years of Foreign Service travel. Lillian got what she had asked for -- a pair of binoculars traded for two cartons of cigarettes. We couldn't figure out why she wanted these -- we later found out her secret pleasures! The servants received items from the Sears Roebuck catalogue -- they were thrilled with the new clothes they had chosen. Maria had ordered an umbrella -- she couldn't wait for rain! Maybe we would have loved all the catalogues that now daily clog our mail! Our Christmas tree was pretty puny -- we had only a few wartime ornaments. For Christmas dinner we were glad to have several single staff members from the Legation -- we knew they were feeling rather lonely.

The big social event of the season was the Turkish Ambassador's New Year's Eve ball. I wore a new black lace evening dress -- I thought it was pretty sexy -- I was still only twenty-eight years old. The Turkish Ambassador, Pasha Tugay, was an interesting person, a member of the old Ottoman nobility. His wife was the sister of Farouk, the last Egyptian King. We never met her -- she wouldn't come to Bucharest. The Turkish Embassy Residence was one of the grandest houses in Bucharest. It even had a ballroom. However the gala evening was rather spoiled by a sad event. It was the day after King Michael, with his family, was given forty-eight hours to leave the country. This had been expected any day, but it was a great shock when it came. He left from the Royal railway station near our house. As Michael was Queen Victoria's great-grandson, the British Legation went into a period of official "mourning" for a month -- its staff would not attend any party.

The King's abdication was just another sign that the cold war had arrived and we were behind the Iron Curtain. The Government took over the radio and the newspapers. Communist propaganda filled the airwaves. Soviet troops were billeted throughout the country. Travel restrictions were put into affect. Diplomats were permitted to travel only fifteen miles beyond Bucharest. Fortunately, that was the distance to Snagov, a village on a small lake where many had villas for recreational purposes. But at Sinaia and Predeal in the Carpathian Mountains -- a three-hour drive north -- some also had villas. Permission from the government had to be obtained to go there -- that was always a hassle -- it might take days to get a pass to travel that far -- just an example of the harassments we had to put up with.

Winter activities

There was much snow our first winter -- it kept most of us indoors. There were no theaters -- the restaurants were bad -- travel was difficult -- we had to entertain ourselves. There were many parties each night. These ranged from small dinners to big bashes. Help and food were cheap. At many buffet dinners there were large bowls of fresh caviar from the Danube delta -- we ate it with gusto. There would be platters of sliced filet mignon -- sometimes a huge cooked sturgeon -- its flat snout sticking out beyond the platter -- bowls of Russian salad -- containing assorted vegetables, mostly beets, with pieces of beef and mayonnaise. Bread, pastries, and ice cream were home made. Strong Turkish coffee in small cups followed, along with *tsuica*. As some of the large houses had ballrooms -- there was dancing -- either to 78 rpms phonograph records or sometimes a combo of musicians in native costumes. Evenings were never complete without dancing the Hora -- we all held hands and circled the room using intricate steps. I can still hum the tantalizing gypsy tunes. Although we were still fairly young, we always left the party to even younger people to dance into the wee hours -- what went on later provided gossip for the next day.

The Americans were a large group -- about twelve Foreign Service Officers -- but only six wives -- plus administrative staff and military attachés. The British Legation was about the same size. Several of our British friends are still alive as we write. We have met

with Ruth and Francis Bennett in London, Washington, Barbados, and Charleston. Our favorites among other diplomats were the Dutch, Turks, and Swedes. One evening at a party there was a new face, a most beautiful young Thai lady, Connie Halusa, wife of the newly arrived Austrian Chargé. She was a member of Thai peerage -- her father was a Scot in the teakwood business in northern Thailand where he had met her mother. We became close friends over the years -- Arno Halusa was later Austrian Ambassador in Bangkok and Washington.

Local produce

As we had brought so much food from the United States, it was rather annoying to find we could eat quite well off the land. Maria found fresh vegetables in the market. Fresh fruit -- apples, plums, and cherries -- never bananas, oranges, or lemons. For meat, we subsisted on calves and pigs -- these were brought to the courtyard of the Legation and slaughtered. Robert found the spectacle of the animals being killed extremely unpleasant. Gypsies did the slaughtering -- they always did such unattractive menial jobs. This revolting event usually took place in the morning. Alexandru would select hunks of meat dripping blood and pile it into the trunk of the car to bring back for Maria. We never could tell what part of the animal we were getting. Maria would just hack off a hunk and broil it. No part of the animal went unused -- I remember Maria cleaning out the pig's intestines -- rather messy and disgusting -- these she stuffed and tied off into sausages. Next she stuffed the stomach with various revolting things. This she placed on the marble-top table and weighed it down with heavy rocks. We did deign to eat the sausages. She probably put the pig's tail in the soup. As we sometimes had a whole animal, Maria would start at either end and, over the days, work her way to the other. The *pièces de résistance* were traditionally kept for the "Master of the House." The eyes and testicles were sautéed and served on toast -- Robert never had the courage to eat these delicacies -- I'm sure the servants thought less of him -- I was glad to be the lowly lady who never was offered these delicacies.

Sometimes a nice little black lamb with white markings was led up our hill and slaughtered and skinned by Alexandru in our courtyard. I never let the children see this barbarous act. The dead animal would completely fill our refrigerator, and we would eat lamb for the next week -- then, back to pork for seven days. The *muşk* -- filet -- came from the Legation slaughtering. Chickens -- Maria bought them alive at the market. She felt it wasn't her job to kill them. A gypsy encampment was nearby -- she would pay a gypsy to cut off the chicken's head. Before finally dropping, the body would rush around the kitchen leaving a trail of blood. Savel Radulescu's hand-cranked ice cream freezer gave us ice cream by the gallon. With her primitive oven, Maria managed to make the marvelous cakes and pastries that a Viennese pastry chef would have approved.

In early 1948 the Romanian government agreed to permit the Legation to import food in bulk. Each family submitted a list of desired items. The lists were combined for a total order. This system had its complications -- on an order for five hundred pounds of sugar, an extra zero was added in error -- five thousand pounds were received! One family requested pickled pigs' feet. Our little Legation commissary ended up with five-dozen

bottles of pickled pigs' feet. Robert had the brilliant idea to order oranges from Turkey. Most froze en route. The few remaining gave each family two oranges -- costing five dollars apiece -- the idea was abandoned.

Gypsies

Gypsies were very much part of the local scene. We had always heard of gypsy music and gypsy fortune-tellers, so we were on the lookout for them. The English word *gypsy* is derived from *Egypt* -- but gypsies did not originate there. The gypsies are unique in many respects -- they are a nomadic people claiming no nationality -- found on every continent -- mostly in Europe -- especially Eastern Europe. It is now believed they originated in India, and in the tenth century began their migration westward through Persia to Africa and Europe. They speak a language called *Romany* -- partially derived from Sanskrit. Their vocabulary reflects their wanderings -- it includes words from Persia, Greece, Romania, and other countries. There is no writing in *Romany*, but there is a rich oral tradition. One reason given for its survival is its use as an argot or secret language -- this adds to the gypsies' reputation for being devious and suspicious. They maintain their own culture and live by their own laws. They used to travel in horse-drawn caravans -- now often minibuses. Owing to their wandering, unsettled and self-contained life, they have become convenient scapegoats and pariahs to settled peoples -- often being accused of antisocial activities. They are rather like the untouchables of India. They work sporadically in circuses and fairs as entertainers, fortune-tellers, and musicians. They also are willing to work at menial jobs disliked by others, such as undertaking. The Romanian peasants disliked and distrusted them. Hitler considered them scum -- in World War II the Nazis are said to have exterminated some four hundred thousand gypsies. Recently in all parts of the former Yugoslavia, some have been mistreated or killed.

We saw many gypsies as our house was near a gypsy encampment. Our trash was a source of income for them; it was heaped in a field beyond our fence. Often a gypsy woman came up our hill and scavenged through the mess -- she made a bundle of her treasures, and looking like Santa Claus with her pack on her back, trudged back down our hill. Her favorite prizes were empty tin cans. These were often flattened and used to make a roof of their shack. The tin cans were also a source of material for a well-known gypsy trade -- repairing pots and pans. Once when I was in the garden, I looked up and saw a gypsy with a dancing bear. He prodded it with a long pointed stick to make it stand up and turn around and "dance." It must have been a female -- there was a cute cub that tried to climb our fence.

Here comes my tale about our white turkey and the gypsy: Maria, thinking about a future dinner party, brought home from the market a large white live turkey. When Alexandru stopped the car in our courtyard, she had a hard time getting the frightened bird out of it. Francie, sitting in her English pram, watched this with great interest. Suddenly the poor turkey went into a paroxysm of gobbling -- Francie was terrified and began screaming. We have the picture. The beautiful bird became our pet -- Iacob fed him every day -- he strutted around thinking he was a peacock. Our neighborhood gypsy soon noticed the handsome bird. One afternoon I saw my gypsy walking up our hill with a little girl. She

was dragging by a string a lovely turkey hen! It took a few minutes to figure out what was going on -- but it took my poor innocent turkey much longer. The child held down her hen and spread apart its back feathers -- the gypsy picked up my turkey and plunked him on top of the hen. Frantic gobbling emanated from both birds -- white feathers flew. The poor guy didn't know how to perform! He would scramble off the hen -- he didn't run away -- he was game to try again. This performance was repeated many times. Each time the child would put her head down in the dirt and look up under the turkey's tail. By this time I had learned a small Romanian vocabulary. One word I found very useful -- the word for "finished" or "done" -- *gata*. After the fifth attempt, the child yelled -- *gata!* The gypsy broke into a smile, yanked on the string, and the three strutted proudly down our hill, leaving our poor turkey a wiser bird, but not sure just what he'd done!

Lillian

Lillian turned out to be a real disaster. There was no one she could talk to -- nothing for her to do outside the house -- nowhere for her to go -- she had nothing in common with the other members of the English-speaking community. She couldn't relate to the servants -- their squabbles in three foreign languages unnerved her. But we did discover why she wanted binoculars. Two events seemed to fascinate her -- funerals and demonstrations. Funerals for the local people were frequently held in the lovely small Eastern Orthodox Church beyond our garden. The funeral procession always passed our house on its way to the church. First would come someone holding up a cross -- then men carrying the coffin lid -- next came the open coffin exposing the grayish corpse -- finally were the mourners -- all in black. Lillian seemed to have a fixation on corpses. She would stand out on her balcony and carefully follow the open coffin with her binoculars! Demonstrations appeared to give her even more of a thrill. I have described the way peasants would be brought in from the outlying districts for an event. They would assemble below our house. Knowing they had many hours to pass ahead of them -- what does a man do confronting a hillside? Why, *pee!!* Few people, including me, have seen a hundred men pee at the same time. Lillian was ecstatic out on her balcony -- binoculars in hand. The women just opened their legs under their long skirts -- not as interesting!

Somehow we had to get Lillian back to the States -- there were no easy solutions. She could never have handled by herself a three-day train trip across Europe -- then the boat trip to the United States. We decided to put her on a freighter from Constanța to New York -- a month's trip. When we eventually heard from her, her letter was furious -- she was sure she was going to be raped by the crew -- she had used her trunk to block her cabin door! She was well over sixty -- poor Lillian -- but what a relief she was gone!

Mrs. Strasser

To replace Lillian we had the great good luck to find Mrs. Strasser -- Austrian widow of a Romanian husband. He had been captured in the War by the Russians and died in prison. Mrs. Strasser had applied for an exit visa to return to her home in Austria -- at that time such visas were almost impossible to obtain. She had been the children's nurse for Roy and Virginia Melbourne at the Legation; when they left, she was very pleased to come to

us. The servants were rather afraid of her. Although she spoke good English, she preferred to speak in German with the children. She was very strict but also affectionate with them. Unlike Lillian, she didn't force Polly to eat -- the happy result was that Polly began to enjoy her food. She weaned Francie from diapers at 18 months. She did have a few rather strange ideas. Francie seemed to have very bad breath. I found out that Mrs. Strasser fed her garlic to kill the worms -- What worms? She often walked to our little village for a beer, taking the children with her. Polly developed a taste of beer. Polly was three years old by then -- she still enjoys beer.

We decided it was about time to reduce some of the household conflict. It seems that Regina, Alexandru's wife, hit Maria over the head with a broom -- Maria was too valuable -- a great cook -- Regina had to go. We found another Transylvanian woman to replace her, who had worked at the Swedish Legation. That helped only a bit -- she, too, soon learned how to wield the mop in a threatening way. As long as it made no contact with a head, some peace reigned. Maria always had a very red face -- I never knew whether it was from her terrible temper or the hot stove. However, there was one way to put Maria into a good frame of mind. When we had a dinner party, we always hired extra men to wait on table. One man in particular came regularly -- spent the night with Maria and in the morning she would be full of smiles.

Medical problems

There was no American Legation doctor -- the medical situation was rather scary -- it was a good idea not to get sick. The Legation did have supplies of medical items unavailable in Bucharest. I was given charge of them. At one point we had four cans of ether, enough penicillin for two illnesses, and the serums for booster shots. These had been supplied by the military in Vienna -- but all carried expired dates. Our own first medical problem came soon after I arrived with the children. Polly suddenly developed a temperature of 105°. No local doctor would come to the house -- I was very happy that a US military doctor was passing through. He saw Polly and diagnosed her illness as probably spinal meningitis -- she should receive penicillin. I brought home one of the two bottles of the drug and locked it in the refrigerator. Antibiotics were just becoming known in Romania -- were worth more than their weight in gold. We needed someone to give the shots. Alexandru found a student nurse willing to stay in our house. The shots had to be given every four hours, night and day, for five days -- each time I gave the girl the proper amount -- she would jab the needle into Polly -- who would let out a blood-curdling scream. Once, the needle broke off, and it took tweezers to dig it out. Between shots the nurse knitted a lovely pair of white lace stockings. Polly's temperature stayed at 105° -- I was a zombie from lack of sleep. With no doctor -- it was very scary. Lillian didn't know what to do, except give her cold baths. After five days, the penicillin didn't seem to have worked -- the girl had finished her lacy white stockings. Alexandru took her back to the hospital. That night the fever suddenly broke. Over the next two weeks Polly's temperature would rise to 100° every afternoon. Good old Dr. Spock saved my sanity -- I had read in his bible that after a child has run a high fever, often he will run a low fever for several weeks. Advice, throw away the thermometer!

The only doctor willing to attend diplomats was an obstetrician, Dr. Abramovici; he spoke French. I became his patient once -- I had a miscarriage and started to hemorrhage. At nine o'clock at night Alexandru fetched the doctor. "*Madame, Il vous faut un lavage,*" -- a curettage. "I suppose you Americans have an anesthetic for child birth -- that's not done here." That scared me. He took me to a dismal hospital. My arms were tied down and indeed I had no anesthetic -- I'll omit the gory details. On the way home in the car, I sat with Dr. Abramovici on the back seat. He put his arm around me and drew me close. I was still wearing my rather bloody nightgown and bathrobe. I'll never know whether he made the move from compassion or testosterone! Today it could be called harassment -- perhaps it was Romanian courtesy. I was not in any state to resist. Anyhow I was shivering with cold -- his arms were warm -- I was probably in shock. I remember I wanted to laugh about my predicament.

Some horror stories were always floating around -- we thrived on them. Our remaining bottle of penicillin was sent to the British for a sick woman -- somehow on the way sterile water was substituted -- the penicillin had been sold on the black market -- the patient survived. A British wife had an emergency appendicitis -- she became conscious halfway through the operation. Another appendix operation was performed on the dining room table to avoid going to the terrible local hospital! The wife of one of our security guards had a Cesarean section. Coy and I visited her. The incision had burst open the previous day. When we came into her room, she giggled and said, "I have something to show you." She pulled down the sheet. Lo and behold -- there on her stomach were two black wriggling leeches sucking the excess blood from the wound! Explanation -- the incision would heal faster! Perhaps modern medicine might agree. Leeches are not on my list of favorite animals. The only doctor no one had complaints about was the dentist. He knew four words of English -- "Open your big mouth." When Robert developed a sty in his eye, he went to the ophthalmologist, who turned out to be a prestigious specialist. He refused to accept payment of his fee. He said he needed a new instrument. Robert ordered it from the U.S. and had it sent through the diplomatic pouch.

Spring 1948

Spring finally came -- our thousand rose bushes burst into bloom. We added a cow to our menagerie. She happily grazed away in the open field beyond our fence. We were a little concerned about a gypsy stealing her. Every day a peasant wearing a typical embroidered costume came to milk her. We had the milk tuberculin tested, but boiled it anyway. However, to be on the safe side we continued to give the children the powdered Klim. Jacob planted some *Country Gentleman* corn seeds Mother had sent. Corn is a staple of the peasant diet -- they eat a kind of cornmeal mush called *mamaliga*. They don't eat corn on the cob. Later in the summer, after the corn grew tall and the ears appeared, Maria was dumbfounded when I showed her how to cook it. It turned out to be the best corn we have ever eaten -- imagine, one minute from the stalk to the boiling water!

The Rome conference

In June came news that a State Department-led conference would be held in Rome to

discuss progress, or the lack of it, in U. S. relations with the Eastern European countries. Officers stationed in Iron Curtain countries -- Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia would attend. I was the only wife from Romania to go. Robert and I took an overnight train to Belgrade, Yugoslavia. It was a rather strange town -- it had the same problems as Bucharest! Belgrade was shabby and grim -- it had been bombed during the war -- not much was yet repaired. Somehow it seemed more Communist than Romania. For example, neckties were frowned on as too bourgeois.

The diplomatic corps -- as in Bucharest -- were kept to themselves -- but there wasn't quite such a feeling of isolation. Italy and Austria were on the northern boundaries and Greece was south. We certainly didn't expect we would live in Belgrade sixteen years later.

The Embassy Air Attaché's plane took us to Rome. The American Ambassador to Yugoslavia and his wife were also on board. She pressed me into playing bridge on the plane. I hadn't yet learned to just say "no." As a treat, our pilot flew low along the Dalmatian Coast. As I looked down on the beautiful mountains and islands of the Adriatic coastline in the setting sun, I was brought up short by, "Mrs. Cleveland, we are playing bridge! Pay attention!" She was a true battle-axe of the old school. I would eventually learn how to deal with such characters.

Even in 1948, Rome seemed a fairy tale world after Bucharest -- fashionable stores filled with luxury items -- restaurants with marvelous Italian food -- stylishly dressed women on the streets -- many cars honking in the traffic. The Embassy people did everything possible to give us a good time -- they felt so sorry for those of us from behind the Iron Curtain! We ladies did look like something the cat had dragged in -- with our out-of-style wartime skimpy short dresses, we stood out like sore thumbs! In Rome the "new look," introduced by the French designer Christian Dior had already taken over -- women wore full skirts down to the ankles. I bought yards of beautiful Italian silk to take back to Bucharest -- a dressmaker could make me a dress for about ten dollars. Our group had an audience with Pope Pius XII at the Vatican. I had a medal blessed for Harry Hickey. We met Sally and Stan Cleveland, Robert's third cousin, stationed in Bulgaria, for the first time. On my 28th birthday, June 23, 1948, there were startling news -- Tito of Yugoslavia broke with the Soviet Cominform. Although still a Communist, Tito would no longer take orders from the Soviets. He was a brilliant politician -- he ran Yugoslavia with great skill -- held it together until his death. He used Communist discipline to control the hatreds of centuries of religious and ethnic factions.

After our Roman fling -- Robert worked, I did the flinging -- we took some leave before returning to Bucharest. An old friend -- Brackley Shaw -- then General Counsel of the Air Force, flew us to Marseilles. From there we traveled by train on a circuitous route to Paris. Our first night was spent at a hotel in Carcassonne, inside the fortified ramparts of the medieval city -- on to Pau in the foothills of the Pyrenees -- Biarritz on the Atlantic -- Bordeaux to stay with my cousins George and Joy Wadleigh. Bordeaux was George's first post as Vice Consul. He and I were together at Harvard in the class of 1942. We had always been very close friends -- we shared the same Aunt Marg and Uncle John and

agreed how difficult they were. After service in the Navy during the war he had joined the Foreign Service. How could we guess that we would never see him alive again?

Finally, on to Paris. In only ten months, the city seemed enormously improved. We stayed at the Hotel George V -- fairly expensive then -- at today's prices our room would cost around \$1000 a day! The Sultan of Brunei now owns it. We bought a lot of stuff to take back to Bucharest for friends and ourselves -- including several bunches of bananas - - fruit we hadn't seen in a year. We were rather happy to board the Orient Express at the Gare de l'Est -- we were missing our children and our friends. We ate most of the bananas on the trip -- saved a few for the children -- Polly had forgotten what a banana was.

Summer 1948

The Bucharest Golf Club became an important part of our lives. It had been a private club; when the Communists took over, they seized it from its membership -- made it available only to the diplomatic community. If they intended to segregate us from the people of Bucharest, they were quite successful. Diplomats were in a place where we could be watched and reported on -- where would do less "espionage." The Club was near our house. Neither of us had played golf before -- we took daily lessons from the local pro -- Tomitsa -- he was an excellent teacher. As the Legation closed at two o'clock every day in summer, we spent much time there and ended up playing fairly well. Robert says I could have been very good if I'd kept it up. Everyone took golf lessons from Tomitsa. He had been a caddie at the Club before the War. As most caddies do, he taught himself to play. The prewar British members recognized his ability and sent him to England to train as the Club golf professional. For the next thirty years he taught golf to diplomats.

Snagov

We had planned to take a villa on Lake Snagov. The tiny resort area had a few simple summer cottages for rent. To get there, you left the main road and traveled several miles over a terrible dirt road -- the Sahara Desert could not produce more dust. On any dusty road today we think of Snagov. We found a nice villa, but were horrified at the servants' accommodations -- a row of tiny cement cells, not unlike a jail -- no windows -- only a door to the outside -- furniture consisted of a pallet of straw in the corner. A cold water faucet was outside -- no shower. The Romanian owner was very surprised that we found the help's quarters unsuitable. Without help, we couldn't bring the children. The Romanian upper classes treated servants rather like animals -- that certainly helped the Communist cause! Several childless friends did have villas -- most weekends we were invited to spend Sunday with them. Our standard picnic lunch included hunks of *mushk* (beef) -- grilled over an open fire -- and corn on the cob -- washed down by Pilsener beer imported from Czechoslovakia. We swam and played bridge. A croquet court was set up among the roots of a plum orchard on a slope going down to the water -- a rather a wild game. One Sunday, I found our first dog -- a St. Bernard puppy. I took him home for the children -- he was with us only a few weeks -- a friendly gypsy stole him. Later, we

acquired a family of generic mutts -- no gypsy wanted them. An attraction of Snagov was an island in the middle of the lake. There -- it was said -- Count Dracula was buried -- nonsense, of course -- he's still in Transylvania!

We didn't take the children on our dusty trips to Snagov -- they were pretty small -- our rose garden was a better place for them to play -- much cooler and cleaner. Francie was learning to walk -- she was a bright child -- but did have some trouble talking. No wonder -- around her she was hearing German -- Romanian -- Hungarian -- French -- English -- her first words were in German. They had a sand pile -- most toys were unobtainable -- but Polly was happy with empty tin cans and a watering pot -- she made sand castles that Francie would tear down. One German word I got to know was *smutzig* -- "dirty." The children ended up every day happily covered in mud. The white turkey continued to strut around along with several ducks and our one chicken that produced eggs for the children. In the meadow beyond our fence, five cows munched. One morning to our surprise, a cow produced a calf -- Polly was intrigued! Iacob tended the vegetable garden he had planted from seeds Mother sent me. With the 2500 rose bushes continuing to bloom, we could have gone into the perfume business. Bulgaria had the same climate as Romania. The growing of roses was an important industry. The attar of roses made from the petals is a main ingredient for perfume. Of course, rose petal jam was a local delicacy.

The Black Sea beaches were forbidden to diplomats -- they were reserved for the proletariat -- not only Romanian, but also those from other Iron Curtain countries -- the beaches were a workers' paradise -- groups went there by trainloads. However we did get the government's permission to spend weekends in Sinaia or Predeal -- in those places there were lovely chalet-type villas located in alpine fields high in the Carpathian Mountains. On our three-hour drives north, we saw quite a bit of the attractive Romanian countryside. The first hour, the road took us across the flat Danube plain -- passing through the bombed-out city of the Ploesti and its oil wells. We would often pass peasants on their little open wagons drawn by small horses; these were rather a menace to traffic, even though, in those days, only a few cars used this narrow main highway. Dirt roads led off the highway to peasant villages of one-story whitewashed houses -- each with its porch facing south. They were set in small plots, surrounded by hand-hewn wooden fences and hand-carved gates -- each had its own apple and plum trees. The latter were the source of *tsuica*, favorite drink of Romania. The peasants usually wore the Romanian native dress -- the men in wide white pants and tunic-length shirt held in by a wide belt -- on their heads a black fur *kaçula* or a little felt hat. The women's clothes, especially on Sundays or holidays, were more colorful. The blouses had beautiful hand-made embroidery on the shoulders and sleeves -- their long heavy brightly colored full skirts had an apron in front. The women wore long scarves on their heads. The material used then was hand loomed. By now everything is probably machine-made and worn as a tourist attraction. The regional dress of each area could be recognized by its style and the design of its embroidery.

As we drove north, the scenery changed -- mountains appeared ahead -- the road began to twist as it gained altitude. It was very pleasant to see pine trees and smell the fresh alpine air. Travel was permitted only to the towns of Sinaia -- site of the royal summer palace --

and Predeal. We were really disappointed not to see more of Romania -- Transylvania -- Hungarian country -- Bran Castle -- of Count Dracula fame, an hour from Predeal. We could not visit the greatest architectural attractions in all Romania -- the Painted Churches -- unique in the world of art. These were a long drive across the mountains to Bukovina, the northeastern province on the Russian border. High walls and monastery buildings surrounded these unique small churches -- whose interior and exterior walls were painted with frescoes of biblical scenes. Built in the 14th century, they reflected the spread northward of Orthodox Eastern (Byzantine) Christianity from Constantinople to Russia. About four of these churches remain -- nestled in the hills near the town of Suceava. We visit them twice -- about thirty years later. Happily, thanks to their cultural importance, they were brought under the protection of UNESCO -- otherwise the Communists might have destroyed them.

Last days in Bucharest

A very sad situation had developed. Our Deputy Chief of Mission's wife -- Tattie -- of whom I was very fond -- took their children back to the States for schooling. Her husband, Butch was left on his own. He was a brilliant officer with great charm -- he would have gone far -- but was an alcoholic and a womanizer. An affair began between him and the wife of a British Legation officer. She was rather exotic -- a Serb by birth -- a member of the former royal family. In our closed isolated community, this presented a real problem. His drinking was constant -- he could barely function at the office. Minister Schoenfeld -- bless his heart -- didn't want to wreck his career by transferring him home. We all wondered how to deal with this problem. Oddly, the Romanian government solved it for us -- probably in order to cause the United States trouble, it declared Butch -- out of the blue -- a "*persona non grata*" and gave him twenty-four hours to leave the country. He was sent to our military hospital in Germany. He finally went on the wagon, and had a few productive years in the State Department -- but died a few years later of a heart attack.

We welcomed the cool fall after the hot summer. Our lives had fallen pretty much into a routine -- I found plenty to do. A major interest was learning Romanian folk dancing. A group of us met every week. Our instructor was a professional dancer who had led an International Romanian Dance group before the war. He found some gypsy musicians to play folk music. Dances were either in a circle (the Hora) or straight line. Dancers held on to each other by tucking their fingers into the belt of the dancer next to them. There were many variations. The man on one end held a corner of a handkerchief that he twirled in time to the music. Only the men performed the very intricate steps. Their supposed purpose in the dance was to charm the women. Some of the music was very syncopated -- the steps fast and intricate, some music haunting and low. Much was in a minor key -- with very strong, twangy Oriental overtones, showing the heavy Turkish influence. Thirty years later -- visiting China -- we attended the performance of a Chinese ethnic minority dance and song group. The music suddenly hit me -- it was identical to some of the Romanian music -- showing how the Oriental influence had traveled westward over the centuries -- first to the Turks -- then to Eastern Europe.

Maria went into action to prepare for the coming winter and Christmas. From fresh tomatoes she made and bottled large quantities of tomato sauce -- far superior to Heinz's ketchup. Some fruits she made into jams and jellies; others she canned. Onions and garlic she strung and hung up on pegs. In the root cellar below was a bin of sand where she buried winter vegetables -- potatoes, carrots, turnips, and so on. She said she needed many dozens of eggs. Alexandru knew where to get them at a country estate about ten miles from town. Coy went with me. On the way we came upon a long caravan of gypsy covered wagons, each drawn by a scruffy looking horse. The wagons had once been gaily painted in brilliant colors -- now they were dirty and dilapidated. Their many children ran along beside the wagons. The men wore their hair long, and the women wore large full skirts. Alexandru didn't like them -- said they were dirty thieving people. We had some trouble passing them. The children chased the car, yelling at us in their strange language. I guess an American Buick was an oddity for them.

We arrived at what must have been the magnificent country estate belonging to an old Romanian *boyar* family. We went through big gates into the inner grounds -- they were ringed by beautiful buildings of typical Romanian style architecture -- whitewashed walls with dark carved woodwork -- large round arched windows -- many arcades and porches reached by steps from below. Now everything was shabby -- needing paint -- the grass was overgrown with weeds. Alexandru didn't know what became of the previous owners. The present occupant had many chickens -- was happy to sell us a large number of eggs. On the same road back we expected to see the gypsies again. They were nowhere to be seen -- where had that long caravan gone -- gypsies had mysterious ways. I had wondered why Maria wanted so many eggs -- it was for winter storage. She rubbed each egg with oil, wrapped it in newspaper, and buried it in the sand of the root cellar. We would not go hungry that winter!

Christmas was coming. We produced our first personal Christmas cards. I found old peasant costumes for each of us, including the upturned-toe leather sandals. We were photographed looking rather pleased with ourselves. On the card was printed *La Multi Ani, Triasca* -- literal translation -- To Many Years, Hail! -- *i.e.* -- Happy New Year! As I was writing the envelopes, Robert arrived home with startling news -- we were to be transferred to Paris immediately -- what a bombshell! I burst into tears -- my newfound happy world was shattered -- we had less than a month to pack up -- and had to leave before Christmas. The household was in an uproar. The servants wondered what would happen to their Christmas presents from the Sears catalogue -- after that -- what would their future be?

We had to dispose of things. Henrik Bos, the Dutch Chargé bought the Buick for \$5000, a 200% profit -- one of the perks of that period of car shortages. His American wife was very happy. I am reminded of the tale Henrik told us about wartime Chunking, China. He and Ambassador Tugay were stationed there. Tugay gave his Turkish National Day reception at a local hotel. Henrik, single at the time, came through the receiving line with a beautiful Chinese girl -- she had been standing at the entrance -- and had asked Henrik to escort her in. In doing so, Henrik made an unforgivable blunder! Tugay, of a noble Turkish family, was deeply offended -- evidently feeling his honor as a Turkish Pasha

was at stake. The glamorous lady on Henrik's arm was the mistress of the Mexican Military Attaché, to Tugay she was no better than a prostitute. It was a grievous insult to Turkey and to its Ambassador. The following morning, a Turkish Embassy staffer brought poor Henrik a challenge from Tugay to a duel -- with pistols! The affair was settled only after much negotiation and many explanations and apologies. But they both lived to meet again in Bucharest!

A few days before we left, a group of peasants in native costume came up our hill singing Christmas carols. They carried -- not crosses -- but large stars on poles. They were selling some wooden toy men carrying stars. I bought four, which go under our tree every Christmas. Alas, only three are left! Noël, our Dalmatian, when she was a puppy, chewed one up.

The Legation commissary took over our foodstuffs. Then we ate our livestock. Of our ducks, only the white one remained. It was force-fed. I remember Iacob -- the poor bird held between his knees -- forcing open its beak -- shoving handfuls of corn down its throat -- washing it down with *tsuica* to make it tender. One morning the poor duck got away and went waddled down the path, furiously quacking -- but with no noise coming out -- the corn had stuck in its windpipe -- it dropped dead at the bottom of the garden. The famous stud white turkey was marked for an important dinner. It had been given lots of *tsuica* and would make a very fine meal. We had it at one of our farewell dinner parties. When the bird, beautifully carved, was passed on a silver platter -- I couldn't take any -- I choked up and nearly wept! Our guest of honor, a Turkish diplomat, seated next to me, said how delicious it was -- but asked about the purple jelly. I told him about cranberries. He was Turkish Ambassador to Washington many years later, and no doubt had cranberry jelly often. The poor turkey was doomed anyway -- if we had not eaten it, a gypsy would have stolen it. As we had rented the cow -- we did not have to eat her. Left to their doom was the pathetic family of piebald puppies that Polly and Francie had loved so much.

The packers arrived in a horse-drawn wagon. The horse had one ear -- the boss man had a peg leg. He sat with it propped up on a chair as he gave orders. I suddenly remembered I wanted to find something typically Romanian as a souvenir of our life in Bucharest. I hurried to Mme. Proka's commission store -- where family heirlooms were sold -- and found a silver water pitcher with a lovely Turkish design carved around the neck. Florinda keeps it polished. Maria was amazed to see the white marble top of the kitchen table being hauled off. Coy Hill was expecting her first child, so she got the baby items, clothes, basket, scale, and so on. She would go to the military hospital in Vienna when her time came -- no Dr. Abramovici! Our possessions filled two lift vans -- to be unpacked later in France. After we left, the house was confiscated by the Romanian government and became a state nursery school. Perhaps it was one of the orphanages from which neglected Romanian orphans were sold. MOVE the following sentence "The top is now in the kitchen of our family summer cottage as a souvenir of Romania." And place after sentence ending -- hauled off"

Farewell parties filled our last evenings in Bucharest. Our friends felt we were lucky to

be going to Paris -- but I had found a wonderful new life in Bucharest -- I hated to leave the strange world behind the Iron Curtain. During our last week Francie had problems. First -- she ran across the bare floor -- fell down and broke off her new front tooth. She then developed a high fever -- perhaps from a horrible boil on her behind. We had no antibiotics for it; we found a pediatrician willing to come to the house. The boil had to be lanced -- to disinfect his instrument he held it over a lighted candle until it was red hot -- then lanced the boil. Francie let out a blood-curdling scream -- but lancing did the trick. The good doctor then explained his willingness to come to the house -- he was Jewish -- hoped the American Legation would help him get an exit visa so he could go to Israel.

We woke to a beautiful sight on our last morning -- all our trees and bushes were covered by ice -- real hoarfrost. Our faithful staff was very upset to see us go -- their Christmas presents still hadn't arrived -- their futures were undecided. It was especially sad to say farewell to Mrs. Strasser, who still had not obtained her exit visa. We piled into the Buick for the last time -- Alexandru drove us to the railway station. There, we boarded the Arlberg Orient Express for the three-day trip to Paris. The platform was crowded with most of the Legation staff and friends from the diplomatic corps. Many men were wearing their *kaçulas* on this very cold day. *Tsuica* was passed around. A farewell gift was thrust into my hands. We found our compartment -- rolled down the window to wave our last good-byes. The whistle blew -- we were off! We were very sad indeed to be leaving our friends. When we opened the package -- it contained a pair of sterling silver birds from the Legation staff. Ever since, those birds have sat on our sideboard as a reminder of Bucharest days.

To Paris -- the Orient Express

Our trip to Paris took three days -- no restaurant car -- we had to take our food with us. Arno and Connie Halusa were on the train. They left it in Vienna. A British nanny returning home helped us with the children. Polly was very excited by the train, but Francie was quite upset by the change in her routine -- she wanted Mrs. Strasser. The next day in Budapest, the train had a layover of a few hours. We left the children on the train with the nanny, and had lunch with friends. We were late getting back to the train -- almost missed it -- what a mess that would have been. Our route went through many towns where we could still see much of the bomb damage from the war -- in that respect, the trip was rather depressing. But we were cheered during those many hours of chugging along by many vignettes of the past year that came to mind -- many were small happenings -- the creaking of the peasant wagons and snorting of the little horses that gathered every morning before dawn below our bedroom windows -- the time, driving along the main avenue of Bucharest, when I saw a sow giving birth to piglets -- another, when I saw a gypsy with a baby chew some food -- take it from her mouth and feed it to the baby and on the golf course, Vassily, the donkey, who pulled the watering cart -- he would bray just as you were going to putt! Many stories are left untold.

56 years later

Leaving behind many friends was the hardest. Fifty years later, few are left. The many

photographs in our album are inadequate -- our camera was poor and film was hard to get. Perhaps what I have written may give some of the flavor of life behind the Iron Curtain. It was a unique experience.

Tomitsa visited the United States in 1984. His old friends gave him a party at the Chevy Chase Club. Robert arranged a game with the golf professional; in his seventies, Tomitsa went around the course in par! He brought us a bottle of fine *tusica*. He had moved to his village in Transylvania. He has been featured on Romanian TV describing life in the bad old days of Communism. Robert sent him greetings on his 85th birthday.

We have twice visited the Painted Churches of Transylvania. They certainly are among the great art treasures of the world. The old nuns at Sucevita are still very much in charge. From them I bought several of their beaded Easter eggs with the ancient Russian designs. I display them at Easter.

Mrs. Strasser finally got her exit visa, and went to live with her sister near Graz in Austria. She visited the States several times. I introduced her to David, Patsy, and Carter, then four months old. She died a few years later.

In January 1999, Robert and I were at the end of the world on a fantastic trip to Antarctica. One afternoon, while we watched the icy glaciers and enormous icebergs slide by, the combo of musicians on board started practicing. I caught a familiar word. "By any chance are you Romanian?" "Da, da." "Can you play the Hora?" I closed my eyes to listen to that familiar music -- what memories came back!

France 1948 -- 1952

Paris

Even after the German occupation and the War, France remained a civilized place of great culture and sophistication. Hitler had ordered Paris bombed before the German retreat. Fortunately, the general in command did not obey his orders, so the city with its beautiful buildings and boulevards was still glorious.

An inglorious arrival

When we arrived from Bucharest at the *Gare de l'Est*, Paris, we were weary and exhausted. We just needed a little peace and order. Polly, almost four years old, and Francie, eighteen months, were tired, dirty, and fussy after being cooped up in a Wagons-Lits compartment for three days. Our luggage had occupied so much space that there had been little room to sit. Francie was upset and missed Mrs. Strasser; she refused to use the potty. I was desperate to find diapers. The Orient Express of 1948 was a far cry from the luxury train of pre-War or today. Its equipment had suffered from the War and had not been maintained or replaced. It was just a way to get from A to B. There was not even a dining car. Friends had fed us lunch in Budapest, and others had produced sandwiches in Vienna. Polly ate almost nothing, and Francie was recovering from an infection and a

broken front tooth. I was sad at leaving friends in Bucharest. Despite the excitement of a new post, we were in some disarray. In contrast to our arrival in Bucharest where the entire Legation had met us, the Paris welcoming committee consisted of an Embassy car and driver, plus a taxi for the luggage. We both had expected Paris to be a change, but this we hadn't imagined. Our reception exemplified the difference between the life at a small isolated Legation and at a huge Embassy where everyone had his or her own independent life. We were on our own. Life in Paris was to be a very different one from Bucharest.

Hotel Vendome

The Embassy car took us to the cozy small Hotel Vendôme, near the Place Vendôme. This was to be our temporary home. We had three rooms, including a sitting room with a coal-burning fireplace. The food was excellent! Even the children recognized that French cooking was different and tasted good. Perhaps our greatest treats were the bananas and fresh oranges that we'd seen so little of in Romania. Our arrival was ten days before Christmas. The next day, I took the children out to find some presents -- those ordered from the States hadn't arrived before we left Bucharest. We would get them next year! Window-shopping was glorious -- seeing all the things we had missed for months! That first day I stumbled into an old store on a back street and found some pre-War Czech Christmas tree ornaments -- the silver bead ones. I still put them on my little tree in the dining room.

The weather was very cold. No more walks with the children. Polly and Francie both came down with some bug, and were sick for the next two weeks. Francie kept wetting her bed -- I had to put her back into diapers -- all Mrs. Strasser's training down the drain! Robert's wallet was stolen; after we reported the theft, the wallet mysteriously reappeared -- a waiter was fired. Nobody from the Embassy so much as telephoned to offer help. I had been determined to have a Christmas tree for the children. To Robert's annoyance, I had hand carried several boxes of tree ornaments along with the luggage. The hotel found a small tree for me. Christmas dinner came via room service, but the children still had fevers, and weren't hungry. After Romania, we weren't used to the French grand style -- Robert's boxer shorts came back from the laundry accordion-pleated like the skirts of the Greek honor guards, the *Evzones* -- instead of ugly black laundry marks, each piece had our initials hand sewn in the corner. On a trip to Paris, 50 years later, we found that the Vendôme has been done over as the private residence of the Sultan of Brunei. I guess it's his Paris Palace but as it was back in 1949, it seemed a palace to us.

Maroche

By luck we saw on the Embassy bulletin board a notice from a lady seeking a child-care job. Mme. Christian Laroche became our lifesaver. She was the widow of a French army officer -- her daughter had married an American. She may have needed the money, but mainly she wanted a contact with an American family. She became "Maroche." We stayed in touch ever since, until she died in 1999 over a hundred years old. When I called her a few years ago at a nursing home near Toulon, France, she sounded the same as she

did in 1949. She had thirteen great-grandchildren. Every year she sent us a box of Calisson candies.

Villa Mirasol

We were to spend four years in Paris. While not as dramatic as our Bucharest period, there, we probably had our best years in the Foreign Service. We were young and our future was ahead of us. After the war, housing was very difficult to find -- nothing new had been built during the war and now there was a large influx of people. We found our first home after a long search outside of Paris. Our house was a Normandy-style villa with a huge garden, on a hillside looking across the Seine valley toward St.-Germain-en-Laye -- a historic and interesting town. Even our address had charm -- *Villa Mirasol, Domaine du Grandchamps, Le Pecq, Seine et Oise*! We were near a village with a royal history -- *Marly-le-Roi*. One of King Louis XIV's chateaux had been there -- it was destroyed in the French Revolution. Owing to the housing shortage, this seemed to be the only house available. Some Embassy families were still living in hotels after three months.

For domestic help, we hired an Italian cook and an Italian valet-de chamber, a houseman, Joseph. He was tiny -- about five feet tall; he asked us to supply the full regalia of the job -- black trousers, striped waistcoat, and white gloves for serving. After getting settled, we began to invite people to dinner. As I wanted to meet more of our colleagues, we invited five Embassy couples for our first dinner party. The cook was up to the job, but Joseph panicked -- he forgot to pass the hors d'oeuvres -- dropped a serving fork on the floor -- finally served the dessert forgetting there were no dessert plates on the table. However, the dinner was a great success!

Our social life soon became active. We kept Joseph for lack of anyone better -- he stayed until the day Robert came home early and Joseph wasn't around -- perhaps seeing his girl friend in the village. When we complained, he left in a huff, taking the fancy waistcoat and gloves with him -- they were so small they would only have fitted Alice's White Rabbit! After several other tries, we were very lucky to find Elizabeth and Auguste -- with their 10-year-old son, René, they remained with us until we left France nearly four years later.

Embassy life

Life in Paris was an enormous change from that of Bucharest. The Embassy staff was enormous -- more than fifty Foreign Service Officers, military and other types of attachés, many of whom I never met! As Paris was such a large city, with so many suburbs, our American colleagues lived in many different areas. Of course there was always so much going on that unlike Bucharest, we didn't depend on each other for entertainment. We were no longer in isolation as in Romania. Many people came to Paris -- both family and friends. American guest rooms were nearly always occupied -- families led their own lives. We fell into the same pattern. When a new officer and family arrived I rarely knew of it -- I would do nothing about it. Of course if the officer was in

Robert's area of the Embassy -- the Economic Section -- I would get in touch with his wife and offer help. Interestingly enough however, the Paris big city independent life-style didn't work out well for everybody. Robert's secretary had come to Paris from a small post -- Ankara, Turkey. There, like Bucharest, she had been part of the Embassy community and was included in social activities. She felt very lonely in Paris. She finally asked for a transfer to a small post.

Protocol

A few of the rather anachronistic customs of the old Foreign Service are perhaps worth mentioning for laughs. In those days protocol -- the rules of diplomatic social behavior -- were still very strict. Soon after an officer's arrival at a new post, his wife was expected to call on the wives of officers senior in rank to her husband's -- starting with the Ambassador's wife. On a given day she would put on hat and white gloves, and head out, calling cards at hand! If her hostess was at home, she might get a cup of tea -- otherwise she would leave her card with the corner turned down. At a small post, she might call on the wives of the other Ambassadors. The calling exercise -- a relic of an earlier era -- did provide a way of getting to know your colleagues. In Bucharest we called on diplomats of other countries. In Paris the Diplomatic Corps was too large -- junior wives called only on senior American wives. Most of the above is now mostly honored in the breach.

Our Ambassador did much entertaining -- luncheons, dinners, and receptions. Embassy staff members were invited in rotation -- but not for our own amusement! We were expected to help entertain the guests. We were given guest lists in advance with biographic data of the VIPs. We would arrive ahead of time. The butler introduced the guest to the ambassador -- then we took over. One of us would be near the receiving line -- meet each guest and introduce him to others and start a conversation. We made sure each guest was not left alone. If a guest was to be seated, there was a lot of protocol. To seat the guest of honor, he or she would be put on the right end of a couch -- in a room with several couches, he or she would be put on the best couch -- never in a corner! We kept moving around trying to see that no guest would be stuck with the same person too long. Of course we were careful not to break up a conversation between VIPs! At a dinner, a male guest would receive a card with the name of the lady he was to escort to the table. A seating chart was at the entrance to the dining room; guests were seated according to strict protocol -- we always knew we would be placed in the middle of the table. On the table were menus beautifully written in calligraphy. Dinner would normally include five courses, with three wines, including champagne with dessert. We were expected to be careful not to drink too much wine -- we weren't invited for our own pleasure! After dinner, coffee and liqueurs were served.

At the end of a reception or dinner, lights would blink -- we would start shaking hands with each other -- saying good-bye -- so guests would gather that it was time to leave. At a recent Japanese Embassy event, it did my heart good to have a little Japanese wife dutifully come up to me and start a conversation! Perhaps this behavior seems stultified in the extreme -- it had its uses to further Embassy objectives. Good manners and consideration of others have their uses. Embassy social events have a purpose -- they

have to be organized so that honored guests are comfortable. Important people with big egos feel a need to be suitably recognized! At the one dinner I attended at the White House, protocol was even stricter. A Marine guard escorted you everywhere. Through our efforts at these rather formal -- even stuffy -- events in Paris, we met a lot of interesting people!

Grocery shopping

At home I reverted to the life of a *hausfrau*. Without Alexandru to drive him, I drove Robert into Paris, to the Embassy every morning -- a half-hour trip -- and picked him up at the end of the day. Traffic in 1949 was light by today's standards. With no Maria, I did the marketing. I drove over to St. Germain where I parked in the central square. In those days there were no checks -- no charge accounts -- no credit cards -- cash only for everything! I picked up my market basket, took out my franks, and plunged in. I soon learned the French word for each food item. In the square on market days, trestle tables were set up for the fresh produce -- vegetables, fruit, and flowers. Many little shops for other items ringed the square -- the *boucherie* for fresh beef and lamb -- the *charcuterie* for smoked meat, ham, bacon, sausage -- the *marchand de volailles* for poultry. Thank goodness the fowl there were already killed and plucked. There was also the *triperie* for innards -- this I avoided -- the *poissonnerie* for fish -- the *pâtisserie* for pastry -- the *boulangerie* for bread -- the *laiterie* for milk -- the *fromagerie* for cheese -- and the *marchand de vins* for wine. Coffee, tea, and canned goods came from the *épicerie*. There was even a *boucherie chevaline* -- a horsemeat shop -- (ugh!!). I never knew who ate such meat, but I did admire the carved golden head of the horse over the door. The French evidently believe that horsemeat is good for children!! When I found out that the children were being fed horsemeat -- I put a stop to it.

At each shop, I stood in line. It took all morning -- every item was wrapped in newspaper and carried in my basket. If I was buying for a dinner party -- it took several baskets. Nowadays, *Supermarchés* are all over France and all other European countries. The commissary at the Embassy had excellent fresh milk and butter from Holland -- duty-free liquor -- also American-style goods such as dry cereals and ketchup. The children had been so used to the Klim powdered milk they had had in Bucharest. At first they refused to drink the lovely Dutch cows' milk.

One day Polly came to market with me. We stood in the line at the *boucherie*. Ahead of us was a huge woman whose bare fat arm hung before Polly's face. What possessed Polly, I don't know. Finally she couldn't resist it. She stuck out her tongue and gave a big slurping lick on the woman's arm! The woman let out a shriek -- the *boucher* held his sharp knife poised in the air -- everyone stared at us -- the woman brought forth all the vindictive words in the French language. I was speechless. I grabbed Polly's hand and made a hasty retreat and headed for the *marchand de volailles*.

Maroche had been good enough to get us settled, but did not wish to stay in the country -- she kindly remained until we could find a regular nanny. After we had made several mistakes -- it was difficult to fire anyone in French -- Maroche came back until we found

a replacement. We finally engaged Mademoiselle, a middle-aged Alsatian spinster, for about forty dollars a month. Alsace was under German occupation for many years -- a Germanic patois and bad French are spoken there. She fitted in well with Elizabeth and Auguste -- also Alsatians. I spoke French with them. I developed a large vocabulary about household matters, but it didn't improve my French accent! I finally took French lessons to learn to speak properly. To this day, I can rattle off in French, but my accent isn't good.

Remembering how much the children enjoyed the animals in Bucharest, we now were ready to take on a pet or two. Our cousins, Stan and Sally Cleveland had asked us to keep their black-and-white cocker, Tippy, while they went on home leave. The children were crazy about him. There was one problem -- Tippy arrived in France full of fleas -- not just ordinary fleas -- Bulgarian fleas -- Stan and Sally had come from Sofia, Bulgaria. It took a while to get rid of the fleas. In the meantime the children were badly bitten -- especially Polly. Then poor Tippy ran out of our gate and was hit by a car. One of Francie's early memories is, all of us huddling around that poor dead dog. It was awful to have tell the Clevelands about Tippy when they returned to Paris. We decided it would be safer to have a cat rather than a dog. I had always admired the Siamese breed. When I saw kittens advertised for sale, I investigated. At an elegant apartment in Neuilly, a handsome lady came to the door. Matching this elegance -- a gorgeous Siamese mother cat was nursing her litter of kittens. I chose a female -- she curled up in my lap for the ride home to her new family. She was still very white, with only dark smudges on her ears and nose. The tiny beast had a very French look to her -- we named her Mimi!

Travels

A few weekends we left Paris to visit Foreign Service friends in Luxembourg, Belgium, Holland, and England. We made semi-annual trips to Strasbourg in Alsace, to attend meetings of the Central Rhine Commission located there. Robert was the US member of the Commission. The sessions lasted a week and were attended by representatives of the riparian countries -- Dutch -- Belgian -- French -- and Swiss. The Germans were represented by the occupying powers -- British -- French -- and Americans. A few years later the Germans were allowed to send observers. When they arrived, it was our first contact with Germans after the war. They were perfectly pleasant, but relationships were somewhat awkward--especially for the French. Robert had to work -- I gallivanted about with the other wives. We joined the men for boat trips up the Rhine. Strasbourg is a picturesque city with a lovely cathedral. Its houses are built in the heavy-beamed and gabled German style -- their window boxes were filled with red geraniums. Strasbourg is a great French culinary center -- its rich food and the famous wines from the Vosges hillsides are gourmets' delights. We were young and thin in those days -- but for one week we ate too much and drank too much wine. We found the Dutch particularly congenial. In Paris, the Commission's Chairman, married to a Rothschild, gave luncheons at his mansion for the Commission members -- those were in higher style than meals at our Embassy. I remember the magnificent lace tablecloth with a yellow cloth under it -- I tried to copy this idea with a piece of yellow material under my lace cloth -- somehow the effect wasn't as sensational.

The children seemed happy in their new home. At the bottom of our large garden were rabbit hutches. The children considered the rabbits as pets -- actually they were the gardener's food supply! He couldn't understand why we wouldn't eat them for dinner. We organized a fourth birthday party for Polly -- to make up for her missed birthday party earlier. We asked all the 4-year-olds I could find. A pair of guinea pigs was the cook's present. The French don't eat them -- in Ecuador they are a staple sold live at the market. Francie had her second birthday in July. Both children were a bit upset at so many changes of nannies -- particularly Francie -- she struggled with Italian, German, French, and English. In Romania it had been Hungarian, Rumanian, German, and English. Polly had a good foundation in English and never stopped talking and asking questions. So that Polly could perhaps learn some French, even at the age of four, we found her a school in St-Germain. She went a few hours in the morning. All seemed to be going pretty well, until one day I picked her up. As she climbed into the car she burst into tears, saying, "They call me a pot of milk!" The name -- Polly -- in French, sounds like *pot à lait*!

Mother paid us a visit in June. All went very well until Auguste served the first dinner. There was a necktie problem. Robert preferred preppy striped rep silk ties from Brooks Brothers. Mother's taste was for flamboyant expensive Countess Mara ties. Mother gave male friends and relatives such ties, including Robert. His previous Christmas tie was a humdinger -- worse than usual. Down its front were three large red roses -- a huge worm crawled out from one! Was this a message to Robert? We'll never know! How could he have worn this tie to the Embassy! Robert gave the tie to Auguste -- who loved it! He wore it on special occasions. After Joseph's departure -- no more fancy uniforms -- Auguste only used a white jacket. At dinner, during which course I can't remember, suddenly Mother stopped in the middle of a sentence. She stared at Auguste -- horrors -- even in the candlelight -- plain to see -- were the three roses with the worm looking out! Perhaps the worm winked at her! For the first time in her life, Mother kept her mouth shut. I wonder what she wrote to Harry!

Bubbles Abel had been studying at the Sorbonne that year -- there, she met Pierre Lalire. On July 8, 1949, they were married at the Mairie du Sixième Arrondissement in Paris. We organized a wedding lunch for them at the Hotel Lutétia. It was a delicious meal -- lots of champagne provided by Pierre's father. Others present were Ted Abel, -- Jean and Georgette Lalire, Pierre's father and mother and Aline Coquerel, Pierre's grandmother. Mimi Abel didn't get to France for the wedding. Bubbles felt that if she came, there would have been more fuss -- a bigger event to include Mimi's French friends. The event was great fun -- then Pierre and Bubbles took off for Italy in their 1927 Panhard.

A long trip

Late that summer we had our first long vacation. Robert had accumulated a lot of leave time in Romania. As the home front seemed under control, we felt we could take four weeks. We planned a trip to Scandinavia and England in our new Oldsmobile. We drove through Belgium and Germany to Bremerhaven. For the first time we saw the wartime

devastation of Germany -- in Cologne only the cathedral stood amid the rubble, though severely damaged. We crossed the Rhine on a wooden bridge. In Bremerhaven we spent the night with Robert's wartime naval friend, Scott Charles, and his new wife -- he and Robert had shared quarters on Pont Street and Chester Row in London. With both wives present, it seemed to cramp the style in their conversation -- they could not rehash old times and former English girl friends! Perhaps they had happy dreams about their past lives in London.

We took the ferry across the Elbe River that passed the lock gates of the Kiel Canal. We continued through the flat Danish countryside -- all the children along the road seemed to have beautiful blonde hair. In Copenhagen we stayed at the famous Hotel Angleterre -- Robert was confused about the local exchange rate, and tipped the bellman \$5 instead of 50 cents. We saw the many sights including the marvelous Tivoli Gardens. We ordered our Georg Jensen flat silver -- in those days it was quite inexpensive--I should have completed the set. Now, to replace one lost butter knife, it would cost over \$200. Appraisers told me it is more valuable than my Georgian silverware.

Another ferry took us across to Sweden. The countryside was gentle and rolling, with plenty of forests. The wooden barns were often painted red, reminding us of home. Our first night we stayed at a lovely hotel on a hillside overlooking a lake. We loved the name, *Gyllene Uttern* -- Golden Otter. We spent several days in the handsome city Stockholm -- it includes many islands, and is sometimes called the "Venice of the North." At its high latitude, Stockholm has a short summer with long days. The sky is never totally dark at night -- Swedes call it their "white nights." The long Swedish winter, where the sun rises at 11 a.m. and sets about 3 p.m., can be very depressing. We saw the sights, bought new material for our living room couch, and attended a party at the Embassy.

The big event in Stockholm was a party in our honor -- we thought -- given by young Swedish colleagues from Bucharest days. When we arrived at their house in the suburbs, we found a big group of Swedes singing songs and drinking *aqvavit*, the strong Swedish drink. August is crayfish time -- always celebrated in Sweden. The whole evening was spent eating crayfish while drinking and singing to the bloody crayfish! It was never dark -- the sun rose at 2 a. m. At 3 a.m. we wanted to leave. At that point our friend's hidden motive appeared! It seemed we were invited -- perhaps not for our charm -- but for our American car with French diplomatic license plates. Sweden's rules about driving and drinking are very strict -- you go to jail if you are caught driving after one alcoholic drink. A designated driver drinks nothing so his companions can enjoy themselves. Robert became the designated driver -- we were elected to take home as many inebriated Swedes as would fit into our car. We managed to squeeze in ten bodies -- two more could have gone in the trunk. Of course we had no idea of where we were going -- a fairly sober Swede showed us. We left the party in brilliant sunshine -- spent the next hour dropping off one happy Swede after another. We reached our hotel by 4 a.m. -- slept for three hours and took off for Norway.

Sweden in 1949 was the last country on the Continent to drive on the left. We were glad

to switch to the right side at the Norwegian border. Soon we reached its lovely mountains, valleys and fjords on the road to Oslo. After a few days in the capital, we drove north to the head of the Sogne Fjord. We put our car on a converted combat landing craft converted to a ferry. We traveled all day down the fjord, stopping at tiny villages nestled at the foot of steep mountains and reaching Bergen on the Atlantic in the evening. Our American Consul met us and kindly invited us home to dinner. On entering his house, my mouth dropped open. On the walls were the originals of the very paintings I had studied in my modern art course at Radcliffe. We were in the former home of Edvard Munch -- probably the greatest Norwegian painter. His most famous painting -- *The Scream* -- portrays a girl standing on a bridge -- her hands over her ears -- screaming. For my Radcliffe course I had written an essay on the painting -- I got an "A"! Later, an art gallery was built in Oslo by the Government to display Munch's paintings.

From Bergen we traveled with the car on the SS *Venus* -- the overnight ferry to Newcastle, England and then, on to Scotland to attend the first *Edinburgh Festival*. There we saw T. S. Eliot's *Cocktail Party* and heard the Glyndebourne Opera perform Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. The Festival was a great treat -- we hadn't heard much music or been to the theater since Washington. Perhaps our grandchildren will come to love good music -- it has been very important in our lives together. While there, we stayed in Gullane, near Edinburgh, at *Graywalls* -- an especially fine country house hotel, designed by Lutyens, the noted architect, for the Horlick (malted milk) family. The hotel was on the edge of the famous Muirfield golf course. Robert, after his lessons in Bucharest, had the erroneous idea he knew how to play golf. He contacted the "Honorary Secretary" of the golf club -- who arranged for him to join a group of octogenarian golfers. It was a colossal embarrassment. Robert kept slicing his ball into the high Scottish rough -- taking three strokes to get back on the fairway. He was pretty upset -- the old gents would hit their balls straight down the course. They were most polite to Robert, adding to his embarrassment.

Durham Cathedral, my favorite, was our next stop. We continued south to stay for the night at my beloved Lygon Arms Hotel at Broadway, in the Cotswolds. After a day or two in London, we took the Dover-Calais ferry back to France. (Fifty years later, in 1999, we took the new "Chunnel" under the English Channel.) The children were happy we were back -- so was Mimi -- she was growing into a beautiful cat.

Wine

One great privilege of living in France was to enjoy fine French wines. Good wine was not expensive -- we drank quite a lot. In September, our wine negotiant, M. Poret, invited us, with our friends, Ruth and Lane Timmons, to be his weekend guest in *Beaune, Burgundy* for the *vendange* -- the harvesting of the grapes. He took us through the whole process -- from the fields where grapes were being picked -- to the wine cellars where the casks of wine were kept -- to the bottling -- and to the table. We were given wine to taste from small shallow cups -- *tastevins*. The correct way to taste, is to sip the wine, savor it, and then spit it out. Professional wine tasters wear *tastevins* on red ribbons around their necks. We still have several silver *tastevins*, one of which Robert wore as a member of

the *tastevin* Society. Poret gave us several meals -- at which we drank glass after glass of every type of wine -- from *apéritifs* through the whites and reds -- then sweet dessert wines -- finally *Marc de Bourgogne*, the local brandy. We went to bed in a fine state -- but thanks to the wine quality -- no hangovers in the morning! Sunday lunch was at a winery in *Nuits Saint Georges*, north of *Beaune*. There we sampled some famous wines of that area. Robert was still able to drive us back to Paris. Between the four of us, we had consumed about twenty-four bottles of wine in twenty-four hours. If the French had the Swedish laws about drinking and driving, Robert might have been thrown in jail. M. Poret's motive for his hospitality was that we would encourage our Embassy friends to buy his wines. We bought some ourselves -- two *fûts* (small casks) -- one red and one white -- we put them in our cellar. We then waited for the wine to mature enough to be bottled. There were certain steps to be followed -- the *caviste* (the bottler) knew. Each cask contained wine that would fill eighty bottles. We wanted to label them *Chateau Cleveland* -- but no -- it would be illegal under the strict French *appellation contrôlée* laws. When it came time to bottle the wine, the professional *caviste* brought the appropriate bottles and labels with the correct *appellation contrôlée* on them. Our wine was a *Beaune-Bressandes* 1949 -- one of the great vintages of the century! The bottles were placed on racks -- were not to be touched for several years. The wine saga will continue later on.

Our first Thanksgiving dinner in France was a huge success. There were twenty-four at the table -- including six just arrived from Romania. At dinner the phone rang -- to our surprise and pleasure -- Bucharest was on the line -- friends celebrating Thanksgiving there. Everyone took turns on the phone. Auguste was upset -- the turkey was getting cold -- no matter -- for a few minutes we were all back in Bucharest!

An accident

One rainy morning disaster struck. After taking Robert to the Embassy, I drove toward home on the narrow main road; it was paved with old-fashioned square paving stones -- very slippery when wet. Around a bend a huge truck was broken down. On my right was the Seine River -- on the left a car was coming. I jammed on the brakes. I skidded into the truck, hitting it on the car's left side. I guess I was lucky -- the Oldsmobile was totaled -- I was knocked out -- but somehow I survived! I regained consciousness in the hospital as they were sewing up my face. Nothing was broken -- but the concussion gave me double vision for many months. I completely forgot Polly at school. Robert rushed to the hospital from the Embassy -- then picked up Polly, and brought us home. Robert informed the director of the French *Routes et Chaussées* Department of the accident -- it was not the first. Soon the stretch of road where I had crashed was properly paved and widened -- now it's a four-lane highway. The double vision was a problem -- I could read and write with some difficulty -- but I could not drive. We hired René as temporary driver of our new replacement car -- a maroon Buick. René was a great convenience -- but had a terrible habit -- he would drive through red lights. To my complaints his response was -- "Why, Madame, should I stop if no cars are coming?" It was a scary time for me -- I would always see two red lights!

George Wadleigh

George Wadleigh, my cousin, was Vice-Consul in Bordeaux, when we visited him and Joy, his wife, in June, 1948. In January 1950, George was ordered to Lisbon, Portugal. He went there to house-hunt, leaving Joy in Bordeaux pregnant with their third child. The baby was born soon after he left. Later in January a telegram from our Embassy in Lisbon to the Embassy in Paris contained the message -- George Wadleigh ill with brain infection -- notify Bordeaux. The same day a second telegram came saying -- George Wadleigh dead -- notify Bordeaux. George's brain had been infected with bulbar polio. He had had a severe headache for two days -- he died the third day! When I heard, I went right away to be with Joy in Bordeaux. I took the night train -- only *couchettes* were available. My *couchette* ticket reserved one of the four bunks in a compartment. On each there was a pillow and a blanket. I got to the train early -- climbed onto a top *couchette*. Three gentlemen occupied the others. It was a novel experience for me -- we took off only our shoes -- and lay there in the darkness. My thoughts were in turmoil -- I couldn't sleep -- just listened to the clickety-clack of the wheels. Then I seemed to smell an orange -- indeed I did -- a hand appeared from below offering a piece of orange. No words were spoken -- we just divided the orange. That was Gallic chivalry for you -- the man knew I was a woman -- probably not that I was an American.

When I reached Joy's house, she was just back from the hospital with the new baby. She had been widowed with three children under the age of three! That whole day we talked about George. He was my age -- twenty-nine. George and I had shared our mutual difficult relatives -- Aunt Marg and Uncle John. We were in the same class at Harvard. George loved music -- to this day I think of him whenever I hear Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. A name for the new baby had previously been agreed -- Joy changed it to George after its father. Lincoln MacVeagh, our Ambassador to Portugal, gave a really beautiful eulogy for George. One sentence in it -- I always quoted when I write a letter about someone who died young -- "It's not the length of a life which is important but it's quality." Several years later Joy married Captain Charles Shane USN. Joy and Charles had many happy years together.

Christmas 1949

This year we were able to have a normal Christmas -- a big twelve-foot tree -- stockings for the children -- a proper Christmas dinner. Stan and Sally Cleveland -- just back from home leave -- joined us. We were sad to tell them about the loss of their dog Tippy. We spent the New Year's weekend in London, staying at the posh Connaught Hotel -- we couldn't afford it today. We celebrated New Year's Eve at a nightclub with our Bucharest friends -- Carol and Anne Ramsden. The place was noisy, crowded, and charmless -- a real disappointment -- particularly compared to the parties of Bucharest days. It snowed on New Year's Day -- London became a scene out of Dickens!

Villa Madrid

After our year in the country, we decided to move nearer Paris. The burden of constant

travel back and forth -- then my accident -- required it. Luckily, a house became available -- a small town house owned by a famous French comedian -- a performer at the *Comédie Française*. It was in an *impasse* at 14 bis Villa Madrid, in Neuilly, a western suburb. Villa Madrid was a typical private French enclave -- a block long, off the Avenue de Madrid. At the entrance of our block was a small building occupied by the *gardienne* -- a formidable lady with dyed black hair -- always in a black dress. She would admit only those with legitimate business.

The house was near the *Metro* and the *Bois de Boulogne* where the children could run and play. Best of all -- there would be no more driving in and out of Paris at all hours -- no more marketing in *St. Germain*. Elizabeth, our cook, could do most of this herself. She now could buy fresh hot croissants for breakfast every morning at the local bakery. It seemed a little cramped after our big house, but we soon adjusted. Auguste and family lived on the ground floor. On the next floor above were a small ornate drawing room -- all mirrors and crystal chandeliers -- the dining room, and the kitchen. The latter had barely room for our purloined Romanian marble top table. On the second floor was the master bedroom containing the owner's king-size bed. We loved the bed -- have slept in king-size beds ever since -- much to Mother's disapproval! A cozy library-sitting room -- where we spent most of our time -- was also on this floor. It had woodwork painted dark turquoise, and panels covered in a rose print material -- very French. The top floor was occupied by the children and Mademoiselle. A whole wall of the children's room was covered by a mirror -- either for the comedian to practice his acts -- or other less noble purposes! Polly and Francie loved to play their games before it. A large balcony outside their room ran across the front of the house.

The house was perfect for our family. Even Mimi the cat liked it. She kept escaping -- she found friends in our little street -- the cat population soon increased. Mimi's first litter of four kittens proved the Mendelian Law -- two were gray-striped -- one a mottled white -- the fourth totally white -- as a good Siamese kitten should be. He soon developed his mother's true coloring -- he grew to be the most beautiful cat we ever had (sorry -- Sisawat and Mish!). Elizabeth named him Tarzan. Slinky Mimi, a real French *putain* (prostitute), soon went strolling again on our street. She produced another litter -- four kittens -- one born white. He became our second most beautiful cat, Mickey Mouse. They would accompany us around the world.

Paris -- with its great history -- its many famous museums -- and its high culture -- by 1949 was beginning to return to normal. Plenty of cultural activities were available. We could understand most of the French in the classical plays, such as Molière. French farces, with their *argot* and slang were harder to follow. The musical events cemented our preference for chamber music. Our favorite group -- *Les Amis de la Musique de Chambre* -- played in a small auditorium. We were the only Americans in the audience. When I saw an advertisement for this group, I went to a musician's apartment for the tickets -- there I found his living room set up with four music stands and sheets of music strewn on tables. It was a cozy stimulating atmosphere! We've often thought we'd like to be reincarnated as musicians. We went to concerts at the Salle Pleyel, near the Embassy. We'll never forget old George Enescu -- at the age of at least eighty -- playing Bach sonatas and

ending with his “Romanian Rhapsody”.

Over Easter, we joined some friends in Italy. We took the Simplon-Orient Express -- it went from Paris to Istanbul -- via Geneva -- the Rhone Valley -- through the Simplon Tunnel to Italy -- on through Venice, Belgrade, and Sofia, Bulgaria. We took the train as far as Stresa, Italy. Our room and balcony at the Grand Hotel des Îles Borromées, looked over the beautiful Lago Maggiore -- with the Alps as a backdrop. We enjoyed boat trips to the lovely islands on the lake -- then drove with our friends in their car to Lake Como and to Milan. There I bought my favorite gold earrings with a green stone -- I had their design copied to a ring in Bangkok many years later. We didn't know much about Italian food customs in those days. At dinner in the hotel we ordered spaghetti and meat sauce. The waiter was shocked -- “Signora, we never serve spaghetti as an entree! That is for the Hotel help!” We ate no spaghetti on that trip to Italy -- but we learned how to order veal scaloppini and other Italian specialties. After a winter in northern Europe, we enjoyed the sunny warm weather of Italy especially sitting on our balcony in the morning -- drinking the blood-red orange juice and the strong Italian coffee. Thirty-seven years later we returned to Stresa -- this time, spaghetti was on the menu! Our friends had a great souvenir of the trip -- nine months later, their first child was born!

Home leave 1950

In May 1950 we went on our first home leave -- two whole months. We brought Mademoiselle with us to help with the children. Bubbles and Pierre Lalire -- expecting their first child -- and moving permanently to the United States -- were also on the boat. We sailed from Cherbourg to New York on the *Ile de France*, a marvelous French Line ship. We traveled in First Class both ways, at Government expense. It was a unique experience -- never to be repeated. Later only American ships were allowed for Foreign Service travel and eventually only planes, First Class, but now, Economy Class along with the hoi-polloi. But on the Isle de France -- those were the days! The ship's cuisine was superb -- caviar and excellent wine every lunch and dinner. An interesting group sat at our table -- among them a Mr. Brentano of the bookstore chain, and a Jewish couple of Belgian origin. They had become US citizens, but previously had spent years in a Nazi concentration camp -- had been liberated by American troops. They didn't dwell on their story -- but they did show us the numbers tattooed on their arms. In 1950 we hadn't come to understand the horrors of the Holocaust. We were with them on deck as we sailed into New York Harbor -- as we passed the Statue of Liberty, tears streamed down their faces.

As we waited for our Washington train in New York's old Pennsylvania Station, Francie saw her first black person. She piped up loudly, “That lady has a dirty face -- she should wash it!” In Washington we stayed at the Wardman -- Mother rented extra rooms for us next to her apartment. This time Polly didn't have to sleep with the dining room chairs! The big new thing for us was a new product -- television! Aunt May had one of the first sets. Looking back -- the black-and-white programs were dreadful -- the texture was grainy -- but the moving image was fascinating. Washington had changed a lot during our three-year absence. It was no longer the pre-War provincial city. The area was becoming a major metropolis. The Federal Government had grown -- business was thriving --

suburbs were beginning to push out into Virginia and Maryland. Shopping malls -- they would soon kill Downtown Washington and its department stores -- were being developed, The Korean War had begun, but it seemed far away at the time.

A wedding

In June, we flew to Charleston, West Virginia to attend the wedding of Peter Abel and Molly Cammack. I dressed appropriately for this important occasion -- I had not lived in Paris for nothing -- my clothes were copied from the *haute couture* fashions of the big *couturiers*! My hats -- important in female attire in those days -- were spectacular! My preferred perfume was *Arpège*, by *Lanvin*. I had gained self-confidence -- not so shy any longer. The pre-wedding dinner was held on June 23, my thirtieth birthday. I had expected to enjoy the party with the young couple and their friends. I hadn't realized I was no longer considered young girl -- I had been married for six years and had two children. We were put at the older folks' table -- parents, grandparents, elderly aunts and uncles -- my décolleté dinner dress seemed out of place -- Charleston was not Paris -- only Robert asked me to dance!

I was more successful in Washington. Count and Countess de Limur -- through her daughter Robert and I first met -- asked us to a luncheon at their handsome Georgetown house. I wore my best Paris black silk suit and my newest hat. During lunch, I heard a guest ask Mme. de Limur about me. I heard the reply, "That's Mary Cleveland -- just back from Paris -- she's very attractive -- but you should have seen her several years ago -- she was very shy -- she has improved enormously." I wanted to slide under the table! After lunch, as we sat in the library for coffee, Count de Limur showed us some of the balloon prints from the valuable collection he had begun before World War One; each print was an original. When we returned to Paris, I started collecting balloon prints -- but most of ours are reproductions!

Our remaining leave we spent at Aunt May's summer home in Gloucester. It was an ideal place for the children -- they loved the beach -- Francie had a third birthday party there. We took Mademoiselle on a drive around the area; she was astonished that the houses and churches in the New England towns were built of wood. She thought a rich country like America should have built its houses of stone! She would have approved of the stone houses around Philadelphia. We spent a day in Marblehead with Nelson, Robert's best man, and Frannie Aldrich. Their two daughters were the same ages as ours. One of them, Abigail Aldrich Cheever, I saw again in 1992, at my fiftieth college reunion -- she was a Radcliffe trustee. In the academic procession to Memorial Chapel, she walked with the President -- I walked behind her, as I was to give a reading at the ceremony. The next day, in Harvard Yard, we saw Abigail's daughter graduate *summa cum laude*.

France again

We sailed back to France on Bastille Day -- July 14. Mr. Brentano sent books to us and to the children -- our Jewish friends sent champagne. We again had our caviar every night. But it was good to get back to Villa Madrid and the cats. Francie finally had mastered

English and kept up with Polly. We sent Polly to a French school in Neuilly to learn to speak French. She was only five. The school, like all French schools, was extremely tough -- every week the children were graded in order of accomplishment. Poor Polly was always at the bottom -- she didn't understand French quite yet. Our Christmas card that year showed Polly and Francie sitting before the fire holding our two cats, Tarzan and Mickey.

Mademoiselle was not in good health; she returned to Alsace in January. Maroche returned until we could find a new nanny. Then "Nursie," a trained Swiss nanny, joined the family. She was responsible and strict, but had trouble adjusting to American culture. She was upset at the children wearing brown shoes instead of white ones. She said she was embarrassed walking with them in the Bois -- only poor children wore brown shoes. I showed her that in Best & Company's catalogue (then the best children's clothing store) white shoes were not offered. She didn't approve of overalls -- they should wear only dresses. And they had no white gloves! Polly was having a hard time at school -- she was out sick with earaches a great deal. We decided to have her tonsils removed -- perhaps it helped. Neither of the other two children had it done -- it is now considered better to keep them. Our French doctor came up with the usual French solution for illness. He said she should go to a place good for ear and nose troubles. Nursie suggested Davos, Switzerland of course. It is high in the eastern Alps. So Nursie and the girls spent two weeks there at a *pension* she knew about. They had a good time in the snow -- I doubt that it cured any earaches. While it seemed all right for Robert and me to go away -- it was the first time the children had left home -- but I didn't like it, I missed them. Polly had missed so much school that we moved her to the American School -- there she would at least know the language.

Social life

Paris social activities were not at all like those in Romania. We mixed mostly with other Diplomatic families and members of the American business community. At our dinner and luncheon parties, we generally included French officials and their wives. This was at least partly so we could be reimbursed from Embassy representation funds. We were never invited to the homes of French officials -- occasionally the husband might have Robert to lunch at a restaurant. Most of the French Foreign Office people lived very simply -- abroad they were well paid, but not at home. We never became *membres de foyer* -- intimate friends of our French acquaintances. The only ones we got know well were those we met in Bucharest -- the Philippe de Luze family. The de Luzes were members of an enormous Protestant family that owned vineyards all over France -- when we dined at their house, we had the family wines from the *apéritifs* to the *alcools*. The family also owned the Limoges porcelain company. When Nicole called on me in Bucharest, she amused me by asking if we were Roman Catholics. When I said we were not, she smiled and said she was glad because the de Luzes were Huguenots. French Protestants are a fairly rare and clannish breed -- many occupy major positions in France. We kept up with the de Luzes for many years. We had few close French friends -- perhaps if Polly had kept on in the French school. I might have met the other childrens' parents and perhaps become friends. The French are not as naturally friendly as the Dutch

and the Italians. We did meet a few attractive French people through Mother's French Relief connection -- we did see quite a bit of M. and Mme. Duhamel. Her daughter was married to Mario Lucioli, an Italian diplomat whom we knew in Washington. Later, in Australia, we became great friends with Mario's brother, Gianni Lucioli,

Occasionally we would go to very gala parties. The President of France gave an annual reception for the Diplomatic Corps at the Elysée Palace, with dinner and dancing. The invitation read *White Tie with decorations*. The ladies looked lovely in all their ball gowns and jewels -- the men were handsome in white tie and decorations. American diplomats don't wear decorations -- it is forbidden to accept them from another country. Of course, our military wore their ribbons. The smaller the country, the more decorations seemed to be worn by its ambassador. For sheer grandeur, the Elysée Palace reception surpassed any event we ever attended. We never got to Buckingham Palace -- the British are very good at pageantry -- they would be hard put to equal the Elysée!

Ken and Mary Bolton of Cleveland, Ohio, lived in a grand style. Ken, a Standard Oil heir, was a protocol officer -- a meeter and greeter -- at the Embassy -- they entertained royally. They had a handsome mansion in Paris -- in the country they rented a small manor house on the grounds of a ruined abbey. Every June they organized a ball at their country place -- the dance floor was under the trees -- the music played into the small hours. One June, Margaret Truman -- the President's daughter -- was the guest of honor. Margaret arrived late -- wore a shaggy sweater over a rather plain evening dress -- sat there with a bored expression on her face. The hosts were quite upset at her behavior -- but it's clear from reading her father's biography -- the party didn't fit the Truman style!

The Windsors

One evening we went with Mother and Harry to a small dinner at the Duke and Duchess of Windsors' Paris home. The Duke, the former King Edward VIII of England, gave up the throne to marry Wallis Warfield Simpson, an American divorcée. Wallis's aunt, Bessie Merryman, was a very close friend of my family -- the Warfields and the Howards were neighbors in Harford County, north of Baltimore. Mrs. Merryman was a delightful person with a great sense of humor. Years earlier she had been a paid companion to Aunt May. Mrs. Merryman was staying at the Windsors' -- she arranged the invitation at the time we were in Paris. We were only eight at the table -- I was on my best behavior -- several years earlier I made a terrible gaffe -- when Robert and I were on a brief stay at the Homestead Hotel in Hot Springs, Virginia, Mrs. Merryman asked us to join her and the Duke and Duchess for drinks. The Duke came in after we were seated -- Robert was very cross that I did not rise! For the entrance of royalty, one should stand! This time, when the Duke entered, I rose right away! I sat next to him at dinner -- for the life of me I can't remember what was said. After dinner Robert -- using his best diplomatic judgment -- hit the mark by asking the Duke questions about British Naval history. It was one of his favorite subjects -- he never stopped talking! Later we heard that the Duke thought Robert was very interesting -- Robert had barely opened his mouth! The Duchess had exquisite taste -- everything was perfection. Like her aunt Bessie, she had a great wit -- made everyone laugh. That night she wore a simple long black dress with one stunning

piece of jewelry on her shoulder. The Duke wore dress kilts. The Windsors died some years ago -- the Paris house is now owned by Mohammed al-Fayed, the owner of Harrods in London, and father of Princess Di's boy friend.

We went to another dinner party at Denny and Eleanor Johnson's house, next door to the Windsors. Eleanor, the daughter of Marjorie Merriweather Post, the heiress, was as beautiful as her famous mother but imperious and demanding. Denny was her fourth husband. All evening, she kept ordering him around -- treating him like a servant. The dinner was elegant but there was an unpleasant undercurrent of tension. The Johnsons were later divorced. The Post house in Washington is now owned by the Smithsonian; it has a fine collection of Russian artifacts.

We really liked the Boltons, but generally preferred the less rich and famous. We often got together with the other Clevelands and the Timmonses to share an evening of caviar. Sally Cleveland had a Russian cook who made Russian blinis. Caviar was much more expensive than in Bucharest, but was still fairly cheap -- among the six of us we could afford enough for a feast. Sour cream was hard to find in Paris. The Embassy elevator man -- a White Russian émigré -- told us where the Russian community lived. There, we got all the sour cream (*smetana*) we needed, as well as good Russian vodka. Those evenings were fun times -- we were young -- we solved all the world's problems. Sadly enough the Clevelands and the Timmonses were both divorced later. Stan Cleveland was a brilliant and highly competent Foreign Service Officer, and a dear friend. He was one of the rising stars of the Service -- regrettably his personal flaws resulted in his leaving the Service prematurely; he later died in a plane crash in Africa. Lane Timmons -- also a dear friend -- had his own problems -- but had a successful career. Lane died in 1997, but we are in close touch with Ruth, his former wife.

The Orient Express from Bucharest brought to Paris most of the friends we had left there. Travel in and out of Romania was entirely by train. Our first year in Paris we met at the *Gare de l'Est* some thirty-five of these colleagues. Over dinner we would catch up on all the gossip. Most of them have died -- a few British friends and Coy Hill are the only ones left. After their hardships of Bucharest, we wanted to introduce them to the civilized world of Paris; so we took them to dinners at fine restaurants. We could easily afford this -- dollars went a long way in those days. When our Bucharest Military Attaché, Jack Lovell, and his wife arrived, we took them to a grand restaurant near the Elysée Palace. We ordered a very special dish and some fine wine -- we felt we were wine connoisseurs. The lunch was a disaster -- Jack wanted beer -- not wine -- when the main course arrived -- veal in a splendid sauce -- he wanted ketchup. The waiter's eyebrows rose in horror -- he called the maitre d'hôtel -- the ketchup arrived after a search -- not wrapped in a napkin -- in plain sight for everyone to see! Jack dumped the ketchup all over his veal, turning the famous sauce to a weird pink color. At nearby tables, the diners watched in horror -- we tried to pretend we weren't there! For months, we didn't dare return to that restaurant. Jack told us later he had grown up in a poor family -- the meat was of poor quality. To make it palatable, they doused it with ketchup -- without ketchup, nothing tasted right! Jack was killed in the Korean War.

We expected the Naval Attaché, Captain Gene Karp, to arrive one day. Gene was a bachelor -- gave great parties -- we had often spent fun evenings at his house in Bucharest. When the Orient Express arrived, he was not on it. Somewhere along the railway line in Austria, he either fell or was pushed from the train to his death. To this day no one knows what really happened. He had been in intelligence, so foul play was a possibility.

Mob scene

When Leo Supinski, a Legation guard and his wife came to Paris, we gave them a really dramatic experience. The Supinskis were definitely not candidates for a fancy restaurant, so we invited them home for dinner. On the way from their hotel to our house, our route was up the *Champs-Élysées*, the main avenue of Paris, to the *Arc de Triomphe*, and then on to *Villa Madrid*. Robert drove our red Buick -- I was in the front seat -- the Supinskis were in the back. It was a period when the French Communist Party was very active -- always making trouble. *Le Figaro*, the chief Paris newspaper, had written something critical about the Party, the Communists demonstrated near the *Figaro* headquarters at the *Rond Point* at the foot of the Champs-Élysées. On our way home, we encountered the Communist mob, gathered in force, rioting and blocking the streets. We ended up in a massive traffic jam on the *Champs-Élysées*. At the *Arc de Triomphe*, the police had stopped traffic from coming down the *Champs-Élysées* -- there were about lanes of cars - - bumper to bumper -- trying to move up the avenue. Eventually all came to a complete stop. The Communists were massed along the sidewalks -- yelling slogans -- they were mostly young men and very hostile. They had pulled up paving blocks and were throwing them at the cars. Seeing our U. S. diplomatic license plates, they singled us out and smashed all our windows with the blocks. From the back seat Leo shouted, "Get down on the floor and stay there." We were sitting ducks. Robert and I sat there, frozen, unable to move. The car doors were not locked -- a man opened the door on the driver's side and started to pull Robert out. Then someone, probably a cadre, called out, "Let him alone." Robert scrambled back into the car and locked the door. We sat there until the traffic moved -- then the Supinskis rose from the floor. Leo, a security guard, had been hired to protect Americans. Perhaps, if he'd had his gun with him, he would have opened fire! He wanted to return to Bucharest, where he'd be safe! The car was in bad shape -- all windows were blown out and the body was badly dented by the paving blocks -- it looked as if it had a case of smallpox! We went directly to the police station and reported the event. The French Government was embarrassed and asked us not to talk about it. The Paris city council paid the expensive car repair bill.

Spain

Our Buick, looking great after repairs, took us on a marvelous trip to every corner of Spain. We entered northwestern Spain, drove through the Basque country and Burgos, south to Madrid. There we visited the Prado and Goya Museums -- in Toledo we saw the El Greco's -- all these were the famous paintings I had studied in History of Art at Radcliffe. We made the trip to coincide with the *Feria* in Seville. This Spanish tradition takes place during Lent. The *penitentes* by the hundreds -- dressed in long robes and high

peaked hoods -- looking rather like Ku Klux Klan members -- parade through the streets at night carrying lighted candles and religious relics. The bull fighting doesn't start until after Easter -- we missed that, thank goodness. On the way to Seville we stopped in Cordoba to see the Alcazar and in Granada, the Alhambra. After Seville, we went on to Cadiz to visit a Sherry winery -- then up the east coast to Valencia. There we took the overnight ferry to Majorca. We spent the night on deck with a herd of sheep! Majorca was beautiful -- we even thought we might retire there. We drove all around the island -- visited the house where George Sand and Chopin had lived. We returned by another boat to Barcelona and home. There were very few gas stations in Spain -- so to be on the safe side, we carried some gas in jerry cans -- also very little traffic. We would drive several hours without seeing another car. All went well -- but when we pulled up at our house in Villa Madrid, we had a flat tire. Robert took out the lug wrench -- it was the wrong size -- it didn't fit the lug nuts. We don't like to think what might have happened if we'd had a flat tire in some remote part of Spain!

Normandy

Our visit to Normandy in May 1951 was great fun -- it turned out to be a major event in our lives. With Mother and Harry, we spent the first night in Deauville and visited the Casino. At the Casino, Robert and I had a big fight. Harry had staked himself out at a table -- spent his evening in seventh heaven -- I don't know if he won or lost. My thoughts were elsewhere. I watched Robert -- as time went on, he was a hundred dollars ahead of his original five-dollar stake -- to me that was then a lot of money, and I was excited. Then Robert had a dreadful idea -- he was going to put the whole hundred on one number at the roulette table -- win or lose all! I begged him to stop right there. You can guess the results -- he felt he'd lost five dollars -- to me the loss was a hundred! I wouldn't speak to Robert for twenty-four hours. The next day we drove to Bayeux to see the famous tapestry woven by Matilda, wife of William the Conqueror, depicting scenes of the Battle of Hastings in 1066. Then we went on to visit Mother's friends Suzette and Charlie Dewey. The Deweys had a lovely manor house on the grounds of a ruined abbey, *L'Abbaye de Ste. Marie*, near Bayeux. Fortunately the place had not been damaged during the Normandy invasion six years earlier. Until we arrived at the Deweys' I had not spoken to Robert all day -- that had to change! After a fabulous dinner we returned to our charming room under the eaves. In the morning the maid brought us coffee, fresh strawberries and cream, and crispy croissants. David arrived nine months later. All's well that ends well!

Geneva

Robert had business in Geneva, Switzerland, in July. I went along to visit our old friends and their "Stresa" baby -- born nine months after our joint fling there. We dined with them at a fine restaurant on the first evening -- but I could barely finish the meal -- I felt awful -- worse than the morning sickness that was beginning. I woke in the night with a high fever -- my neck was swollen. It turned out to be mumps. My friend only knew her obstetrician -- he kindly came to the hotel. When he learned I was pregnant, he became very interested in my case. I became an important patient -- he sent me in a clinique -- a

small private hospital. On my first day there, the hospital chaplain, wearing long robes, paid a visit to comfort me; he said a prayer in French. This scared me to death -- I was sure I was being prepared for a miscarriage. I was also afraid that Robert -- who had not had mumps -- would come down with the disease -- become sterile -- never sire a third child! Robert had to return to Paris. I was alone for a week. Understandably no one wanted to come near me. The baby and I survived at least temporarily -- I returned home after ten days. My troubles weren't over. My French doctor was concerned about my having mumps when just five weeks pregnant -- he wondered if I should have an abortion. If it had been measles, there was no question. After some tests, he thought I should take the chance! While I was in Geneva, our Washington pediatrician, Dr. Anderson, visited Paris -- he told Robert he was rather worried about my condition. Robert was good enough not to tell me!

Summer 1951

The Normandy farmhouse of an American friend of Mother's was for rent. It sounded ideal for the children -- we took it sight unseen. Robert drove us there from Paris. With us in the car were the two girls -- four and six -- Nursie -- and a Russian refugee, engaged as cook for the summer. She had been captured by the Germans -- but escaped to France. Elizabeth and Auguste stayed in Paris to take care of Robert and the house. In the trunk with the luggage were Mimi, her kittens, and another pregnant cat we had acquired. At a gas station on the way, we opened the trunk to check on the cats. Mimi escaped -- shot under the car -- the station attendants and we surrounded the car -- on our hands and knees we called *minou!! Minou!!* -- French for kitty, kitty. I should have taken a picture! Somebody finally got the terrified Mimi by the tail and pulled her out. At our lovely new farmhouse we let out the cats -- a fatal decision. Mimi fled, never to be seen again. I hope some farmer recognized her beauty and kept her.

Robert worked in Paris during the week and came down for the weekends. We invited several Embassy colleagues with children to visit us. The wives would stay with me during the week -- weekends their husbands and Robert would come down. The farmhouse was of typical Normandy architecture -- long and low with a pitched roof and dark crisscrossed beams set in plaster that was painted yellow. It stood in an apple orchard. A cow belonging to a neighboring farmer grazed there. All very picturesque till one day the cow went berserk and charged around like a bull, bellowing loudly. He stuck his head in the kitchen window -- letting out a startling moo and scaring me to death! It turned out to be a heifer come into season. The farmer proudly led it away to be bred -- we were learning about farm life.

For starters -- there was no telephone -- to call Paris and do the marketing, I drove to Goustranville, a village five miles away. On weekends, Robert brought down stuff from the Commissary. The beaches were not near, but we occasionally took the children swimming. Francie had her fourth birthday party in the orchard with the Fisher children, Sally, aged six, and Guy, aged three. Never underestimate the horrible things little girls can think up! Francie recently asked if I remembered that she and Polly had put grasshoppers into Guy's drink and made him drink it! At the beginning, all worked out

fairly well. I had worried whether Nursie would get along with the Russian cook. But the cook was content to stay by herself. She must have been very lonely. After dinner during the late sunset, she would stroll into the orchard, stand by an apple tree, and sing sad Russian songs -- very Chekhov!

The Cistern

Our water supply came from a stone cistern that collected rainwater from the roof. Thinking the supply was inexhaustible; we were very careless with its use. It normally rains a lot along the French coast, but that summer was an exception. All of a sudden there was no water. The cistern was bone dry -- we would have no water until it rained. We were in real trouble. When I called Robert, he suggested we go behind a bush! OK for boys -- not for a household full of females! The children were delighted -- hooray -- no baths! For cooking we bought several cases of Evian water -- shocking the neighboring farmer -- he said Evian was a *coup de fusil*! -- shockingly expensive. We just had somehow to get water to fill the cistern. I had the idea of calling on the *Maire* of Dozulé -- a nearby town -- to ask for help. Nursie told me that to call on a *Maire* one must wear a black dress and carry gloves! As I had none of the above, I did dress as carefully as possible. Although I was slightly pregnant, it still didn't show -- too bad -- in France an *enceinte* (pregnant) lady got great consideration. Maybe I should have stuck a pillow over my tummy.

I drove to Dozulé -- found the *Mairie* -- asked to see *M. le Maire*. I sat on a bench outside the *Maire's* office and waited my turn. Other women there -- most of who indeed wore black dresses -- gazed at me. When I was ushered into the *Maire's* office, I explained my problem in my halting French. He could not help me -- suggested I try the *Maire* of Trouville, a nearby town with a reservoir. I drove to the *Mairie* of Trouville -- up the coast. I was afraid the mayor might be out for his two-hour lunch -- I got there just in time. When I explained my plight to the *Maire*, he responded, "*Mais oui, Madame,*" -- you are welcome to all the water you want -- but how can we get the water to your cistern? He put his finger against his nose in typical French style -- thought for a moment. Ah, "*Madame, j'ai une bonne idée -- vous avez de la chance -- c'est la saison pour le Calvados et le cidre -- comprenez-vous?*" (I have a good idea -- you are lucky -- it's the Calvados and cider season.) The principal Normandy fruit is the apple -- not the grape -- so the local drink is not wine -- but cider -- plain or fermented -- and Calvados -- a brandy made by distilling fermented cider. The cider is transported in large tank trucks that belong to the local *cidrerie* -- the cider plant. We needed a tanker to go to the Trouville reservoir, fill it with water, and deliver it to our cistern. With a few phone calls, his Honor the *Maire* arranged everything. The only problem would be the timing. As it was the height of the cider season, no trucks were available until the following Sunday. We would have to be five days more without water -- at least there was water at the end of the tunnel -- we'd manage somehow. I drove home in triumph. Then I thought to borrow a large milk can from a nearby farm. I filled it from a stream a few miles away. The water was not potable -- but was OK for washing dishes and flushing toilets.

The week passed slowly until Sunday. The truck finally arrived and filled our cistern. We

were saved! We all had great baths -- the laundry was done. But one thing we hadn't expected -- our lovely clean sheets and pillowcases smelled of cider -- even the food had a cider flavor. The water for our cistern had thoroughly cleaned out the cider truck! Two days later the heavens opened -- it rained for a week -- the cistern overflowed -- our lawn was became a lake. You can't win them all!

That rainy week was spent mostly indoors in the cozy living room filled with nice French provincial furniture. At the time, one of my best friends, Jib Koren -- who hated cats -- was visiting. As we sat by the fire one morning, Jib screamed. Our pregnant cat had decided to have its kittens inside Jib's chic straw hat. I removed the cat and one kitten -- we all watched her produce three more kittens. Polly was fascinated. She drew a picture of the kitten and covered it with sticky white paste -- saying, "That's what a new-born kitten looks like."

Picnics

Many of our friends came to stay -- others only for Sunday picnics. One famous weekend we had a big cookout in the orchard. We wanted to have hamburgers and salad -- but hamburger rolls did not exist in France. Robert described the rolls we wanted to the local baker. He produced the best Hamburger buns we ever ate. They were so good that the local villagers decided they liked them too. Thereafter, the baker's window displayed our buns along with his baguettes and croissants -- they became a staple item in the diet of Goustranville folks. In the local market we found some blood-red peaches. We dusted off Savel Radulescu's big old hand-cranked ice cream freezer -- put our guests to work on the machine and ended up with the best peach ice cream anybody ever had -- though it looked like raspberry ice cream! Then, after dinner, everybody sat on the grass among the apple trees drinking the Calvados produced by the *Maire* of Goustranville. It was well aged -- very smooth. If you put a match over your glass, a blue flame would appear. The stuff was about 120 proof -- 60 percent alcohol -- whiskey and vodka is 80 proof. In Normandy, a traveling distiller -- *bouilleur* -- travels from farm to farm with his portable still -- distills the farmer's cider into Calvados. His charge for this includes an *impôt* for the French Government. The guests really enjoyed the *Maire*'s Calvados. They drank quite a bit -- a few had difficulties getting up from the grass -- but the stuff was pure -- few headaches the next day.

The Normandy summer was very rewarding. The locals we met -- the *Maires* -- the village butcher -- the baker -- the local farmers were more friendly than Parisians. It was only seven years since the Normandy invasion. There was still a great residue of appreciation for Americans. A few of the friends who visited that summer are still alive -- among them are Bobby and Frank Taylor -- who took Grisette, Tarzan's littermate -- we saw them in Savannah in June 2001. Sarah Fisher died in 2000. Her daughter, Sally (Polly's age) is married to David Pabst, a Foreign Service Officer. Guy Fisher grows orchids in Maui. I only mention those friends whom the children may remember.

Tao and Zita Abel arrived at the end of summer. We took a trip with them around Brittany. Zita, age thirteen, was in a state of teenage boredom and revolt. During the

entire trip she played solitaire on the back seat of the car, never looking out the window at the spectacular scenery. She showed no interest in anything -- even Mont St.-Michel, where we had the famous omelettes. For three days we traveled through Brittany -- seeing the fishing villages and the women with their Breton lace headdresses. But after we got to Quimper, the next morning, I was in big trouble. I had started to miscarry. When I called my doctor in Paris, he told us to drive back to Paris as fast as we could -- never mind bumps in the road, but go to the nearest hospital if things got worse. It was a nerve-wracking trip. The baby and I made it. Now, full steam ahead!

Back to Paris

Polly started second grade at the American School in September. It was too bad that she would miss learning French -- but we probably had only another year in France -- so it seemed important for her to begin learning English. She soon learned to read. In her class a boy named Randolph took a shine to Polly -- he gave her a gold bracelet -- I thought this was odd -- maybe Polly can tell more! Francie was four -- but there really was no appropriate school for her -- she stayed home -- probably feeling left out.

That fall I was glad I could tell Mother I was expecting a baby. With the Atlantic Ocean between us, she couldn't cause too much trouble. Sure enough, she began sending me packages for the baby. As I had given all my baby clothes to Coy in Romania, I needed a layette. I ordered it all from Best's catalogue. Mother began to knit sweaters and blankets. Each week was like Christmas -- packages kept arriving from the States. When I showed the layette items to Nursie, she regarded each piece with distaste -- nothing was right -- she was shocked -- no woolen clothes! I said that in America sweaters are the only woolen clothes. She looked at the diapers -- they were the wrong shape -- impossible to fold. After searching through the catalogue she gave up. She knew she had lost. With a grimace she said she would boil them to sterilize them. I said that in America we don't boil new clothes. We finally agreed that she would only wash and iron the diapers -- this might kill some germs! Mother's beautiful hand-knitted sweaters and blankets escaped being boiled.

Our Christmas card that year showed the two girls and the cats outside the Normandy farm. Color film was just beginning -- the yellow-and-black house was my first photo. On Christmas Eve, we went to the Boltons to one of their marvelous parties -- I still have our presents. We reached home very late -- I was extremely tired -- but I still filled the children's stockings. Coy Hill showed up in Paris. She and John were on their way to Guatemala. She carried her second baby in a baby basket -- the one in which my father had once carried me. Coy returned our baby scale -- Nursie scoffed at it -- it was not in kilos.

David Cleveland

The new baby was due February 16th. The first two children had been late, so it seemed safe to plan a dinner party on that evening. But on the morning of the 16th, I knew we had to cancel the party. Off I went to the American hospital in Neuilly. We didn't know

how long I'd be in labor -- Robert went to work -- men still weren't expected to witness a birth. Things went quickly. When I came to, the doctor's first words were, "*C'est un petit garçon, Madame.*" We were both delighted and relieved it turned out to be a healthy boy. In those days the sex of a baby was not known in advance. Unlike today I was expected to spend seven days in the hospital -- was forbidden to get up or walk around. David was the name we gave the baby. Robert's father was unhappy -- he had wanted the baby named for him -- Henry. When David came home -- the girls were interested and not so jealous. They were four and seven -- a baby who slept most of the time didn't bother them. One day the Swiss doctor who had taken care of me in Geneva came to Paris -- especially to see the baby and congratulate me. He had been interested in my outcome after the mumps. He had kept in touch with my French doctor, and later, at an obstetrical conference in Algeria, had given a paper on the effects of mumps on pregnancy. David thus became part of medical history. David was baptized at the American Cathedral in Paris. Our closest friends, Stan Cleveland and Lane Timmons, were godfathers -- Gib Koren -- my friend who hated cats -- represented Mary Lampson, his godmother.

Last days in Paris

We had expected our time in Paris to end during 1952, but were surprised when a newly arrived officer told Robert we were to be transferred to Ankara, Turkey. Robert might have had a different career if we had gone there. However Robert had a new job as politico-military adviser to the Ambassador. At the Ambassador's request, the Turkish assignment was canceled.

In July, Nursie, the three children, and I said good-bye to Robert and the cats, and took a plane for our first crossing of the Atlantic by air. We traveled on an old DC6 propeller plane with sleeping berths in first class. We had two berths, the girls and Nursie were in one and David and I in the other. It was a long slow trip; it took eighteen hours elapsed time from Paris to Boston. We landed twice for refueling, at Shannon, Ireland, and Gander, Newfoundland. Mother was actually quite pleased to see the new baby. Nursie liked America -- all was well -- but I missed Robert. We moved into Aunt May's at Gloucester for the summer. Nursie and the girls stayed in the guesthouse.

In September, Robert was ordered to Washington. I returned to Europe to help pack up for our departure in October. I hated leaving the children, but Mother agreed to take them to Washington. As Robert had local leave due him, we arranged to meet in Lisbon, Portugal. We took a leisurely trip back to Paris in our blue Buick, stopping at interesting places in Portugal and Spain. Our last weeks in Paris -- with the packing and farewell parties -- were very hectic. We sold our Buick and bought a British Ford Consul to take back to the States with us.

We wanted a few French antiques for our new home. I tried to buy from our landlord the handsome *Tric-trac* -- backgammon -- table in our Neuilly living room -- but he wouldn't sell it. So I browsed in the antique shops on the Left Bank. I bought our Louis XVI commode with the gray marble top. It is an antique -- more or less -- it was made over a hundred years ago -- a copy of a real Louis XVI commode that we couldn't afford. I did

find the two convex mirrors that hang in the dining room. As a farewell gift, Maroche gave us the silver bell in the shape of Queen Elizabeth. David would probably wish we had bought paintings while we lived in Paris. Prices were much lower then -- we lived comfortably -- but didn't have much extra for art acquisitions. Only the Boltons were rich enough to buy paintings and antiques of high quality.

A chance encounter

During my searches -- one rainy morning -- as I was driving slowly along a narrow street, I saw an interesting object in a shop window. I parked and entered the shop; there, I observed a good-looking blond woman, stylishly dressed, speaking French with an American accent. She had in her hand a piece of sculpture she was interested in. The dealer said it was a *Rodin*. I was intrigued. When her purchase was concluded -- I offered to give her a lift. She accepted, saying she wanted to take the sculpture to the Rodin Museum for authentication. As we drove off, she asked where I was from. When I said Washington, she remarked in a rather imperious tone, "My husband is from there. Have you heard of the *Washington Star* newspaper? My husband owns it!!!" I gulped! "May I ask your name?" "Gloria Kauffmann." I drove on, savoring the moment for as long as I could. When we pulled up in front of the Rodin Museum, I said, "Well, how interesting. My family also owns the *Evening Star*." I rather enjoyed my moment of put-down. Gloria -- a perfect name for her -- was married to Philip Kauffmann, a brother of Sam Kauffmann, then President of the *Star*. Philip was a Kauffmann ne'er-do-well -- living on his inheritance in Palm Beach. We invited Gloria to dinner. She was a glamorous, jet-set type -- spoke in a husky cigarette smoke voice. She said her son would be the next president of the *Star*. She told us she had a lover living with her and her husband -- a *ménage à trois*. At the time I felt myself to be a mousy little creature compared to Gloria. We never saw her again -- her son never became president of the *Star*.

Robert then had to make a quick trip to Washington -- so I went to London to visit our friends, the Taylors. (Poor Grisette had died.) They lived in an Embassy house on Montpelier Square off the Brompton Road. It was my first experience of life in London. I discovered the pleasures of Harrods. Little did I know how much the Knightsbridge area of London would become part of our lives. We saw a British play -- good not to concentrate on French. Peter Ustinov had the lead -- he was a new stage personality at the time.

After nearly four years in Paris, it was hard to say farewell to friends there. After nearly fifty years, not many are left -- we would see some of them in Washington at the annual gathering to raise funds for the American Cathedral in Paris -- each year fewer and fewer of our contemporaries show up. Robert and I learned a lot from living in Paris, but the demands of Robert's job prevented our seeing as much of France as we should. The children were too young to have benefited as much as we'd have liked. They did not learn French, nor appreciate much of France outside their own activities -- but we did take them up the Eiffel Tower a few days before we left. Elizabeth and Auguste stayed on at the Villa Madrid house -- to work for another Embassy couple. Our cats population had been reduced to two -- Tarzan and Mickey Mouse. Elizabeth was very upset to tell them

au revoir!. Our famous wine bottled in our cellar had yet to be opened, and was packed with our furniture for shipment. It had several years to go before it matured. It was the best souvenir of our life in France.

We sailed for home from Le Havre on the SS *America*. On our last evening in Le Havre we had a memorable dinner at a Normandy restaurant -- *sole bonne femme* -- with the best white wine on the menu. The SS *America* was no *Ile de France*.

Australia 1954-1956

Washington turmoil

In the fall of 1953 our life became rather tumultuous. There was a new administration in Washington. The McCarthy investigations were in full swing. The State Department was in turmoil. Robert was told he would be reassigned overseas by the end of the year. First we were assigned to Bombay, India -- a real surprise. Robert felt the assignment was a demotion from his job in Paris. He told the personnel people of his objections -- a no-no in those days; it slowed his Foreign Service promotions. However we made reservations on a boat that would take us through the Suez Canal to Bombay. Then State Department medicos concluded, after Robert's medical exam, that with his history of *diverticulitis*, India was not good for his health. Bombay was canceled -- we waited for the next surprise.

Our Christmas of 1953 was not our merriest -- we wondered where we'd be for the next Christmas -- no family Christmas celebration at Aunt May's. Mother was anxious about our future -- she didn't want us to go anywhere. On New Year's Eve we were told our orders were for Sydney, Australia -- urgent need there -- immediate departure! Robert was skeptical about the urgency -- he was not too pleased -- to him, Australia was out of the mainstream of world affairs -- but he felt we had no choice. It seemed to me, however, that Australia had become more important to the United States after World War II. It was a close American ally in South East Asia. Australia was far away, but not a backwater.

Off to Sydney

It took time to get used to the idea of moving to the other side of the world. But time we did not have. We needed to decide how to get there. Luckily, travel by boat was permitted -- plane travel in those pre-jet days, while possible, was considered too difficult for a family. The Orient Line had occasional sailings from San Francisco to New Zealand and Australia. Their SS *Oronsay* would leave in three weeks -- we would be on it! Packing was a horrendous job. Our lift vans would go via the Panama Canal -- take several months. Of course we didn't have to take any of the provisions we had needed in Romania. There were many other decisions to make. We ordered a right-hand-drive Chevrolet -- made in Canada -- to be shipped to Australia. Our famous French wine had been resting for a year in our overheated pantry -- it would be packed and reshipped. Poor wine -- would it ever be drinkable? Our greatest concern was for the two cats. To avoid

rabies Australia did not accept pets coming directly from the United States. Rabies did not exist in Australia. There was only one way to arrange their entry. They could go to a special quarantine kennel for animals in Surrey, England,. After six months there, they could go to Australia. So poor Tarzan and Mickey went to England. We were sad when we took them to the vet -- he handled their air shipment to England. Of course, we could have found them a home in Washington -- but they were family members -- we didn't want to lose them. The long saga of the travels of Tarzan and Mickey will be continued later.

There were limits on the weight permitted in our lift vans -- we had to store some stuff. What to take and what to leave behind -- was difficult when you had no idea of where you'd live. We left Washington before the apartment was finally cleaned out. Careful lists were made, but some mistakes developed. Several valuable old Japanese prints, part of a collection given to Dr. Cleveland from a grateful patient, were supposed to have been shipped. They weren't in the vans when we unpacked. We assumed they had been left in storage. Years later we found they had been stolen along with some other things -- it was too late for an insurance claim. Robert's easy chair came without cushions. My childhood books were gone forever. That's life in the Foreign Service!

In late January we started our three-day trip to San Francisco. By now we were all excited about our new adventure. Mother and Harry sadly saw us off on the first leg of our journey -- an overnight ride on the old Pennsylvania Railroad between Washington and Chicago. We had a huge amount of hand luggage -- and we checked several trunks through to California. We needed all this stuff with us -- three weeks on the boat -- then months before our vans would reach Sydney. David was almost two years old -- I asked Dr. Anderson about potty training, he suggested waiting until Australia -- traveling always upset children. Remembering Francie's problems -- I thought I'd try the new disposable diapers. We had a drawing room and a compartment in the Pullman -- each had his or her own berth. The next morning, David's berth was awash -- the new diapers had worked like sieves! I cleaned up the mess as best as I could. We had an all day layover in Chicago before taking the Union Pacific train for San Francisco. We took our luggage to the Union Pacific station -- checked it, bundled the children and David's pushcart into a taxi and headed for Marshall Field's. I bought dozens of boxes of better diapers that we had to carry around with us all day. We were determined -- children or not -- to visit the famous Seurat painting -- *Apres-midi sur l'île de la Grande Jatte* -- at the Chicago Art Institute. The Ile de la Grande Jatte is in the Seine, near our house in Villa Madrid. We've had a print of the work all our married life -- we love it! So we pushed David and dragged the girls to the Institute -- they were not too interested. We had lunch at the famous Drake Hotel with Bob Mead, Mimi's first cousin, whom I had never met. We explained to him our load of diapers. After a pleasant meal, the children became fussy and tired. Robert and I were glad when it was train time that evening.

The next morning, in the observation car I sat next to a veterinarian. When I grumbled about the Australian policy on rabies and our cats languishing in cages in England -- he was not sympathetic -- he admonished me severely asking if I had ever seen a person with rabies. Of course he was right -- but I still worried about Tarzan and Mickey. We

traveled through the Great Plains all day -- the scenic part -- the Rockies we went through at night -- but perhaps that would have bored the children. We got to Oakland the next day and took the ferry across its Bay to San Francisco because the Oakland Bridge hadn't been built yet. We had no time to enjoy the San Francisco skyline -- what with dealing with the children -- the luggage including trunks -- and the diapers! The State Department dispatch agent sent the trunks on to the boat. We used two taxis to get to the Fairmont Hotel at the top of Nob Hill. When we got to our rooms, we found we had not unloaded one taxi's trunk. We had lost David's pushcart and all the new diapers! But the view was magnificent! Robert's Aunt Olga -- his mother's sister -- and her husband joined us for dinner. We're sorry we failed to keep up with them since. The children had their dinner in the room -- they had artichokes for the first time -- they have liked them ever since.

The Oronsay

Next morning, after a stop at a department store in Union Square for more diapers, we boarded the *Oronsay* -- off to the South Seas! All five of us were on the deck of the *Oronsay* as it pulled away from the pier -- whistles were blowing -- passengers were screaming their good-byes. As we sailed under the Golden Gate Bridge -- the San Francisco skyline receded behind us -- the sun slipped slowly into the Pacific.

The Orient Line was British. For many years before the war its ships -- named for the islands of the Hebrides -- transported British families and civil servants to the far reaches of the British Empire. After the War, the line mainly transported emigrants from Britain to Australia and New Zealand. We were on *Oronsay*'s first voyage from San Francisco. Many passengers were Australian and New Zealand war brides -- taking their children home for their first visit to their grandparents. Life aboard this British ship was run according to British customs. Children were to be seen but not heard. They were not permitted in the main lounges -- they stayed in the children's area supervised by the ship's nanny. They had plenty of toys, books and activities. They ate in their own dining saloon letting parents free to dine late in a civilized fashion -- a very agreeable arrangement.

The purser was a Mr. Pickles -- the kids thought that was a pretty funny name! Once they adapted to the British system, life on board became routine. At first it was cool, but when we hit warm weather the children spent their time in the swimming pool. Polly -- almost nine -- discovered the British children's author, Enid Blyton -- she read every book. She remembers the swimming pool with pleasure -- also remembers with horror the smell of the awful vegetable soup served to the children. Robert and I celebrated a belated tenth wedding anniversary on board -- we had champagne -- unlike the French line, no caviar! Despite the confusion of travel -- diapers, etc. -- Robert managed to hang onto his anniversary present -- twelve silver butter dishes engraved with my initials and our wedding date. He should have had his own initials put in next mine!

We reached Honolulu early in the morning -- giving us a whole day to spend. We took a room at the old Royal Hawaiian Hotel at Waikiki, and spent most of the day on the beach. The hotel, a pink old-fashioned building eight stories high, seemed quite grand at

the time. It is now dwarfed by the modern skyscrapers next door. It is now a historic landmark. While it seems lost among the high-rises, it is still the most deluxe hotel in Hawaii. Robert and David bought red matching swimsuits of a Hawaiian design. On the palm-lined beach, we watched surfers ride the waves -- a new experience for all of us. Pigeons joined us at mealtime looking for crumbs -- David fed most of his lunch to them.

From Hawaii we sailed south for days. As we crossed the equator, King Neptune appeared by the pool, waving his trident. After appropriate ceremonies, some of the kids were tossed into the water -- the children thought it was great fun. All had gone too well -- David suddenly became quite ill -- it had to be the food. He had just started grown-up food -- obviously the ship's fare didn't suit him. (Maybe it was Polly's hated vegetable soup!) I stupidly put him back on baby food from jars -- I should have fed him rice.

At Suva, Fiji, when we pulled up to the dock, a Fijian military band playing and singing greeted us. The men in the band wore a kind of skirt. Fijians are Melanesian -- very black -- with tightly curled hair worn in their own Afro-type style. They are a different race than the Polynesians, who are brown-skinned and have straight hair. The Polynesians had sailed north to settle the Hawaiian Islands. In Fiji I hoped to find more baby food. Instead of sightseeing, I spent the hot and humid day going from store to store buying as many jars of food as I could find. The shopkeepers were East Indians -- not the indigenous Fijians. The jars I found were rusty around the top. But they solved David's problem for the time being -- he celebrated his second birthday on shipboard. Polly's ninth birthday party came a week later. The boat was very organized to take care of children's birthday parties.

Auckland, New Zealand, was next. Some young war brides and their small children got off, met by smiling grandparents. A few days later, we could see land on the horizon -- Australia! Soon the vertical headlands of Sydney Harbour came into view. We sailed between the sheer cliffs and entered the sheltered waters of the harbor -- one of the most beautiful in the world. We had arrived "Down Under."

A bit about Australia

In ancient geologic times, Australia was part of the Asian continent. Owing to tectonic plate movements, it gradually drifted south to its present location, becoming a separate continent. Its area is slightly smaller than the United States. It has a few fairly low mountain ranges. Its center is mostly arid -- the far north is tropical, with rain forests and crocodiles. Its population is concentrated in cities along the coast -- their climate is like that of California.

The country has many unique natural features. The Great Barrier Reef -- extending along two hundred miles of the northeast coast -- is the largest coral reef in the world -- has the finest collection of corals and tropical fish. Ayers Rock in central Australia is a huge single red rock, a batholith. It rises fifteen hundred feet from the desert and is a mile long and half a mile wide. The famous kangaroos and other marsupials, including the koala, are unique to Australia.

Some history

Australia's modern history began during the 17th century, when the great European exploration took place. Dutch explorers made the early sightings of the continent -- among them Abel Tasman, after whom Tasmania was named. The Dutch did not settle. At the time, Britain was too occupied with its American colonies and the American Revolution. In 1770, Captain Cook -- on his first expedition -- actually set foot ashore at Botany Bay, south of Sydney Harbour, and claimed the area for Britain, naming it New South Wales. Following the American Revolution, convicts could no longer be sent to America. A new destination was needed -- the British Government established a convict settlement in 1788 at Sydney Harbour under a Captain Philip who became its first governor. Sydney was named for Lord Sydney, the British Secretary of State at the time. During the next hundred years, the British transported thousands of convicts from England and Ireland to various parts of the Australian continent. Conditions were severe -- disease was rampant -- colonization was slow and very difficult.

A major problem was the Aborigines -- an indigenous black people who had occupied the continent probably from the time it broke away from Asia. Like the flora and fauna, they had developed in isolation from the rest of the world. They were very a primitive tribal people -- still living in the Stone Age -- obviously unable to contend against the colonizers. Like the native American, they were badly exploited. Over time the "Abo's" were pushed back to the Northern Territory and northern Queensland. Newer enlightened attitudes have improved their status -- but many continue to live in poverty, ignorance, and neglect.

The infamous Captain Bligh of *Mutiny on the Bounty* was an early governor of New South Wales. His story shows that one could reach the top of the British Navy through mutiny. In 1789, aged 33, he was captain of the *Bounty*, with the mission to transport breadfruit trees from Tahiti to the West Indies. (in 1995 -- at St. Vincent island's Botanical Gardens -- we saw a breadfruit tree brought by Captain Bligh). It's not clear what the mutineers wanted -- perhaps to stay in Tahiti. Perhaps Captain Bligh was not as evil as he appeared in the movie. Bligh and eighteen men were put to sea in a longboat. The mutineers sailed on to Pitcairn Island. Three of them eventually returned to England and were hanged! Bligh and his men in the longboat sailed over four thousand miles during the next few years, eventually reaching Timor. Bligh returned to his naval career. In 1797 he was involved in another mutiny. After Admiralty inquiries, he was exonerated. Mutiny on the high seas even now is a very serious crime -- to preserve naval discipline a commanding officer was nearly always considered to be in the right. In 1805, Bligh became Governor of New South Wales. Three years later, the Lieutenant Governor and his followers rebelled -- charging Bligh with "oppressive behavior." He was sent back to England under arrest for trial. He was acquitted -- the mutineers in New South Wales were found guilty. Bligh was promoted twice to Vice-Admiral. He seems to have had special persuasive qualities -- or very high connections in Britain.

The Commonwealth

British immigrants pushed in waves across the continent in the 19th century. Six colonies -- to become states in 1901 -- were established: first, New South Wales -- then Queensland -- Victoria -- South Australia -- Western Australia -- Tasmania. The remaining area was designated Northern Territory. The colonies were competitive -- for misguided self-protection -- each insisted on having a different railway gauge. In our day there were three -- they became standard later. At each state border one had change trains. On a trip we made across the country, we changed four times .

When the colonies became states and Australia joined the British Commonwealth, Canberra was made the Federal capital. Polly was taught Australian history -- not American history -- in school. She came home one day with the information that -- like Australia -- convicts had settled America. (There was a small convict settlement in Georgia under General Oglethorpe). Polly also learned about the American Revolution from the British point of view -- we were the bad guys who rebelled against the English! As in America, the original colonists were British -- good Anglo-Saxons. Until the last century, immigration policy was to keep it that way. The "White Australia" policy was established to exclude "black, brown, or yellow people." There had been one exception -- as in America, during a gold rush in the 1850s, Chinese were brought in to work the gold mines and build the railroads. There was a small permanent Chinese population -- after the gold rush no more could enter. The Chinese we saw were mostly truck farmers -- growing and selling green vegetables. After World War II, the Government saw the need to increase their population. European immigration was encouraged -- applicants were carefully screened for certain qualifications. Immigrants were called, "New Australians." Some old timers looked down on them with suspicion. This was nearly fifty years ago -- now there's a limited quota for Asian immigration. Australia fears that opening the floodgates for Asian immigrants might result in Caucasians becoming a minority -- the Anglo-Saxon culture jeopardized. When we revisited Australia thirty years later, the general population seemed almost as multiracial as that of the United States.

Before World War II, Australia was mostly an agricultural and pastoral country. The east coast climate was great for cattle, sugar cane, bananas -- wheat and sheep were important commodities for increasing prosperity. Sheep were well suited to the arid parts of the country -- especially the Merinos, producers of the highest quality wool. The expression - - "Australian prosperity rides on the sheep's back" was generally true. Sheep raising created the true Australian life style of the "Outback," in inland areas. Owing to the harsh aridity of the land, grazing animals need a great deal of space. The squatters -- as the Australians called sheep ranchers -- needed enormous properties, up to 100,000 acres. The ranches -- stations -- as the Australians call them -- are few and far between. The families once lived in great isolation -- often a day's or longer horseback ride to the next station. It was a hard life -- terrible droughts, sandstorms and floods. The men lived a rugged outdoor life herding the sheep -- the women had the hard work of running the household and raising children. When radio came, it became the chief method of communication (similar to ham radio); it was widely used for social and business matters and was crucial for emergencies. The famous "flying Doctor" gave out medical advice by

radio and flew the sick to the nearest hospital. Education was by correspondence systems, assisted by lessons over the radio. For high school, children had to go to boarding schools on the coast. Living in the Outback was rather like frontier life in our Wild West. Legends, myths, and songs became the folklore -- telling of the heroes of the Outback -- like the pioneers and cowboys in this country. American "Westerns" became the Australians' favorite movies. Americans seem to enjoy Australian films. Today outback life is much less isolated -- thanks to modern communications, transportation, and growth of towns.

World War II

World War II created a strong bond between the Australians and the Americans -- in the Pacific war, we were major allies. When the War began in Europe, Australian troops fought in the Battle of Britain, the Mediterranean, and North Africa. After Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, Australian military efforts were concentrated on the Pacific, working mostly with American forces. The Japanese took 15,000 Australians prisoners in Malaya and Singapore in early 1942, and were on their way to capture Papua and New Guinea. They bombed Darwin on the northern coast -- Sydney expected to be the next target. This was the darkest moment of the war -- the Australians felt defenseless. General Douglas Mac Arthur made his headquarters in Australia -- it became a major staging ground for U. S. forces. After months of retreat from the Japanese in the South Pacific, the Australian and American navies won the Battle of the Coral Sea in May 1942 off the eastern coast of Australia. It was the turning point of the war. From then on, the countries fought together against the Japanese -- starting in New Guinea and continuing island by island until the War ended in August 1945.

Australia in 1954

The above is intended to give an idea of the atmosphere of the Australia we found when we landed in Sydney February 1954 -- nine years after the War. Change had only begun -- now -- fifty years later -- it is a thriving industrialized country that takes its place alongside the world's advanced and dynamic countries. In 1954 it was still suffering the effects of World War II -- comparatively huge losses of men, and staggering expenses. Before the War it was strictly an agricultural country -- just beginning to seek a larger identity in the world. It was tied to Britain culturally and economically. In 1954, before jet transport, it was very much isolated from the major forces and interests in the world. When we revisited Australia thirty years later, it was hard to believe it was the same country. Sydney had developed from an overgrown, rather provincial city into a great metropolis. Nearly every major American corporation is there. Its trade with countries of the Orient -- Japan, China, Singapore, and so on -- has become of great importance.

Sydney

Sydney made a great first impression on us -- as we arrived by sea -- sailed between the perpendicular headlands -- moved into the quiet waters of the magnificent Sydney Harbour and made our way slowly to the city. We stood on the upper deck of *Oronsay* --

took in the beauty of that immense harbor. We could see the masses of red-roofed houses on the low hills rising from the shore. Many promontories jutted out into the harbor. Point Piper was one of them -- we did not know that there, would be our home for the next few years. There were boats in profusion -- motorboats -- yachts under full sail -- small sailboats -- some in races -- others just cruising. They all cleared the channel for us. We couldn't imagine we would have a motorboat -- *Kangaroo*. Tied to moorings were larger vessels -- freighters and naval ships.. Nearer the city, we saw green ferries plying their way between the city and the outer suburbs. The Taronga Zoo was on a wooded hill -- there we would visit the kangaroos and koala bears. Perched on the end of another point, we saw a handsome house -- the residence of the American Consul General on Darling Point -- it had a great view of the harbor. Finally we saw the tall buildings at the heart of Sydney. The Sydney Harbour Bridge, a famous landmark, we found rather ugly - - not like the handsome suspension bridges built today. The Opera House -- with its white flying roofs -- now featured in pictures of Sydney -- had not been built. The *Oronsay* sailed under the bridge -- its dock was in the center of the city. When we walked down the gangplank, we had arrived at the bottom of the world.

Hotel Australia in downtown Sydney was our first temporary home. We assembled the luggage -- including our trunks and moved in. It was then the only first-class hotel in Sydney -- now there are many. Our rooms were okay -- but the Australia wasn't in the same league as our first home in Paris -- the Vendôme. The food was another story. Our first priority was to find a doctor for David -- he had not recovered from his upset on the boat. We had an introduction to an American -- Anne -- married to Ian Sinclair-Smith -- an Australian doctor. Ian was a cardiologist, but put me in touch with Dr. Vines, a pediatrician. He cured David right away -- he became almost a member of the family -- the children had no resistance to Australian viruses in our early days in Sydney. Dr. Vines was willing to make house calls at very little charge.

Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip came to Sydney while we were at the hotel. The Australians' excitement was enormous -- we caught that fever. We realized we were in the British Commonwealth. The Queen was on her first official tour of Australia since her coronation. She was to visit several Australian states -- each state's Governor -- appointed by her as the Crown's representative -- would be her host. In Sydney, the Governor of New South Wales held a great garden party for her at Government House. The Sydney ladies, in long dresses for the occasion -- in Ascot-size hats -- and white gloves that reached above the elbow -- were pictured in the morning's paper. For some reason we were not invited! But we all stood with the cheering mob on the curb as the Queen and Prince Philip drove by in an open carriage -- they looked young and handsome.

After Sydney, the royal yacht *Britannia* took them to the other Australian capitals. Later, when we visited Perth, friends told us of the dinner for the Queen. While it was their most elegant social event ever, they were astonished to see a gin bottle on the dinner table, next to her crystal water goblet. It contained drinking water brought for her from the *Britannia*. The Aussies were a bit insulted -- but our own experience told us the Queen was wise to take this precaution -- changes in drinking water can upset the tummy.

Ascham School

As a school for the girls, we decided on Ascham, a private school, located in the suburb of Double Bay. Because the seasons Down Under are reversed, the Australian school year begins in February -- the children had missed only the opening week. As Australian schools follow the British system -- for example, the children learn to read earlier -- the girls' level in school had to change. Francie joined other 6-year-olds -- Polly, the 9-year-olds. They would be three years apart in school. When the Australian teacher complained about Polly's lack of attention, she was moved to a higher grade -- and all was well.

The uniforms the children wore were typical British-style -- each school had its individual color identification. The standard Ascham dress included white shirts, navy blue ties, khaki tunics and bloomers. In summer -- February was Australian summer -- they wore broad-brimmed Panama hats with a ribbon of the school colors. The hat brims got floppier and floppier after each rainstorm. The winter hats were felt, also in khaki. Jackets, sweaters, and socks were the same ugly color -- a bit like the school colors of Carter and Christopher at Hill House School in London. Each girl had her own leather school bag.

While we were still living at the hotel, the girls had to be taken to school. Our Chevrolet had not arrived from Canada -- we rented a manual gearshift Morris Minor. I learned for the first time to shift gears while driving on the left side of the road -- a real challenge! Finding my way to Double Bay was scary -- the signs were written in English, but had different meanings. The place names seemed to come from a child's storybook. On the way to school, I passed through an area called Woolloomooloo! In the same way we adopted native American names, the Australians took many Aboriginal names. David rode with me everywhere -- no seat belts or child seats. I didn't know it was dangerous -- we were lucky -- no accidents.

"The Buckingham Palace"

The school's location determined the area where we would look for a house. Since it would take time and we were fed up with hotel living, we moved into the Buckingham, a rather dismal residential hotel on Point Piper near the Ascham School. We called it the "Buckingham Palace"! We had a small housekeeping apartment. Finally, we could escape the rather dreadful hotel food. We found a middle-aged Greek lady to help with David -- a Mrs. Stanopolous, who became "Mrs. Stan."

Now came my introduction to shopping -- Australian style -- a major adjustment. Double Bay was the local shopping center. Like France -- no supermarkets -- each type of food product was sold in a separate shop. The various shops were more scattered than in St. Germain -- it took all morning. No shopping bags -- each item was wrapped in newspaper -- put in my wire shopping basket. (We still use it to carry the mail upstairs). When I first tried to buy milk, I was told "no bottle -- no milk". Even after I explained that we had just arrived in Australia and had no bottles, the answer was still NO!. The children had no

milk until I could borrow a bottle from the Dorrs -- Bob Dorr was Robert's colleague at the office. They could only spare one so for a while we got by on a bottle a day. What if the glass bottle was dropped and broken?

The Buckingham kitchen was primitive -- a two-burner stove and a few tinny pots and pans. Cooking dinner was a trial -- many dishes were burnt. The biggest handicap was the simple fact that I didn't know how to cook! In Washington, Bucharest, and Paris, we had always had a cook. In Paris I had learned to make a few gourmet-type desserts for my formal dinner parties -- these required whipping cream and liqueurs -- not exactly food for children. I had to rely on cookbooks -- but ours hadn't yet arrived. I bought an Australian cookbook -- only to find quantities designated in kilos and liters. I often wished we were back in the hotel -- the food there might have tasted better.

According to my letter to Mother, the day ran like this: "...up early to get breakfast for everyone -- make lunch sandwiches for the girls -- sliced bread was still in the future -- they complained I cut the bread too thick -- get them to school by 8:30 -- then Robert to the office -- market all morning -- maybe look at a house to rent -- make David's lunch -- wash and iron the girls' uniforms -- pick up the girls -- start dinner -- pick up Robert -- eat dinner -- edible or not -- clean up the kitchen -- this usually meant scouring a burnt pan and finally get the children to bed."

Tragedy then struck. Mrs. Stan fell and broke her leg while getting off a tram -- for many weeks she sat with her leg in a cast. Australian law required us to pay her doctor's bills and her expensive taxi rides. I was forced to cook and wait on her -- she could baby-sit -- cooped up with David in the small apartment. She didn't care for my cooking! Then the final insult -- the refrigerator blew up, letting off terrible ammonia fumes -- no replacement available. The weather was too warm to keep anything cool on the windows ledge. The butter melted and my one bottle of milk turned sour.

Another calamity -- we all woke up one morning covered with itchy bites -- Polly the worst off. Was it bed bugs? No -- the apartment's original flea population had exploded -- it had been waiting for fresh blood. These were not ordinary animal fleas -- but sand fleas -- very tiny and almost invisible. But they bit like any good flea! Also, there were no screens in the windows -- mosquito bites were added to the fleabites. The "Buckingham Palace" was no palace!

Taronga Zoo

Taronga Zoo was our first outing -- the children were dying to see a kangaroo. We took the green ferryboat across the harbor to get there. We saw the usual zoo animals -- but the kids were more interested in the marsupials, the animals that carry their young in a pouch -- the most well known being the many types of kangaroos. They come in various sizes. A small version -- the wallaby -- can make a nice pet if you have a large backyard. The big red kangaroo is the largest. As it shares the sheep's grazing ground, ranchers consider it a pest. Also other marsupials are the large and small opossums. The smallest beast of all is the cute kangaroo rat. At the zoo they were all sleeping -- but we did see one small

head of a baby -- a Joey -- peeking out of its mother's pouch. We saw a wombat -- new to us -- a large furry thing with no tail -- similar to a badger. It lives in the underbrush of eucalyptus forests. When a kangaroo or wombat decides to cross a highway, it becomes a danger to motorists. Traveling along the outback highways, you often see yellow warning signs with a picture of a wombat or kangaroo.

When we reached the koalas, we were able to pet one an attendant was holding. We had expected soft downy fur like a stuffed toy but it was harsh and coarse. The beast was sound asleep -- so were the others nestled in the tree branches -- one above the other. Sleep is mostly what koalas do -- but they still need to pee. It made our morning to see the koala sleeping on the top branch let go -- its pee just sprayed down onto the face of the sleeping koala below. All he did was shake his head -- neither koala opened its eyes. The children never forgot this. We still have the sketch of the two koalas that Polly drew. Other Australian curiosities are the huge emu -- the size of an ostrich -- the strange duck-billed platypus, part mammal, part reptile who lays eggs -- the spiny anteater and many lizards -- all unique to Australia..

Wunulla Road

Life changed for the better. We finally found and rented a house right on the water -- at 51 Wunulla Road, Point Piper. There, began one of the happiest periods of the children's lives. The house was at the end of a cul-de-sac. The large lawn ran down to a stonewall at the water's edge. Its picture windows, facing east, looked across Rose Bay, part of Sydney harbor, to the hills of the distant suburbs. Many nights, as the moon rose over the bay, its light was reflected in a path across the water to our garden wall.

When the lift vans and the Chevrolet finally arrived, we moved into our new home. The house -- being on a slight hill -- had three entrances -- the door at street level led to the bedroom floor; the main entrance was at the bottom of a flight of steps; below that, at the basement level, was a door into the garden. Inside were two "lounges" -- as the Australians call living rooms. The dining room had a large picture window looking over the bay. It also had a fireplace. For decoration, I liked to keep a bowl of fruit on the table. But every morning we would find the fruit mysteriously scattered about. Finally a half-eaten apple gave us the clue -- it had to be connected with the scampering of tiny feet on the roof at night. The ashes in the fireplace were in a mess each morning. Evidently a family of opossums with furless tails lived on the roof, and came down the chimney at night to feed. We never lit the fire -- and in hopes of meeting the beasts, I kept refilling the bowl -- but we never saw them. I was too lazy to get up and surprise them in the wee hours of morning. If they had been koalas, it would have been exciting. Some koalas still lived in the Sydney suburbs -- like raccoons, if they got into the house, they could cause much damage. House pets they were not

By Australian standards the kitchen was modern -- but we were happy to have a new GE refrigerator. The stove I called "my pet dragon." Its grill was open, allowing flames to leap to the ceiling -- I couldn't control it -- a proper stove ordered from Sears took months to arrive -- luckily I never had a real fire. On the ground floor, a large room with

a piano -- the owners called it a ballroom -- became the children's playroom. On this floor was a suite of rooms -- to be used as help's quarters if we ever found any. From the playroom, a door opened onto the garden. At water's edge was a dilapidated tidal swimming pool -- it filled at high tide, but its drain mechanism was totally gone -- at low tide little water was left -- just enough for the children's pet sand shark.

Owing to its mild climate, central heating was almost unknown in Sydney -- the house had none. In the winter months -- July and August we relied on electric fires in the lounges and kerosene stoves elsewhere -- these smelled bad, and could blow up or start a fire. The heating was never satisfactory -- sitting next to the electric fire you burned up -- away from it, you froze.

From our picture windows, the view was always changing. We could see a bit of the main harbor and there was plenty of activity on Rose Bay. Nearby was a marina. Sailing is a major Australian pastime -- each weekend were races for all sizes of boats. A great attraction was the "Flying Boats" -- commercial seaplanes that took off from the Bay in front of our house for trips up the coast. Two harbor craft cruised ahead to clear the path for the planes. Next door was the slipway for the *Ada*, a sixty-eight-foot schooner-rigged racing yacht -- the classiest boat in the harbor. Frank Packer, a newspaper publisher, and a leading citizen of Sydney owned *Ada*; he had sailed it all the way from England. On weekends a select crew of twelve men -- all dressed in white -- would take it out for a sail. I could never stop photographing it in every light. As it was often moored in front of our house, we almost felt it was ours! Rudy, a Norwegian, maintained *Ada*. When he pulled it up on the slipway for repairs, he would let the children on it. Sadly enough, we were never invited for a sail.

Servant problems

The staff of the Sydney Consulate General included about seven officers plus a support staff. The American Embassy was in Canberra, which was still in the process of being developed as the country's new capital. Several embassies were still in Sydney, including the Italians, the Germans and the Dutch. At the Italian Embassy we found the Luciolis, whose brother we had known in Washington. There would be plenty of social life -- including our duties at the Consul General's dinners and receptions. To help handle our duties and family life, we needed domestic help. No Australians wanted to be servants. Our European colleagues had brought their help from home. It was clear that the only people willing to do housework would be new immigrants needing a place to live. Robert was planning a trip across Australia. I wanted to go along -- so was desperate to find someone to keep house. A newly arrived but rather unprepossessing English couple -- a Mr. and Mrs. Jones -- was our first try. Jones was a big good-looking guy with the florid face and dissipated look of an alcoholic. Mrs. Jones was a huge woman with a bloated figure -- dressed in voluminous clothes -- looking a gypsy. Most of her teeth were missing -- she was straight out of Dickens. She suffered from malnutrition -- she had grown up in a poor family -- ate ONLY bread soaked in beef drippings -- never vegetables or fruit. Later I wondered how I could possibly have left the children with the Joneses. As Mrs. Stan -- out of her cast -- was there -- we took a chance. While we were

away for ten days, Anne Dorr would keep an eye on the household and take the children to school.

Trip across Australia

The Australian Chambers of Commerce invited Robert, as the chief US Economic officer in Australia, to its annual conferences -- held each year at a different state capital. Perth, capital of Western Australia, was the site in 1954. To get there, we chose to take a four-day train trip across Australia -- it turned out be one of our most memorable journeys. Owing to a different railroad gauge in each state, we would change trains at each state line. On the first day, after dinner, we departed Sydney on a New South Wales standard gauge train. In a comfortable compartment, we slept well in our bunks as we click-clacked along. But before daybreak we were wakened by a knock on our door. "Your morning tea, Sir and Madam -- be prepared to change trains at Albany." As the sun rose, the train came to a stop at the Victoria State line. Passengers and luggage were transferred to the Victoria Railways -- the cars were definitely wider. We then had an introduction to a real Australian breakfast -- eggs and bacon -- sausage -- grilled lamb chops -- a small steak -- grilled tomatoes -- fried potatoes -- toast and jam. We tried the coffee but decided to stay with tea in the future. Our Australian friends said they always took coffee in the States because our tea was bad! At Melbourne, the capital of Victoria, we had a good American lunch with the American Consul General. Melbourne was dignified and imposing in appearance. In contrast to Sydney -- Australia's commercial center -- Melbourne considers itself the center of Australian cultural and social elites -- rather like Boston. Some leading families believe they are the Brahmins of Australia -- they trace their ancestry back to British landed gentry.

On the train for Adelaide, South Australia, in the late afternoon, we enjoyed an Australian "cream tea" -- like a British high tea -- cut sandwiches of tomato, cucumber, and meat on thin slices of bread -- no crusts. There were cakes and scones with Devonshire cream. At cocktail time, most of the Australians drank local beer. Its high alcoholic content encouraged them to be relaxed, convivial, and very friendly to us. They all wanted to talk with us -- we held center stage, and began a four-day friendship. After the high tea we didn't have much appetite for a sumptuous four-course dinner. At the dinner, though, we had an excellent Australian wine. Before we turned in, at eleven o'clock, we were offered cut sandwiches and tea. We barely made it to our compartment!

Adelaide, the capital of South Australia, was our next stop. Soon after dawn the next morning came the knock on our door, "Your tea, Sir and Madam -- breakfast will be served shortly." It was the same huge repast as the day before. This time we remembered to take tea. The scenery did not seem exciting -- but we knew that kangaroos, koalas, wombats, and unique birds were lurking out there. We went by farming communities along the Murray River -- eucalyptus forests -- and small towns whose buildings had New Orleans-style grille balconies. All the intricate iron grille railings on many early Australian buildings came from Britain as ballast on ships. Nearer Adelaide, the ground grew hillier -- we were in the South Australian wine country. It produces wines as fine as any from France.

When we arrived in Adelaide about noon, we found we would have several hours layover. This would give us an opportunity to see the city. We knew no one in Adelaide. The American Consulate had been shut down that year because Congress had cut back State Department appropriations -- the Consulate was reopened a few years later! We hired a taxi to show us around -- as a city Adelaide didn't seem to offer much for sightseers. For lunch we found an Italian restaurant -- such places were a novelty in Australia -- Italian restaurant food was a change from their usual meat-and-potatoes diet. After lunch, there was still some time before the next train's departure. Robert had a brilliant idea. As we had two more nights on trains and its shower arrangements were poor, why not go to the local hotel -- take a room and have a nice bath. A taxi took us to the South Australian Hotel where we requested a room for a few hours. The middle-aged woman at the reception desk looked us over -- said there were no vacancies. We were slow to catch on. We persisted, pointing out that all we wanted was a quick bath before our long journey. Surely, on a Thursday afternoon, there must be a room available. The woman's eyebrows rose to her hairline. Pursing her lips and drawing herself up straight, she said, "You can find that sort of hotel down the street -- good day." We suddenly realized that, of course, without luggage a request for a room for a couple of hours, meant only one thing! Our respectable appearance cut no ice! The explanation of the receptionist's behavior would come later in Perth.

We left Adelaide feeling rather grimy. On our third train we traveled a short distance north to the Port Pirie junction. Here we changed to our fourth train, the Trans-Australia Express -- built by the Australian Government -- no State could have afforded it. It was back to standard gauge. Although we had become fast friends with the other passengers, we didn't dare to mention our turn-own at the hotel! There was the same continuous eating -- tea -- drinks -- dinner and finally cut sandwiches and tea before bedtime.

The next morning we awoke to a strange new world. Sipping our early tea, and later at breakfast, we looked out on a desert -- flat, flat brown sand stretching in every direction - - no tree nor other vegetation was in sight. The only sign of civilization was a dirt road paralleling the track. Now and then we saw a "Black Boy," a cactus with a very tall stalk, its spiky top crowned by black fuzz. We were going along the Nullarbor Plain (no-tree plain). It covers a huge area, perhaps over a thousand miles along the southern coast of Australia. We spent all day crossing this barren land. The railway tracks were absolutely straight -- never a bend -- never a sign of civilization -- the train traveled fast. In mid-morning we were introduced to Pooh Bear's "elevenses" -- not his pot of honey, but right on the dot of 11 a.m -- cut sandwiches and tea were served. Now I knew what "elevenses" were -- they're the British counterparts of the U. S. coffee break (without food). Robert says that tea was always served at eleven in the Combined Operations Headquarters in London during the War. Maybe Patsy had "elevenses" at her office in London!

After several hours of moving over the flat desert with nothing in sight, the train came to a halt in the middle of nowhere. From the window we saw a Land Rover parked on the sand, and a man waving. A boy in school uniform climbed down from the train and

jumped into the Land Rover. Off they went, making tracks on the open desert. Our friends said there were cattle stations north of the Nullarbor Plain, and the boy was home for spring vacation. There was no road and no sign of civilization at that point, but it was evidently a regular stopping place. In earlier days, Aborigines would meet the train here to sell boomerangs. We were amazed that the engineer knew where to stop and that the Land Rover could find its way home over the sand.

Toward evening the landscape changed. We began to climb from the flat desert into a rocky mountainous region. After dinner we arrived at Kalgoorlie, a former gold mining town, at the Western Australian state line. We packed for the last time -- all got off -- onto the fifth train for Perth. It was a narrow-gauge line, with carriages to match -- a small real steam engine pulled the train! With much huffing and puffing and whistle blowing, we started the slow descent to the coast. After our last evening "elevenses" of cut sandwiches and tea, we went to bed. The bunks were short and narrow, not too comfortable. The train rocked and swayed -- not the smooth roadbed of the Nullarbor. It was nice, though, to hear the "choo-choo" and the whistle of a real steam engine. This was the last time we would ever ride behind a steam engine.

A green world of trees and farmland met our eyes when we woke in the morning. During our last big breakfast we saw the scenery become prettier and prettier. Our fellow passengers were fairly quiet -- perhaps feeling sad that this fascinating train adventure would soon be over. Someone proposed we should get each other's addresses. The large dinner menus from the night before were sent around for each person to write a message and sign. Sadly, we lost ours somewhere. We all split forever.

Perth

Perth is on the Swan River upstream from Fremantle, its port on the Indian Ocean. It was the site of an American submarine base during World War II. On our arrival, we were treated like VIPs. Some charming Western Australians met us and escorted us to our hotel where we were welcomed royally -- a distinct contrast to the hotel in Adelaide! Besides us, there were about ten other foreign representatives along with members of the Chambers of Commerce from each Australian State.

For the next week, the men attended business meetings every day. The Perth ladies escorted us, wives, on sightseeing trips, including lunches and teas. It was fun to be on the receiving end for a change and enjoy VIP treatment. We took tea at a "station" in the country outside of Perth. The house was bungalow style -- a one-story building with a tin roof and a verandah running around its four sides. The parlor and dining room were filled with Victorian furniture brought out from England -- lots of brightly polished silver and antique china represented the life in England they had left behind. Black Aborigines served us the "cream tea," even fancier than the ones on the train. We also had a boat trip down the Swan River to the coast -- the famous black swans with red bills followed our boat -- the river was named for them. Western Australia is also noted for wild flowers unique to the area.

In the evenings we all had drinks and dinner together. During dinner our Adelaide hotel problem was explained. When we spoke about it, the Adelaide representatives whooped with laughter. During World War II Adelaide was a recreational center for US troops -- the military leased the hotel for the use of American soldiers. When the receptionist heard our American accents, she remembered the War. Adelaide is a very prim and proper town -- its wartime activity of providing facilities for the GIs' pleasures had been difficult to accept. She wasn't about to rent a room for such pleasures. Our new friends couldn't wait to return to Adelaide to tell the hotel manager that she had turned down the American Consul! For some reason the episode made the rounds of Australia for the rest of our time there. On meeting someone, we would hear, "Oh, you are the Clevelands who couldn't get a room at the Adelaide hotel!"

The week in Perth went fast -- but I had to pay for my enjoyment. At the final ladies' luncheon, I was asked to make a speech. Horrors! I'd never given a speech in my life. I didn't know what to talk about. Finally, I had the brilliant idea of describing how the Soviets took over Romania. The Cold War was just beginning, but the events in Eastern Europe were totally outside the ken of these nice ladies in this remote city. (Perhaps they would rather have heard about American cooking.) Anyhow -- my speech was a hit -- they had barely heard of Romania -- the threat of Communism was entirely new to them, and they kept asking questions. After the final dinner that evening we said good-bye to our new friends -- many of whom we would see again over the next few years. Then we took the long flight back to Sydney on an old prop plane. Nowadays, the train goes strait across Australia on standard gauge -- maybe even that trip has become a jet flight only. I prefer the fun of the old days.

Having visited the more important cities of Australia, we began to appreciate the old saw often told about the visitor arriving in Australia. When a traveler arrives in Perth, he is asked if he wants a beer -- in Adelaide he is asked what church he belongs to -- in Melbourne, what is his family background -- in Sydney, how much money he had -- at Brisbane, would he like another beer!

Home again

On Point Piper, all was well. We found a new addition to the family -- Tizzy Cat, a striped stray had wandered into our garden. Poor Tarzan and Mickey Mouse were still caged in Surrey, waiting out the six months' quarantine before their long voyage to Australia. The household wasn't yet completely under control. My cooking was improving, but Mrs. Jones's was disintegrating. When I came down to breakfast one morning I found Mrs. Jones with a black eye and swollen lip. I wasn't sure what to do, but the problem took care of itself. A few days later Mr. and Mrs. Jones took their few possessions and walked out without saying good-bye. Later I heard through the grapevine that they were working at a sheep station where he was regularly beating her up -- certainly not the best "New Australians."

It was a relief in one way -- but meant much more work. But, I was beginning to adjust to life in Australia. The milkman came twice a week -- milk came in glass bottles -- they

had gold, silver, or red tops according to fat content. Bread (un-sliced) came by a horse-drawn wagon. Chinese immigrants generally were the vegetable growers. Our greengrocer -- a nice Chinese guy who spoke no English -- came by twice a week in his pickup truck and took down my order in Chinese characters. The rest of the marketing was done in the various shops in Double Bay. My favorite was the Hungarian delicatessen that sold Eastern European foodstuffs. The owner's son went to school with David the following year. He was the type of "New Australian" the country needed to attract.

The pediatrician, Dr. Vines, made house calls; his fee was less than ten dollars; he certainly became a regular visitor. The children adjusted well to school, but it took some time for them to adjust to Australian viruses. Each week one child would have a cold -- the next week it would be an earache, all of which was passed to the other children. Dr. Vines would appear with an antibiotic -- a new experience in our lives -- the following week all would be well. Then another child would bring home a cold -- restarting the cycle. When Polly came down with the measles, she had it badly -- saw things crawling on the ceiling. Then Francie had them -- Dr. Vines introduced something else new -- a shot for the measles -- it was in time to take effect on David -- he was hardly sick at all.

Australian winters were another adjustment. The house had no central heating; we somehow had to cope with the cold dampness. Our Australian doctor friend, Bruce Sinclair-Smith, said that as a child, he had terrible chilblains on his ears and fingers. Years later, so did many of the boys in David's British school at Haslemere. I have not heard that Carter or Christopher had this problem at Hill House School. I found a partial solution -- I wore SPENCERS! Who's heard of Spencers? Charles Dickens had! In *David Copperfield*, I read David wore them. They are finely woven cotton shirts and drawers, the expensive ones in silk -- they are worn as underwear. The shirts came in styles appropriate for any occasion -- long sleeves -- short sleeves and straps, cut low for a décolleté dress. Mine kept me warm under most circumstances. Our bedroom was so cold, I couldn't bear to take off my Spencer -- I just put my nightgown on over it. On a properly dressed Australian gentleman, you could often see the edge of his Spencer (looking grubby) under his shirt cuff. You knew that the fashionably dressed lady in her ball gown also wore a Spencer underneath.

Isaac Stern

During the winter, performing artists, theater, and dance groups from Europe and America toured Australia. The spectacular Sydney Opera House had not been built -- most major cultural events were held in the Sydney City Hall auditorium. Isaac Stern, the great violinist, played there when he came on tour. For his concerts in Sydney, his accompanist was Mr. Zakin. Luckily, the Consul General did not care for music, and asked if we would "be willing to cope" with Stern. We gave a reception for him and his new bride, Vera. It was one of the great musical experiences of our lives. The City Hall had no central heating -- the auditorium was really chilly. I wore my fur coat during every performance. Between each number Isaac hurried backstage and immersed his hands in hot water. He played a great deal of Bach. After our years of chamber music in

Paris, this was just what we loved! We attended all his eight concerts and had supper with him afterward. During supper, Isaac would talk about everything under the sun. He had his Russian-born mother send him every week three sections from the Sunday *New York Times*: the sports, the political editorials, and of course the art reviews. He became a lifelong friend; we visited with him every time he performed in Washington.

Polly reminded me of the event I described to her after one of Isaac's concerts. Two potted plants were the sole decoration of the stage. In the middle of a Bach sonata Isaac stopped playing and raised his bow high over his head. The audience gasped. "I cannot compete with that cricket singing in the potted palm. Please, someone get rid of it!" A stagehand appeared, picked up the heavy pot, and staggered off with it. The Bach continued. Only Polly would remember about the cricket.

A spooky story

Hephzibah Menuhin, sister of the famous violinist, Yehudi, was a great friend of Isaacs. On another occasion she and her Svengali-type boyfriend, Hauser, joined Isaac and us for supper. After they left, Isaac told us a remarkable tale. Hephzibah had married an Australian, heir to the Aspro pharmaceutical fortune, and had given up her career to raise her children. When she met Hauser, a Viennese, he persuaded her to return to her career. Later, she was preparing to join her brother, Yehudi, in India for a concert tour with him. The tour was organized and the tickets had been sold. Hephzibah was about to fly from Sydney to Calcutta via Singapore. As she was about to leave for the airport, Hauser became very agitated. "I have a feeling that something terrible will happen -- you must not take that plane -- you must cancel your trip." She argued that Yehudi was waiting for her -- the tour would be disrupted. Hauser became so insistent that she finally gave in. Hours later, Hauser was still in a state of anxiety. As the time for the plane's arrival in Calcutta drew near, he became even more agitated -- perspiration ran down his face. Then he relaxed. "It is over -- whatever happened is done." The next morning came the news that the airplane had crashed on landing at the Calcutta airport -- had burst into flames and all were killed. The crash happened just at the moment when Hauser was the most agitated. When our next bank statement arrived, in it was a check which had paid for the cats' board in England -- a corner was charred. My letter to a friend was received half burned -- the mail sack had not been completely destroyed. Hephzibah later divorced her husband and married Hauser. Many years later we met with them in Washington, on her final concert tour. She died a few years after.

Australia may have seemed the end of the world, but plenty of cultural events came our way. Polly and Francie were introduced to Shakespeare. Katherine Hepburn came on a tour playing in *The Taming of the Shrew*. England's Royal Covent Garden Ballet also came. I took Polly to hear Hephzibah Menuhin play Schubert's "Trout" Quintet.

Point Piper friends

On July second, we celebrated Francie's seventh birthday with her school friends in the garden. Both Francie and Polly received bicycles. As Wunulla Road was a cul-de-sac, it

was perfect for learning to ride. When the winter school break arrived, the girls had time to cement friendships with Cheryl -- who lived a couple of houses away -- and Susan Thèvenin, daughter of a French engineer. They became an inseparable -- swimming in the pool when it was full -- fishing from a rowboat -- playing games in the "ballroom." They went to different schools, but couldn't wait to get home in the afternoon. They were completely on their own and had wonderful times together. David was still too young for school -- he didn't fare so well in finding friends -- only Warwick next door -- a rather nasty little boy who liked to tease cats. From him, David acquired an Australian accent. He called himself "Daivid" and said he lived on "Rose Baiy."

The beautiful purple Jacaranda and other winter flowering trees, including the flame trees in our garden, were dropping their petals -- they made a purple or crimson carpet around each tree. Green leaves were growing, the harbinger of warm spring weather. The masses of hydrangeas, pink, purple, and green, were about to burst into flower. Only our banana tree failed to produce fruit -- the children were very disappointed. The marvelous Kookaburra, a large kingfisher, came to life. At daybreak and late evening he would let go with his extraordinary laugh, a "Kaa, Kaa, Kaa, Kaa-a-a." For this, he is called the "Laughing Jackass." An itinerant artist came to the door and proposed to paint a watercolor of our view. I grudgingly agreed. We love the picture -- we had it framed. It hangs in Robert's dressing room.

Finally, we found a "New Australian" couple to help with the housework. The Larsons and Elaine, their seven-year-old daughter -- just arrived from England -- moved in. They made it abundantly clear that were not servants -- they had never been household help -- but they needed a home and were willing to try. They found the living arrangements satisfactory -- Elaine would fit in well with our girls. Mrs. Larson's background was Italian. Her family in England -- like that of many Italians -- was in the ice-cream-making business; Mr. Larson had been in the printing business. They were certainly many cuts above the Joneses. They were Roman Catholics -- Elaine went to a Catholic school. She soon became a member of the Wunulla Road Gang. I found another "New Australian," -- a French lady, to become our laundress. She spoke very little English, and was delighted I could speak French. She actually enjoyed washing and ironing our lace tablecloths.

Our traveling cats

We received word that Tarzan and Mickey were finally on their way -- not by plane but by cargo ship around the Cape of Good Hope -- not the Suez Canal. We counted the weeks before we would see them and were very disappointed to learn they would have to spend two months in Australian quarantine. When the boat arrived, we dashed down to the dock and went on board. We were fearful that we would find perhaps two scrawny, moth-eaten cats -- more dead than alive. They had been six months in cages in Surrey, England -- then a six-week trip, stopping at ports along the coasts of Africa, India, and Australia. An elderly man, the ship's carpenter, led us aft. There -- each in his large cage -- a duplex with two shelves -- sat our beautiful Siamese cats. Polly shouted, "There's Tarzan!" It was Tarzan, all right, but over the cage door was the name "Mickey." From the other cage Mickey looked out -- over his door was the name "Tarzan." I wondered if

having their names mixed up would make them schizophrenic! The carpenter picked up Tarzan and handed him to me. He had a catch in his voice, "I just loved these cats -- every night they slept with me in my cabin. When we were in port I caught fresh fish for them." The cats were obviously in great shape -- perhaps sorry to leave their friend. Then the quarantine officer took them away.

When they finally came home two months later -- they seemed to remember us. They both scooted under our bed -- perhaps it had a familiar smell. But we hadn't reckoned on Tizzy Cat -- she thought the house was hers -- she chased them mercilessly -- hissing all the while -- until Mickey finally had enough. He cornered Tizzy and growled her into submission. The cats then staked out their own territory -- peace reigned. Up to then, Tarzan and Mickey had not known the pleasures of a garden. Their favorite spot for sleeping was under the hydrangea bushes. Warwick, the boy next door, was a threat -- he liked to put rubber bands around the cats' legs or tails. He did this once to Mickey -- his leg was badly swollen -- I rushed him to the vet -- he said he would have had to amputate if we had waited much longer!

Spring 1954

As warm weather returned, the spencers were abandoned -- and the girls put on their summer uniforms. Elaine had a pretty uniform of a bright blue and yellow -- Cheryl's gray uniform was not too bad but I thought the girl's khaki tunics were just dreary. By now their Panama hats had the consistency of soggy cardboard. Angela was Francie's best school friend. But both girls preferred their Wunulla Road pals.

David didn't have too much fun till he started kindergarten. He tried to keep up with the other children -- but was the target of much teasing. Francie said they would build him a house under the piano in the playroom -- then pound on the piano to scare him. David remembers crawling to the outer wall of the swimming pool that jutted into the bay -- not realizing he might fall into deep water. Evidently I screamed at him -- he carefully crawled back to safety. The girls had the most fun -- they kept pet sand sharks in our salt-water swimming pool or Cheryl's -- fed them fish caught from a rowboat. They often walked to Rose Bay and bought fish and chips from Charlie, a Chinese, who kept a snack shop. Sometimes I took them to Double Bay -- where they shopped at Woolworth's -- Polly bought me a sapphire pin there -- I still have it. The Wunulla Gang could think of no end of fun things to do. Perhaps one day they'll write up some of their escapades.

The famous Chateau Cleveland wine -- a 1949 Burgundy that we bottled in our house in Paris -- was due for another tasting. 1949 was one of best years of the century for Burgundy wines. The bottles, laid down in France, should have been left untouched for many years before the wine was ready to be drink. But our wines were first moved to Washington -- stored in a warm closet -- then jolted about during a long freighter voyage to Sydney. Now we were terrified of what we would find -- hopefully not vinegar. But our Chateau Cleveland 1949 had become the nectar of the gods. Our friend, Jean de Montoussé, the French Consul, confirmed it. The voyages more than halfway around the world had matured it early. Its only problem -- it should be drunk soon -- and there were

many bottles!

The American stove I'd ordered finally arrived -- cooking meals became easier. Mrs. Larson -- the children called her Joan -- and I could cope with small dinners. Two women from a catering service helped with large parties. They taught me to make a wonderful chocolate roll -- filled with mint flavored whipped cream -- served with thin hot chocolate sauce. Australian meat, vegetables and fruit were excellent. Our dinner parties were successful save for one disastrous event. We had invited a group -- Australian, French, Italian, and American for dinner one Friday night. The dessert was made -- Mrs. Larson would grill the filet mignon. Late in the afternoon, our American colleague called to remind me it was Friday -- she was Catholic and must eat fish -- I realized that my French and Italian friends were also Catholics. I called an SOS to Robert -- he said he would handle it. He arrived home at seven o'clock with ten large frozen fish. I didn't know how to cook fish nor how to defrost them. Neither Mrs. Larsen nor I had ever seen frozen food. So I filled a bathtub with hot water and threw them in. I still don't know how to cook fish and don't want to know! My French and Italian friends later told me that as guests they could eat meat on Fridays -- it would be rude not to.

Australian life style

Australians seemed to me to have some strange eating habits. Fast-food joints had not arrived. For a sandwich lunch at a restaurant, there was the usual choice of meat, cheese, tomato, cucumber etc. But among the favorite Aussie open sandwiches were asparagus -- cold spaghetti in tomato sauce -- cold baked beans -- corn kernels stuck to bread with a kind of gooey liquid salad dressing. "Golden Syrup" -- a kind of refined molasses -- was poured over most desserts. An Australian friend remarked that she really missed her "Golden Syrup" in the United States. Robert could get a good hamburger for lunch at the American Club in downtown Sydney. A great Aussie pleasure came from "Marmite" -- a condensed beef product. A newspaper article says about Marmite -- "It is absolute and final proof that the English and the Americans have evolved into different species. A foul-smelling vegetable extract with consistency of axle grease, it is smeared on buttered toast and enjoyed with tea. The taste has been described as dried mud with a touch of salt. For the English (and Australians), Marmite summons up powerful childhood memories. It taps deep into a thousand-year heritage of bad food. No American should try it." But Polly did try it -- she liked the stuff -- at school she bought Marmite sandwiches at the school Tuck Shop. Marmite is available at the Giant stores in Washington -- no American should buy it!

Australian drinking habits were -- and are -- unique. Australian men drank the strong Australian beer, 12% alcohol. At bars -- called "hotels" -- on the city streets, and at every rural crossroads, men congregated after work to drink large beakers of beer. The closing hour was 6:30 p.m., so the idea was to drink as much as you could before closing. The noise of good cheer emanating from these bars was reminiscent of saloons in Western movies. Almost daily there were newspaper stories about wives waiting at home for their drunken husbands -- the women pushed for an earlier closing hour. The "hotels" also created problems for our Consulate General. When US Naval ships came into Sydney

Harbour, the young sailors headed for the nearest "hotel" -- the strong beer would hit home -- one or two would land in jail -- the Consul would arrange for the naval shore patrol to get them out.

At a cocktail party the Australian men usually drank beer -- perhaps a whiskey or a brandy after dinner -- the women had their favorite drink -- a Brandy Crusta -- a dreadful mixture of brandy and ginger ale -- in a glass whose rim was dipped in sugar. We didn't want to waste our fine French cognac -- we bought local brandy that probably tasted just as good to the ladies. At any gathering, the men would congregate at one end of the room and talk about sports -- the ladies, at the other end, discussing food and children. Only at the dinner table were the men forced to talk to the women. The latter seemed to like it that way -- Australia was still a man's world.

The Australians we knew lived very simply -- we were not invited into many Australian homes. The few who entertained did so at their clubs -- no spaghetti sandwiches there! There were Australian clubs for all income or social levels. Robert joined the Sydney Royal Golf Club -- very masculine -- but two fine golf courses -- one for the women! I had privileges at the Queens Club of Sydney through the Sulgrave Club in Washington. Of course there were tennis clubs, swimming clubs, and many other golf clubs scattered around the Sydney area. There were also popular social clubs, where the food and drink was inexpensive -- supported by the profits from slot machines! At the American Club, lunch was cheap for the same reason -- Robert might pay a dollar or two for lunch -- then drop three or four into the machine! Very few families lived as well as we did -- most had no help. I admired the women -- they worked hard -- raising their children, making their clothes, and doing all the housework and cooking. In their California-type climate, the Australians developed a rather laid-back life style. People spent their free time outdoors, swimming on the marvelous beaches, surfing, boating, horseracing, playing golf, and, especially, playing tennis. There were many public tennis courts with special lighting for night play.

But the elite Sydney ladies took formal social events very seriously. The height of the social season was in November. They put on classy garden parties and charity balls -- at these I wore long white-kid gloves reaching above the elbow. Happily, my Paris hats were much admired. Sydney was more provincial than the Washington of my grandparents. The morning newspapers had pages devoted to social events -- with many photographs. Prince's Restaurant was the Mecca where the social elite of Sydney female society gathered for lunch. The ladies wore their newest hats -- some they had made themselves -- and anxiously awaited the cruising photographer, hoping the next morning's paper would carry their photo with a description of their dress and hat. Australian girls, for their eighteenth birthday, were given a party at Prince's. My first introduction to the inner sanctum of Prince's was at a reception for Lady Slim, wife of the Governor-General of Australia. I wore my elbow-length white kid gloves and my favorite Paris hat. Going through the receiving line, the ladies curtsied to Lady Slim. As an American, this was not required of me -- but being a good Foreign Service wife -- I felt it the diplomatic thing to curtsy -- the first time since dancing school.

I even hit the society pages! The children and I were photographed standing next to a newly imported American car. Then I was asked to give the recipe for a typical American dessert, preferably a pie, as "that is what Americans eat." When the photographer came to our house, I took him to the kitchen -- he was truly impressed by the American stove and refrigerator. I had decided upon a recipe for a rum pie, but he said that didn't sound American; so we settled on a pumpkin pie -- I had never made one before! He took a picture of me with a mixing bowl in my hands. David was sitting on the counter looking very American with his much too short hair cut.

The Melbourne Cup was the biggest event of the November season. For Australia, this horse race was the Kentucky Derby and Ascot rolled into one. The race was held in Melbourne, Victoria. During the preceding week the bookies were very active taking bets. The event gave an excuse for many parties. On race day everyone listened to the radio (no TV yet). As race time drew near, all business came to a halt -- even the trams stopped, so passengers could go to the nearest "hotel" to listen to the race. Every store had its radio turned up high.

Christmas 1954

Mother and Harry came for Christmas by way of a beautiful trip via the Suez Canal and Ceylon. They brought us many things not available in Australia, such as cake mixes and maple syrup -- the same as we took to Patsy and David in London. They soon adapted to the new world -- "Down Under." Harry swam with the children in our pool. Their greatest pleasures were the local horse races. Don Smith, the Consul General -- who didn't like classical music -- did like horse races -- he was delighted to take Mother and Harry. In a few weeks time Mother made more Australian friends than I did -- she became part of the Australian scene.

One day Mother went shopping with me -- going to so many stores she found very odd. At the butcher shop, she really distinguished herself and caused me some embarrassment. After a long wait in the queue, I finally asked my nice friendly butcher for some lamb chops for my mother. He started to cut up a rack of lamb. Suddenly Mother yelped -- "You're not going to give my daughter that bum chop!" The man's cleaver was raised above his head -- he held it there and glared at Mother with a stunned expression. I heard the gasps of the women in the queue behind me. Poor Mother didn't realize she had uttered a vulgar and rude word -- never -- but never to be used in polite society. In Australia it referred to one's bottom. It was the equivalent of a four-letter word. The butcher became red in the face and slowly lowered his cleaver. There was total silence -- the women behind us stared at Mother -- I slunk out of the store with the chops, Mother following.

Our first hot Christmas seemed strange -- but we had a fine time. We enjoyed Mother's gifts -- especially the maple syrup. The tree was rather odd -- a limp, scraggly Australian pine. The children had fun decorating it with their old ornaments -- most of them had arrived unbroken. I was glad Mother had brought fruitcake and plum puddings -- unlike the Australian women, I didn't know how to make these Christmas delicacies. While

most Australians took off for the beaches after Christmas lunch, we enjoyed just sitting on our lawn, watching the boats sail by. The *Ada* put up all its sails. For Christmas the ladies were invited aboard, dressed all in white like the men. It was a gorgeous sight to see it sail out to the main harbor. Tarzan and Mickey -- now well adjusted -- curled up under the hydrangeas. That evening the moon rose above the hills across the bay, its reflection reaching across the water to our seawall. So ended our first Christmas "Down Under."

Mother had brought boxes of hot-roll mix -- for her, without rolls, no dinner would be right. She said she would make them herself. Mrs. Larson watched Mother with amazement -- she had never seen this mix before. Mother finished late in the afternoon. The rolls only needed to be baked. Then Mother made a terrible discovery -- she had taken off her diamond ring so as not to get flour on it. It was nowhere to be found! We looked everywhere -- even in the trashcan. A gardener we had recently employed had come to the kitchen for a drink of water before he went home. Mother was sure the man had stolen it -- we must call the police. Luckily I didn't know his last name or where he lived. Mother was frantic -- she'd had this ring for only a year -- it had been part of Aunt May's estate. When I happened to walk into the dining room and pass the silver tray on the sideboard, my eye caught a sparkle. Hanging on the spout of the Georgian teapot, hung Mother's ring. Now Patsy (our daughter-in-law) wears it!

Trip to New Zealand

Mother and Harry planned to return home by boat via England. We decided we'd take a trip through New Zealand with them -- they would board the *Orsova* in Auckland. We felt we could get away. The children were still on Christmas vacation -- Mrs. Stan had long been let go -- but it was clear that the Larsons could handle them.

Here's a bit about New Zealand's early history -- it is fairly similar to Australia's. New Zealand was discovered by Abel Tasman, a Dutch explorer. In 1769 Captain Cook set foot on the land and claimed it for England. The next year he claimed Australia. The first Europeans arrivals in New Zealand were missionaries who came to convert the Maori to Christianity. The Maori were members of a remarkable Polynesian seafaring race that had populated many Pacific islands, including Tahiti and Hawaii. At first the Maori did not feel threatened -- but later, as colonizers tried to take their lands, the Maori fought fierce and bloody battles against them. New Zealand was made a British Colony in 1830. The British military were brought in -- but the Maori were never fully subdued, and the peace treaties were quite favorable to their rights. Unlike the Australian Aborigines -- but like the Hawaiians -- they are amalgamated into the population -- yet have kept their culture alive. Kiri Te Kanawa, the great New Zealand opera star, is a Maori.

Geologically, New Zealand is fascinating. Its two large islands contain every kind of natural wonder except deserts. The North Island sits over a fault in the earth's crust -- it lies at the southern end of the Pacific "Rim of Fire." This fault creates active volcanoes, geysers, hot boiling mud pots, and hot water lakes -- phenomena similar to those in Yellowstone Park and the large island of Hawaii. The South Island has a permanently

snow-covered range, the Southern Alps. Several glaciers cut their way through rain forests and deep fjords reach far onto the coast like those in Norway.

We took a night flight to Christchurch, New Zealand. As we flew over Sydney we could see the twinkling lights around the harbor and the many rectangular patches of lighted tennis courts. At the Christchurch airport the next morning, Alan, our hired car driver met us in his pre-War Buick -- it would carry us around the South and North Islands for the next two weeks. We became great friends with Alan. Australia and New Zealand are egalitarian societies. We, of course, invited him to join us for meals. Before dinner, we introduced him to that sinful cocktail -- the dry martini. He soon was hooked and went to bed every night very happy. We're sure he'll never forget us -- does he still drink martinis in his old age? Perhaps his wife says "no!"

Christchurch was a sleepy small city with a very English atmosphere. The small brick houses had enormous flowering gardens. The cars were almost all pre-War models -- the New Zealanders took great care of them. The spoken English sounded somewhere between British and Australian, certainly less cockney. Christchurch was a small piece of England far from home.

Tourism was in its infancy -- very little traffic on the roads -- a herd of sheep might occasionally block the road. We had the countryside to ourselves. Hotels were plain and simple -- dinner for everyone was at six o'clock. Christchurch is on the South Island -- for sheer scenic beauty, nothing can match it. Alan knew every nook and cranny -- each day brought a new thrill! First we drove south to Dunedin -- then along the Western coast. South Island was grazing country -- its economy depended on raising sheep for their wool. The Merino sheep produces the highest quality wool. One day we stopped to watch sheep being sheared -- in minutes, a heavy woolly beast would suddenly become a thin scrawny scalped animal, bleating its objections to being manhandled. As in Australia, the shearers are itinerants, moving from station to station. They are proud of their skill and speed -- each sheep pelt was in one piece. There I bought a sheepskin rug.

Mother did it again. In Queenstown -- on an all-day boat excursion on Lake Wakatipu -- we sat next to a pleasant English lady from London. Mother -- always most friendly with strangers -- decided to tell her of the Australian butcher's odd reaction when she used the word "bum." The woman drew in her breath -- glared at Mother and moved to another seat! Mother was no lady -- what uncouth Americans. She avoided us for the rest of the trip. Today, among British folks everywhere, the word is used a lot -- it's vulgar, but not obscene!

On our way to Milford Sound, we drove through a rain forest where the tree ferns were over twenty-feet high. We spent the night on the shore of the Sound -- a narrow fjord like those in Norway -- cut through the mountains by ancient glaciers. Hundreds of waterfalls cascaded down the perpendicular cliffs. We were among the few in the brand-new hotel - - it now is a crowded tourist Mecca. Another day we flew in a tiny plane around the Southern Alps. The setting sun reflected on the glaciers and lakes was reminiscent of Switzerland. We saw the pink alpine glow on the snows of Mount Cook, the highest

peak. Our biggest event was a hike on the Tasman Glacier looking into ice caves and crevasses -- we felt like real alpinists. A few days later -- our friend and Foreign Service colleague, Art Emmons, a mountaineer of the Himalayas -- climbed to the top of Mount Cook at ten thousand feet. He followed a route suggested by his friend, Sir Edmund Hillary who had just been knighted for the first successful ascent of Mt. Everest.

North Island was totally different. We took the overnight ferry that linked the two islands to Wellington, the capital. It wasn't much larger than Christchurch. From there we traveled to the Volcanic National Park. We could see the cone of a smoking volcano from our hotel window. As we played golf nearby, the volcano kept letting off explosions and sending black puffs up into the sky. We were a bit nervous -- we wondered if we were safe. A nearby volcano had blown its top the year before. We were told that as long as the volcano kept letting off steam, there was no danger.

North Island has many lakes, with large beautiful trout. Sports fishermen from all over the world come there. At one lake we encountered fish so tame that they jumped out of the water to snatch a piece of meat from a stick. At Rotorua National Park, the view had the look of a moonscape. It was a large area of thermal activity similar to Yellowstone Park or Iceland. On the golf course, steam came out of some bunkers. Major hazards were boiling mud pots giving off sulfur smells. On one lake, hunks of pumice were floating -- in other places steam rose from fissures in the earth. Engineers were beginning to look into thermal energy as a source for power.

At the Auckland Zoo we saw the flightless Kiwi bird. It was about the size of a chicken -- it strutted around on its funny legs and pecked at the ground with its long curved bill. On our last day in New Zealand, Alan drove us up to the volcanic rim of Mount Eden. It overlooked Auckland's beautiful harbor where we had docked on our way to Australia. Below, we saw the Orient Line ship, the *Orsova*, which would take Mother and Harry to England on their way home. We had a farewell dinner with Alan -- saw a Maori dance exhibition -- put Mother and Harry on the boat. We then flew back to Sydney.

Footnote:

In 1999, after three weeks in the snow and ice of Antarctica, Robert and I sailed on the Marco Polo into Lyttelton Harbour, the harbor of Christchurch. We could appreciate the excitement Antarctic explorers must feel, returning to civilization, just to see green trees and houses. Christchurch is the staging point for most Antarctic expeditions -- being the nearest distance to the McMurdo Sound scientific stations of the United States and New Zealand. Christchurch had not changed much, just spread out with more suburbs. However, it now boasts the world-renowned Antarctic Museum. New Zealand also is home to several kinds of penguins. A friend told us she is much annoyed by the small penguins that walk around her garden messing it up.

Early 1955

The new school year began in February. On his third birthday David started at the

Cranbrook School kindergarten, held in the St. Mark's Church parish hall on Darling Point. He wore a uniform of a blue shirt, striped necktie, gray shorts, sweater and cap plus a jacket with the Cranbrook insignia. He had a dark blue overall to play in. This was fine -- except when he needed to go to the bathroom. For this he had to undo four buttons on the overall and another four on the shorts -- eight in all. David had never had to undo buttons in his life. He had a problem if he was in a hurry! (Robert's early bespoke London pants had buttons as did a suit made in Sydney) Zippers evidently took a while to reach our Anglo-Saxon cousins -- little Australian boys were no doubt trained from babyhood to manage buttons. My research tells me that zippers finally did reach Australia -- too late for David!

One day in early 1955, we were relieved of a worry that was always in the back of our minds -- that one of the children might catch poliomyelitis. The State Department had sent the Consulate General a supply of the new Salk vaccine. The whole Consulate General community assembled at the Consul General's residence -- each person was given a lump of sugar with a few drops of the vaccine on it. We were immunized for life. The Salk vaccine practically eliminated the awful scourge of infantile paralysis. Robert and I had both been painfully aware of the disease -- a Hartwood neighbor spent her life in a wheelchair. As a child I had sat near President Roosevelt in church and seen him struggle with canes -- to avoid being seen in a wheelchair.

February was birthday party time for Polly and David -- his came first. The Larsons gave him an airplane that shot out sparks. Massimo Luciolli gave him his favorite present -- a red fire engine -- he insisted on taking it to bed with him. For Massimo's birthday party a few weeks later David selected a lovely car as his present -- he was quite upset that he was expected to give it to Massimo. At Suzy Sinclair-Smith's party, he didn't mind giving her a teddy bear -- he already had one.

For Polly's tenth birthday party, we found a movie -- *The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. Who* -- the most marvelous, imaginative movie ever made for children -- until Spielberg made *ET* thirty years later. Polly says Dr. Seuss wrote it. It was in black and white. It began with a little boy who had to practice the piano -- then became a nightmare -- the boy climbs a long stairway of piano keys ending in a strange land of adventures. Parts were quite scary -- but nothing as today's movies with terrifying special effects. The children were old enough to go to some movies. As we were in a Commonwealth country -- before the feature started -- the face of the Queen flashed on the screen and the audience stood to sing, *God Save the Queen*. There were not as many movies for children as there are today. However, one of them Polly saw over and over again -- the classic, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, by Jules Verne. James Mason, who played Captain Nemo, was the real reason she loved -- he was her first crush! We still have her sketch of him -- I liked him too. I didn't guess that years later Mason would be our guest at dinner in Belgrade

In Australia, after tennis, swimming and surfboarding were the most popular sports. North of Sydney, along the coast, had spectacular beaches where we often took the children. The lifeguards were highly trained young men -- in an instant notice they could

row a large boat out through the waves to rescue someone in trouble. Australian beaches had two dangers -- the high surf and undertow -- and sharks. For safety, the swimming area was controlled -- limited to a space marked off by red flags. The guards sat on high chairs, watching the sea for the telltale dorsal fin of a shark. If one was seen -- there'd be a whistle and the shout, "All swimmers out." To keep sharks out of some beaches heavy nets were strung. Hungry sharks occasionally came into shallow water -- every year there were a few shark attacks, some fatal.

Also at The Royal Sydney Golf Club along with the two golf courses were bowling greens and croquet courts. Here, they played real English croquet. The croquet lawns were beautifully mowed -- the wickets set far apart -- not at all like my childhood game. White uniforms were required for all croquet players and bowlers -- shirts and slacks for men -- long white skirts for the women -- plus Panama hats sporting the club colors. Both games were taken very seriously. Complete silence was expected of the audience -- only the crack of the croquet mallet or the click of the bowling balls was heard -- perhaps after an exceptional shot -- "good on yer" -- a favorite Australian expression. This turn-of-the-century scene could have been painted by Monet. There were regional and national competitions in both games all over Australia.

Canberra, the Federal Capital

Australia's newish capital -- Canberra -- is about 185 miles southwest of Sydney. It is the Australian Commonwealth Territory, an area within New South Wales, but set apart under the Australian Constitution. When Australia became a commonwealth after the First World War, the first government buildings were constructed. After the Second World War, federal ministries began moving there from Sydney and Melbourne. When the External Affairs ministry moved there from Sydney, other countries began moving their Embassies to Canberra. In our time, several embassies were still in Sydney. The United States received permission to build its embassy on land overlooking the city. Our Embassy Residence and several houses were built in handsome Georgian style. An old friend, John Amory, was the State Department's supervising architect. John met and married a beautiful red-headed Australian girl, and stayed on. He later built a house for our friends, the Sinclair-Smiths, on Point Piper.

Robert often had business in Canberra. Sometimes I went with him. By car, the trip took several hours -- a pleasant ride through eucalyptus forests and small farming communities. We had to look out for those furry wombats crossing the road. We never saw a kangaroo on these trips -- they had been pushed farther inland toward the open spaces -- the "Outback." We usually stayed with Art and Evie Emmons, the Political Counselor. While we were there -- during a dinner party the Emmonses gave for a few Australian Parliament members -- their usually gentle cocker spaniel decided he didn't like Australians -- bit the honored guest at the knee and ripped a hole in his trouser leg! That diplomatic incident cost the Emmons a new suit of clothes! The Emmons became very close friends -- we would be with them often again.

Canberra looked like the new city it was -- no historic buildings -- new construction

everywhere -- just planted young trees along freshly paved streets. Of course, tennis courts abounded. We played golf on the new golf course. There I collected the large pinecones that had dropped along the fairways -- they now fill my Thai lacquer bowl in our Oriental room downstairs.

Housing in Canberra was hard to find -- the French Embassy residence was a small bungalow. The Ambassador's Japanese wife complained there was no grand staircase to descend -- she couldn't make an appropriate entrance in her new Paris creations. When she found that the Japanese were not welcomed by Australians -- we heard that the poor woman became very depressed and took to her bed.

Once, when the Ambassador was in America, we stayed at the Embassy Residence, and gave a dinner for twenty-four -- our first such event since Paris. We were served our breakfast by the butler -- hardly the way we lived in Sydney! We stopped in Canberra on a trip thirty years later -- we really couldn't recognize the place! -- tall buildings and full grown trees.

The Coral Sea Celebrations

One of the great events each year celebrated the naval victory over the Japanese in the Battle of the Coral Sea in May 1942. The battle took place off the northeastern coast of Australia -- it was considered the turning point of the Pacific War. The Australians felt we had saved their country from a Japanese invasion. Each May a weeklong Coral Sea celebration was held in Australian cities. The United States would send a high-ranking military officer to participate in the festivities. In 1955 General Doolittle was the honored guest. Four months after Pearl Harbor, General Doolittle led the first air raid on Tokyo from the aircraft carrier *Hornet* -- the long-range bombers could take off but could not land on the carrier. The pilots would have to land within friendly lines in China. Most of them did, but some did not. One of the pilots was our Air Attaché in Bucharest, Bob Emmons, who crash-landed in Siberia. The Soviets were not yet at war with Japan -- so Bob had some adventures. General Doolittle received a hero's welcome in each Australian state capital he visited during the celebration.

Tasmania

We spent a week in Tasmania, attending an Australian Chamber of Commerce Conference in Hobart, the capital. Tasmania is an island off the southern coast of Australia. We flew to Launceston on its northern shore where we borrowed an Australian Holden car and drove south to Hobart through lush green farming districts and by many fruit orchards, passing mountains five thousand feet high on the western coast. There are still some rain forests in parts of the island where certain almost extinct animals and birds exist, unique to Tasmania. Often on TV nature programs they are featured.

In Hobart we had a reunion with the friends we had made in Perth the previous year, and also met some of Tasmania's leading citizens. Hobart was a pleasant small city. Many houses were copies of Victorian cottages -- with gabled roofs and carved wooden

gingerbread under the eaves -- not unlike some of the houses in Oak Bluffs on Martha's Vineyard. During the Chamber meetings, the ladies were given luncheons and teas by the leading citizens. We joined the men at night. The local citizens were very hospitable -- perhaps they felt rather isolated in Tasmania, and were happy to see new people.

After the Conference we were invited by a young couple from Launceston to spend our last night with them. They were a typical well-to-do young Australian family. They gave a dinner in our honor. During cocktails, their two young sons came in, bowed and shook hands with the guests like well-bred English children! After a sumptuous dinner, most of which I suspected the wife had cooked. guess what? At the stroke of 11 p.m. -- cut sandwiches and tea were served! I can't imagine this custom still exists in the fast-moving world of today. The next morning, before we left, the lady of the house showed us her prized possessions -- the two chairs she and her husband had sat on at Westminster Abbey during Queen Elizabeth's coronation. The blue silk chairs had "ER" embroidered on the back. I bet her sons were not allowed to sit on them.

Vacation in Queensland

The time came for a real vacation with the children -- during their three-week winter break from school in August. Surfers' Paradise in Queensland, with its magnificent beach, was the ideal spot. We rented a small beach house -- packed up the Chevrolet -- said good-bye to the cats -- and took off for the five-hundred-mile -- two-day -- drive north.

The first day we drove to Armidale, a small town in the part of New South Wales called New England. We stayed at an old run-down provincial hotel with the typical Victorian grillwork. At dinner that night David discovered a kind of strong-flavored liquid salad dressing in a bottle. This he proceeded to pour over all his food: the meat, vegetables, and mashed potato. I did not make a scene about it -- he lapped up all his food. After that, David never gave us an eating problem as long as he had this salad dressing -- he preferred it to the homemade mayonnaise I made. Which is worse, pouring a horrible salad dressing over everything or ketchup? That night all three children slept in the same room -- the weather turned cold during the night -- the steam pipes kept giving off rumbling growls. The girls had great fun teasing David -- telling him that a strange animal living in the pipes wanted to get out.

The next day we continued north across a high plateau. The country side was sparsely populated. The cold weather had produced snow under the gum trees. We stopped the car so the children could make snowballs -- it was the only time we saw snow in Australia -- it was David's first time to see snow. After crossing the state border of Queensland, our route descended to the coast and to Surfers Paradise. It was then a small winter resort town with a row of small houses strung along the beach behind the sand dunes. At the end of a road was our two-bedroom house -- labeled, "*South Pacific*." Before breakfast next morning the children hopped over the dunes to the magnificent beach. It stretched for miles. Even better was the isolation -- we were slightly ahead of season. For the next two weeks we felt we were in Heaven -- we had the whole beach to ourselves! Except for

one man surfcasting and another catching worms for bait by a most ingenious method. He tied a piece of meat to his big toe -- walked across the sand where the waves washed in. Here he swished his foot across the ground. Beneath the sand were tiny worms that surfaced through tiny holes at the smell of the meat. The man would then pull them out and drop them into a tin bucket hung around his neck. We all had a happy time. During our stay there was a full moon -- I remember singing a child's song, "*Tell Me Why the Moon Does Shine, Tell me why the ivy does twine, Tell me why the ocean's so blue, Tell me why I love you?*" We were sad to leave "*South Pacific*" -- but we were to have further adventures.

Silverwake

In Mackay, up the coast we had chartered the *Silverwake*, a fifty-foot motorboat, for a four-day cruise to the Great Barrier Reef. We took the train from Brisbane, Queensland's capital, for the twenty-four hour trip north. The track was narrow gauge, but our accommodations were comfortable -- in our compartment Polly had an upper berth -- Francie and David shared a lower. David had his favorite teddy bear along -- calamity -- he was left on the train in the excitement of arrival at Mackay. I made up a story that Bear and the engineer had become friends -- that Bear was learning to drive the train! The *Silverwake's* captain met us at Mackay, and took us to the boat. The children were intrigued by the captain -- his little finger was missing! Had a shark bitten it off? The boat was funny-looking -- a top-heavy tub -- probably a former commercial fishing boat. There were three cabins below -- above there was a deck with a canopy, where we spent most of our time. The next day at dawn, with the captain and two-man crew we chugged out of the harbor.

The weather was perfect -- a cool tropical wind always blew. Most of our time we sailed through the Whitsunday Passage -- first discovered by Captain Cook -- the area contains hundreds of small uninhabited islands. On a few larger islands were some simple beach house -- we didn't go near them. We lived in our bathing suits. We would anchor off an uninhabited island and take the dinghy to the white sand beach to swim or stroll among the palm trees. Often we scared a flock of white cockatoos -- they would fly off screaming at us. We ate our meals on deck -- the cook always managed something good -- no Marmite sandwiches. When not in the water the children were content to just sail along. Polly was reading *The Count of Monte Cristo* -- Francie was learning to knit -- David was crayoning. We hardly saw another boat. We tried a little fishing -- I caught a four-foot shark. At the end of the trolling line we got a fifteen-pound mackerel -- whales blowing near our boat caused great excitement.

The Great Barrier Reef was our goal -- it stretches 200 miles off the Queensland coast. One could walk on the reef only at low tide -- for us it turned out to be between 7 and 9 a.m. We anchored near the reef at 6:30 and waited for the water to recede. We wore shoes to protect our feet from the sharp coral. When the time came, the captain helped us onto the reef -- there was still some water on it. David had a fit -- began to cry -- he didn't want his shoes to get wet. The colors of corals show up best under water. Looking down into pools, we saw many different colored corals. The giant clams were the most

intriguing -- two or three feet in length -- they were embedded upright in the coral with their outer shell edges just above the coral -- displaying the mantle -- blue -- green -- or purple. Through the mantles the clams sift nutrients from the sea. If disturbed, the clams slam shut -- sending up a spray of water. A clam squirted Francie -- she wrote to Granny and Harry, ... "a big clam spat water in my face so I looked as if I had taken a bath with my clothes on." The muscles of the clam were very strong -- if a person's foot or hand was caught when it slammed shut -- a leg bone could be broken -- to get your hand out would be a great problem. The children collected many shells -- under a rock we found a beautiful live cone shell. We had to be very careful when picking it up -- its poison could kill you! Back on the *Silverwake*, the captain boiled the shells to remove the contents, so we could take them home.

I did not go snorkeling -- I didn't know about such pleasures. A few months later -- in Noumea, New Caledonia -- we were introduced to that glorious sport. We now have snorkeled in many parts of the world -- but never on the Great Barrier Reef. The reef has now become such a tourist attraction that scientists fear it may be damaged. We were lucky to have had the reef to ourselves.

We returned to Brisbane on the southbound train that went through Mackay at 6 a.m. We looked for Bear but he was on another train. We had spent our last night on the boat and had gotten up in the dark to catch the train. After several hours, I looked for my pocketbook. I had left it under my bunk on the boat! There was no money in the bag but horrors my diamond wristwatch was in it. I had stupidly taken along my watch while my everyday watch was being repaired -- I worried all day and all night on the train. The Captain had told us his next trip was to carry provisions to a lighthouse. When we arrived in Brisbane, Robert called Mackay -- got the terrible news that the boat had left Mackay in dense fog -- hit a coral reef -- and sank!!! But, when the captain was rescued, he was holding my pocketbook!!! Now I never wear a diamond watch -- it sits in our safe-deposit box along with other inherited diamond watches.

Back in Surfers Paradise we had taken another house jointly with the Dorr family. The rent was only thirty dollars a week -- \$15 per family! Our new Consul General, Don Kennedy, was due to arrive, so Robert and Bob had to return to Sydney to greet him, leaving Ann Dorr, me, and the children. We had a great time. Alan Dorr was a little younger than David -- John Dorr a little older than Polly -- but on the beach everything works -- they could even horseback ride on the beach. Although the season was at full tilt, the beach was never crowded. The kitchen of the house left much to be desired -- the electric stove was an antique -- it took twenty minutes to heat water -- then only at a simmer. Cold cereals could not be had locally -- we made porridge -- it took forty minutes to prepare. With no way to cook vegetables -- we somehow managed -- the children were most happy without them. The children were delighted to find a large birdbath in the garden -- it was half the shell of a giant clam. We took trips to nearby attractions, a park where wallabies were kept. They make good pets -- a friend kept a wallaby in her back yard. They were very tame and ate from the children's hands. At a bird sanctuary, hundreds of multicolored parakeets flew in at sundown to feed. We held out plates of honey. As the sun dipped down -- there was a whirring of wings -- the birds

swooped in -- sat on our plates to eat the honey.

When Robert returned from Sydney he offered to do the laundry. He poured half a box of detergent into the antique washing machine -- a Walt Disney scenario ensued -- a cloud of soapsuds exploded over the top and kept coming till the floor was a foot deep in suds - - we took brooms and swept the stuff out the back door. As the children had to return to school, they flew back to Sydney with the Dorrs. Robert and I drove to Sydney on the narrow coast road. It would take three days. The coastal road was very different from the highland road we took going north. We crossed three very wide rivers by ferry -- in later years large bridges would span the rivers. We drove through pineapple and sugar cane fields and finally through banana plantations cared for by "new Australian" Italian labor. The vacation had been a wonderful success -- we'll never forget that sleepy little winter resort town and the beautiful beach. Today we would not want to go back. The entire area -- from below Brisbane to beyond the New South Wales border -- is officially incorporated into a city -- the Gold Coast -- twenty-five miles long -- population, a quarter million! The beach may be the same, but pictures of Surfers Paradise show a line of high-rise condos and hotels -- a clone of Miami Beach. What a sad change. Imagine now finding a large beach house for thirty dollars!

Kangaroo

The *Silverwake* whetted our appetites for a boat to use around the Sydney Harbour. We found a thirty-foot boat motorboat, the *Kangaroo*. It was kept on the Hawkesbury River up the coast. To bring it home, we had to sail it down the river to the open Pacific and then sail thirty miles south, down the coast to Sydney Harbour. For insurance against our inexperience we took along our French friend, Jean de Montoussé -- an experienced sailor. We were wise -- the trip was dramatic. While out in the choppy ocean, the rudder broke -- the waves were pushing the boat toward the cliffs. Jean quickly grabbed an oar from the dinghy and, using it as a rudder, managed to steer the boat and keep it on a straight course. Then, after entering Sydney Harbour between its spectacular perpendicular Heads, we saw two men clinging to a capsized sailboat. They called for help -- they couldn't swim. Hauling them into our boat in the choppy harbour waters was no picnic -- we were completely exhausted. The whole trip gave us an important lesson about the dangers of boating -- we remembered them at the Vineyard years later.

Cheryl's father loaned us a mooring. With our own boat, we were now set for some of the best times we ever had as a family. Saturdays and Sundays we invited friends and their children for a boat ride. Our crew was generally Bob Dorr and Nick Andrews -- our Vice-Consuls -- and any children we could round up. Polly and Francie usually stretched out on the cabin roof or at the bow, but to David's annoyance, I kept him in the cockpit. It was a pleasant and informal way to socialize. We sometimes invited the German Consul, but never at the same time as the French Consul -- though always civil, the past war still created some tension between them. We would find a small cove, anchor, and take a swim. Afterwards, we would devour a picnic lunch. We took along plenty of wine and Australian beer which came in liter bottles and was 12 percent alcohol -- very tasty and strong. Sydney Harbour covers a huge area with hundreds of miles of shoreline and

hundreds of inlets and tiny coves. We never anchored twice in the same spot. On weekends the yacht clubs of the area held their races -- we watched them with interest. I took many pictures with my new camera -- we were careful to keep out of the way of racing boats. We always felt they looked down on our plebian motorboat.

Tizzy Cat

That spring Tizzy went roaming and soon was expecting kittens. She guarded her territory fiercely keeping Tarzan and Mickey at bay. They knew that the kitchen and laundry belonged to Tizzy. Once when David developed a fever -- to amuse him -- I brought Tizzy to sleep on his bed. Then Dr. Vines arrived to see David. At that moment Tizzy went into labor. The poor cat was yowling and having a bad time. The first kitten was breach and seemed stuck. When I asked Dr. Vines to help -- he gave me a strange look -- picked up his black bag and bolted -- leaving me to extract the first kitten. There were three kittens -- a mottled bunch to say the least -- the children loved them. Polly named them -- Fossil Features -- Fire Engine -- Nemo -- the latter being obviously the handsomest! In a letter she wrote -- "Dear Granny and Harry, ... Can you send eight catnip mice, please. Cheryl's cat and Diana's cat are having a birthday party and our six cats have been invited -- the mice are to be souvenirs for the party."

English (Australian) and Labor Holidays

For the children there were many school holidays. The Australians celebrated the British holidays -- Guy Fawkes Day -- David says he remembers the large bonfires -- Empire Day -- the Queen's Birthday -- and so on. The labor holidays were four days long, from Friday through Tuesday. Under the New South Wales Labor government there were many holidays honoring various trades in the Labor Movement. Business came to a halt, including the food stores. Invariably the milk bought on Thursday turned sour.

Social events

Our social life was more than we needed. Our great friends, the Luciollis, were leaving. There were farewell dinners for them. Don Kennedy, the new Consul General, had arrived -- more welcoming parties for him. He gave a lot of parties himself. His wife was not with him, so the Consulate women were expected to be his hostesses. I made Japanese flower arrangements for his residence on Darling Point. Poinsettia plants -- red and white -- grew in profusion in most gardens and could be used as cut flowers. My favorite arrangement for Don's entrance hall was -- three branches of white poinsettia on a large gray pewter plate.

Fall was the time of year for white-tie charity balls -- for a new evening dress I found a "New Australian" dressmaker -- Romanian by birth. Before coming to Australia, she had worked for Jacques Fath in Paris. In Sydney she had opened a dressmaking business. She made me the most beautiful evening dress I've ever owned -- very simply cut from the finest quality of black lace. After I wore it for the first time -- it was described in the society news the next morning. Even the local shopkeepers -- they always read the social

pages -- complimented me!

At a tea party for the Sydney ladies, Don asked me to pour -- a new experience for me -- in Washington it was done by elderly ladies. I sat behind the silver teapot and filled each guest's teacup. The good ladies in their large hats and flowered dresses lined up -- I asked if they wished milk or lemon -- milk I would add after the cup was filled with tea. All went well until a large buxom lady next in line announced loudly in a heavy Australian accent, "My Dear, never pour milk into the tea -- it must be in the cup before the tea is poured." When David heard this story, he said that in Victorian times -- when fine porcelain teacups were used -- it was felt safer to pour the cold milk in first to avoid cracking the cup with hot tea.

European influences

Immigration in the fifties was strictly and carefully regulated -- particularly -- no Orientals. Most "New Australians" were of European origin and were looked down upon by the local natives. The latter didn't seem to mind uneducated immigrants who worked in banana plantations and sugarcane fields. But middle-class Europeans seemed a social and cultural threat to the old British-Australian way of life. During our three years in Sydney, there were some changes for the better. For example, Australian food was generally bland, unimaginative, and monotonous consisting mostly of overcooked meat and potatoes -- even worse than bad English cooking. But they could make plum puddings! Most restaurants served the same food -- I still remember the terrible cold spaghetti sandwiches! When Italian immigrants arrived, many opened Italian restaurants introducing Italian specialties -- but no pizzas! There were a few French restaurants and patisseries -- good French bread for a change. My favorite Hungarian delicatessen provided excellent *hors d'oeuvres* for our dinner parties -- we especially enjoyed the Liptauer cheese made with Hungarian paprika. I argued with some Australian friends that the "New Australians" would add to their culture. This had happened in America -- diversity was important. Certainly in the arts, there could be an infusion of creative ideas. My friends were not convinced -- no one likes change. In earlier days, Chinese had been admitted for a brief while -- mostly, as in America, to work on the railroads and in the gold fields. In our day, the Chinese did much of the truck farming, producing the fruit and vegetables for their green grocery stores along with the fish-and-chips shops. From the time we left until the present, the restrictions on Orientals have become increasingly liberal.

Everyday life

Both girls were doing very well at school. On Sports Day, Francie won the high jump competition. At the school pet show Tarzan and Mickey didn't win a prize -- a Great Dane from up the street won as the biggest dog. David had mastered his buttons. I had fun making Japanese flower arrangements -- I used some unusual Australian flowers, Banksia -- Bottlebrush -- and Waratah, a large red cactus-like flower that I put into a copper jug along with artichokes. This "veggie," -- as Aussies called vegetables, were picked on long stalks. This arrangement created much amused comment -- after a week,

we ate the artichokes.

To recover our rather shabby-looking furniture, I found at a local decorator's some red and yellow Thai silk -- from Jim Thompson's firm in Bangkok. At the time we had no expectation of being stationed in Bangkok or that Jim would later become a great friend. A nice Australian came to the house to measure for slipcovers. He had an intriguing hobby -- racing carrier pigeons. He kept them in cages on the roof of his house. For a race, he and other members of the Pigeon Club would carry their birds two thousand miles north to a place in Queensland and release them. The pigeons would fly back to Sydney, and each would land on his home roost if not blown off course by a storm. The first one home would win -- my friend's birds had won several races.

Christmas 1955

Mother and Harry came again for Christmas -- they were glad to see the children -- but missed Don Smith -- the Consul General who had taken them to the horse races the year before. Mother didn't enjoy our trips on the *Kangaroo* -- she expected to feel seasick and looked miserable with her head tied up in a scarf like a Russian "Babushka". We took the boat back to the Hawkesbury River to explore that area. Children were spread out on the foredeck and roof -- but David still had to stay below. My favorite photo is one of David on the fantail with his father. He was eating chips -- Robert took some to eat himself -- my camera caught David giving Robert a very black look.

For Christmas we had the same floppy pine tree. I had thought of giving David an electric train -- but the toy store sales person said he was too young -- she recommended a large red wooden train he could push around. Dana Andrews hit the spot with Polly -- she found a book about James Mason and his Siamese cats.

Nearing departure time

Our pleasant life seemed to be coming to an end. After two years, we were due for home leave. We might go and return -- or be transferred -- Foreign Service life is full of uncertainties. The Dorrs were leaving -- new people were coming. In the diplomatic community, some of our friends were going -- most of them we might never see again. We had no idea where we would be in a year -- but we carried on as if nothing was going to happen. The girls started horseback riding in the park -- we brought the *Kangaroo* back to our harbor -- it was pleasant to see it moored beyond our seawall. It was the only boat in the harbor to fly the American flag -- but we were upset one day to find the flag had been stolen.

New Caledonia

Our Consulate in Noumea, the capital of New Caledonia, was regularly serviced by Foreign Service personnel stationed in Australia -- they acted as couriers to carry the classified diplomatic pouches to the Consulate there. When Robert's turn came, I went along. New Caledonia is a French *Département* in the South Pacific, northeast of

Australia. It was discovered by Captain Cook on one of his voyages. He gave it the Latin name for Scotland. It is encircled by the world's next longest -- after Australia's -- barrier reef. It has a rich vein nickel ore -- nickel products are its chief exports.

Noumea was an interesting town with a charm of its own. We were there at the time of year when the red flame trees were in bloom everywhere. It had an overlay of French culture -- French colonial buildings -- French restaurants. French Caucasians ran the government and owned the shops and other businesses. The indigenous population is Melanesian -- black-skinned -- not to be confused with the brown-skinned Polynesians. Both races suffered the same fate when the missionaries arrived in the Pacific islands and Hawaii in the nineteenth century. Women had to cover their bodies with long dresses called muumuus. The local Melanesians appeared to lack entrepreneurial spirit -- Malays were brought in by the French to work in the mines and other activities. The economic levels were shown by the means of transport -- the whites rode in cars -- the Malays motor scooters -- the Melanesians rode bicycles or walked! But they enjoyed themselves -- one afternoon in the large city park we saw Melanesian women playing -- of all things -- baseball. They ran around the bases lifting their long brilliantly colored muumuus. They had learned the game from American sailors during World War II. Noumea was a major US Navy command center during the Pacific War. You would have thought our sailors would have discouraged the women from wearing muumuus! For us, a major attraction was the coral reef. A Frenchman whose profession was underwater photography introduced us to snorkeling. His photos were exhibited in the *National Geographic* magazine. We spent eight glorious days, especially enjoying the French restaurants.

Final days

The Australian Chamber of Commerce had its annual meeting in Sydney in May. We gave a dinner for the group of twenty-four people. Mrs. Larson cooked well -- but I did the fancy stuff myself. I wanted to put on the dog for our good Australian friends. The first course was *oeux en gelée*—poached eggs set in individual molds of jelly -- flavored by a strip of fresh tarragon. I had to make jellied consommé from scratch -- no canned product available! These productions took me two days to make. My old standby, Chicken Country Captain, was the entrée -- made with tomato sauce, almonds, and raisins. My famous chocolate roll was the dessert. Perhaps to the disappointment of our Aussie friends, I did not serve cut sandwiches and tea at eleven o'clock! Australian native flowers I used exclusively in the flower arrangements. The party was a great success -- but we were a little sad -- knowing we would not be there for next year's meeting in Brisbane and worse, probably never see these friends again..

A calamity struck -- poor Tizzy and her three kittens became deadly ill with feline leukemia. I hadn't known about this cat disease -- I took them to the vet -- it was hopeless -- all except one kitten died a horrible death. Luckily, Tarzan and Mickey had been immunized back in America.

We had hoped to visit Ayers Rock in the desert of Central Australia. We planned to go

with Evie and Art Emmons. It would be complicated -- in those days, the only way to get there was by a three-day ride from Alice Springs by Land Rover. Once there, we planned to camp -- so all provisions had to be taken. But we never made it. In June we received our orders for home leave and transfer to somewhere yet unknown -- life on Point Piper was coming to an end. Robert's replacement was to be Economic Counselor of the Embassy in Canberra. We began our preparations for departure -- the furniture would be stored temporarily, not knowing where we would be sent. Our two Chevrolets would be sold -- owing to Australian import restrictions -- at a handsome profit. Our American stove and refrigerator also went at a profit. *Kangaroo* -- minus its American flag -- also had to go! A home for Tizzy's one kitten had to be found. The Larsons were upset -- they seemed to have been happy with us. I am sure that like other "New Australians," Stan Larson found a proper job and could buy their own home. This time the farewell parties were for us -- it was difficult to say good-bye to our Australian friends.

L'envoi

Australians were friendlier to Americans than the people of the other countries where we had lived -- I once told a friend I hoped one of my daughters would marry an Australian -- I could return to visit my grandchildren. Departure was hard on the girls -- Cheryl had become a member of the family -- also Susan, Brooks, Diana, and others of the Point Piper gang. I still look back on those days with nostalgia. We were both still fairly young -- the children were happy and well adjusted to the carefree lifestyle of Australia. I'll never forget the views from the picture windows of our house -- the reflection of the full moon rising above the hills of Vaucluse across Rose Bay, and the black storm clouds followed by rainbows -- sometimes-double ones. During the cold months there were the red flame trees -- the purple flowering Jacaranda trees -- the bottlebrushes and other unique Australian plants. I'll not forget the majestic *Ada* moored beyond our seawall -- its sails set. Then our dumpy little boat, *Kangaroo*, bobbing on the waves -- it had given us much fun. And dear Tizzy, who had had a good life while it lasted. Perhaps my Australian world sounds frivolous -- but I do look back on it with much pleasure. I hope this story brings back happy memories for our children -- and reminds the grandchildren that their parents were children once.

Included in these memoirs are only those friends whom the children may remember. Evie and Art Emmons -- our closest friends from Australian days and later Bangkok -- are both dead -- so are Anne and Bob Dorr -- and both our Consuls General -- also Gianni Luciolli and Jean de Montoussé. I still keep in touch with Jan Whittington from Adelaide -- we still have a laugh over past funny events.

Thirty years later

In 1986 Robert and I returned to Australia. We arrived at Sydney airport -- rented a car -- and drove into the city. How strange it seemed! Like a dream, it was Sydney but really not! Nothing was the way we remembered it, only the ugly Harbour Bridge. We had seen photos of the new opera house -- but were not prepared for the forest of skyscrapers and the traffic jams. We couldn't find our old haunts. We drove to Double Bay -- where were

all the little shops I had patronized? We found only large imposing buildings and the modern hotel where we stayed. Many houses in the residential area had been turned into expensive boutiques. We drove down a street to the edge of the bay -- there, was one familiar sight -- my favorite blooming flame tree overhanging the water. Did we dare to find Wunulla Road? We drove to Point Piper -- many of the houses looked familiar -- then drove along Wunulla Road and held our breath. At the end of the cul-de-sac we saw the wall of number 51. Tacked to it was an ominous "For Sale" sign. The house was there -- the same steps led down to the front entrance -- but something was wrong! We walked down the side path to the garden. The banana tree and flame trees were gone. To our horror, a house had been built in the garden, cutting off the view from our picture windows. What a monstrous thing to have done! There was no *Ada* or *Kangaroo* moored beyond the seawall -- we felt very, very sad! That evening some Australian friends -- now rather elderly -- took us to the Royal Sydney Golf Club for dinner. In this bastion of pre-war Australian culture -- nothing had changed. The Australian wine was exceptional. We felt a little better. Our friends explained that the land on Point Piper had become very valuable -- that houses were built on every square inch and sold at a great price. The new people there had no idea of how beautiful it once was. We will just keep the memories of our happy days of long ago. Perhaps, it's a mistake to revisit old haunts. It was just a bad dream.

Between Posts 1956

The long trip home

On departure morning, we got the children, cats and luggage to the Sydney airport and said our farewells to the Larsons and our friends and neighbors. The cats were our main concern -- they would be together in one cage for the long hot trip. Also with us, in another cage, was a pair of Dachshunds we were escorting to Washington for Consulate colleagues. All the poor beasts had to be stashed away in the luggage compartment of the plane -- a PAN AM Boeing Stratocruiser -- a big slow prop plane -- the state of the art at the time. Jets were still a few years away -- airports runways were being lengthened in preparation for them in a few years.

The plane refueled twice on the trip to Hawaii -- first at Nadi, Fiji. We landed in the late afternoon, and spent the several-hour layover in the lounge of the airport hotel. The lounge was open to a lovely garden of tropical vegetation. After being cooped up so long on the plane, the children were delighted to run around. We and the other passengers sat on the rattan chairs sipping cool drinks. Suddenly Polly showed up with a large grin on her face -- holding onto her dress -- hiked above her knees. There came a funny croaking noise and movement -- Polly then dumped about ten huge toads on the floor -- they hopped in all directions. You should have heard the hotel guests -- they squealed as if the toads were rats!

We re-boarded the plane in the late evening and flew until we landed on Howland Island -- a tiny U. S. territory on the Equator -- then used as a refueling stop for military and civil aviation. During the refueling, we got off to see to the animals. It was terribly hot --

the cats seemed unhappy but okay -- but the dogs were in bad shape. The lady dachshund had come into season -- but the cage was too small for the male dog to mount his girl friend! When we reached Hawaii, the animals were really miserable and they still had another two days' trip to Washington. The poor male dachshund was foaming at the mouth!

Washington

All of us -- cats included -- finally arrived home intact. Tarzan and Mickey were delighted to be set free at Mother's apartment -- but they had to adjust to Amber -- Mother's tiny yappy dog -- she was more of a problem than Tizzy Cat -- they spent most of their time under the beds.

Washington summers were still terribly hot -- we had to organize something for the children. Gloucester was no longer available -- and we'd have to be present at Hartwood. So we sent the girls to an excellent, highly regarded camp in Maine. As a child, I had loved camp -- I believed they would be happy there -- but this did not happen. Both girls hated it -- they felt like fish out of water in the environment. Organized sports were important there -- neither girl cared for them. Polly said she liked arts and crafts and sailing but disliked everything else -- particularly regimented activities. She handled the problem by falling into a nest of wasps -- she was severely stung, and spent the last ten days of camp in the infirmary. The camp nurse went out of her way to tell me that Polly was a fascinating child.

Assignment to Bangkok

Robert's new assignment was slow in coming -- we could make no plans until it did. It so happened that we saw the Rodgers and Hammerstein movie -- *The King and I*. Having read Margaret Landon's -- *Anna and the King of Siam*, we had particularly enjoyed it. We didn't know then that the costumes in the movie were made of Thai silk provided by our future friend, Jim Thompson. Then Robert called to say he had been assigned to Bangkok as Economic Counselor -- to leave in September. Robert had some misgivings about the Ambassador; although he was a Foreign Service Officer, he had the reputation for political toadyism, false accusations against colleagues, and worse. In fact, a senior Foreign Service officer said to us that he would resign from the Service rather than serve under him! Nevertheless, it seemed to be the best job available at the time, and Robert accepted it. Our anxiety was greatly relieved by the fact that our old friends John and Coy Hill were stationed there.

We were told we would have a furnished Government house -- so our furniture would have to remain in storage in Sydney -- other items would be shipped to Bangkok. For tropical Thailand, hot weather clothes were needed -- plenty were still available in the hot Washington summer. Other preparations were not too complicated -- but we had to add cholera, yellow fever, and bubonic plague to the required immunization shots. To break the long trip, especially for the children, we planned to stop several days each in Hawaii, Tokyo, and Hong Kong. Tarzan and Mickey would stay behind until we were settled --

the poor cats had a tough life!

We said good-bye to Mother and Harry, and began our long trip. We traveled via San Francisco in a Douglas DC 7 prop plane for the long flight to Hawaii -- no cats this time -- but David carried teddy bear Number Two! We revisited the pink Royal Hawaiian Hotel in Waikiki, and spent a few days mostly on the beach. The children were fascinated by the woman who passed the muffins at meals -- she wore a Japanese kimono -- it was our first introduction to anything Japanese. They called her the "Muffin Lady." When we reached Japan -- when they saw a woman wearing a kimono, they would yell out, "There goes a Muffin Lady!"

Japan

On the flight from Hawaii to Tokyo, the plane landed once to refuel on Wake Island, and arrived the next morning at the old Haneda Airport near the city. We spent a few nights at the old Imperial Hotel -- designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. It was the first building in Japan constructed to withstand earthquakes after the devastating 1923 quake. It also survived the US fire bombings during the war. I remember the long narrow windows of the typical Wright design and the contemporary chandeliers in the high-ceilinged lobby. The children remember the huge bathtub -- they all got in together. The hotel is kept as a landmark -- has been completely modernized. Japan really astonished all of us -- the masses of people on the streets and the traffic jams. We took a trip to Kamakura to visit the shrines and the huge sixty-six-foot Buddha statue -- the Daibutsu -- sitting in the open surrounded by pine trees. On that day we were the only tourists there, along with a few "Muffin Ladies."

Hong Kong

Our next stop was in Hong Kong -- then a British crown colony -- an enclave on the south coast of China. It includes the peninsula of Kowloon and the New Territories on the mainland, Victoria Island -- Hong Kong's center, and many other smaller islands. In 1997 the colony was returned to China. The airport was in the center of heavily populated Kowloon; it was adequate for prop planes, but rather dangerous and scary for landing. This involved skimming the top of a densely populated hill and dropping at the last moment onto the runway -- there had been several bad accidents. Now, for jets, the airport has been improved by slicing off the top of the hill and extending the runways on reclaimed land from the harbor.

We stayed at the Miramar, a modest hotel in Kowloon, several blocks up the hill from the famous Peninsula Hotel. It now has landmark status -- has been modernized with a tower and helicopter pad on the roof. With its mountains and harbor, Hong Kong is one of the most beautiful sites in the world. From our bedroom windows we looked across the harbor to Victoria Island. At night you could see the lights along the harbor and a few lights climbing the mountain to the Peak behind the city. In 1956 Hong Kong buildings were still low -- not yet constructed was today's forest of skyscrapers that dwarf the old British colonial buildings. The harbor was a confusion of freighters, Chinese junks,

sampans, and the green Star ferries going back and forth across the harbor -- then the only means of travel. Now there is a car tunnel under the harbor -- not nearly as pleasant as the ferry ride.

The sights of Hong Kong -- we saw them all! We took the Star ferry to Victoria Island -- there we were swallowed

up in the narrow streets -- it was hard to thread our way among the masses of Chinese. I was terrified we might lose a child -- how would we ever find each other again? If we thought Tokyo was crowded, nothing prepared us for the seething humanity charging along Hong Kong streets. We found our way to the cog railway that climbs the steep mountainside to the Peak. Its magnificent view overlooked the harbor toward Kowloon and the distant mountains of China in the west. A taxi took us around the Island -- on its far side was a beach where we spent several hours swimming. We went on over winding roads. At Aberdeen we saw hundreds of houseboats jammed together -- several were fancy fish restaurants. Not being a fish eating family, we thought it better to return to our hotel. At the ferry landing in Kowloon stood a line of red rickshaws -- each with its coolie. These have long since been discontinued -- as degrading to the men pulling them. That didn't occur to us -- no political correctness then! The coolies grinned broadly and were only too happy to earn some money. We each climbed into a rickshaw, and the five coolies trotted with us up the hill to the hotel.

We took a boat tour of the harbor -- it was very different from Sydney Harbour! We had never seen sampans before -- some had outboard motors -- most were paddled by one man. They were going in all directions -- piled high with produce. The huge Chinese junks entranced us the most. Their sails often had holes in them and often large patches. The junks were home for the families on board -- there were always children running around the decks and laundry strung up. Though Hong Kong was a Mecca for world shopping, it was not on our agenda this time. We would shop on our next trip, without the children. We didn't try any real Chinese food -- but we probably ate a lot of chicken and rice -- it tasted different -- better than anything we had ever eaten. In 1995 it was amusing to receive a letter from Aislyn, saying, "After living with a Chinese family, when my group arrived in Peking, the first thing we did was to find a Macdonald's!"

For the flight to Bangkok we boarded the old PAN AM Flight One -- that airline, now defunct -- was the carrier for almost all our travels over the years -- we were very attached to it! On our descent into Bangkok the plane flew low over miles of green rice paddies -- we saw no buildings or runway -- it seemed as though we might land in a paddy. The plane landed safely -- but we were shocked by the intense heat that hit us as we came down the steps and crossed to the terminal building -- no air-conditioning then. Here were a strange people speaking a language we had never heard -- we certainly felt we were in a new world. Soon we, with all our possessions, were on our way to town -- nearly all, David's famous Bear #2 had been left on the plane. As this flight circled the globe twice a week, we told David that Bear was helping the pilot fly the plane -- that was more exciting than Bear#1 driving a train in Queensland, Australia. Fortunately a white koala bear had become part of the family in Sydney -- he had been carefully packed

and was with us forever!

Thailand 1956-1958

Arrival -- September 1956

The heat of the Thai climate really hit us when we landed. Embassy staff helped us through customs -- with diplomatic passports there never was a problem. Our experience in this startling new world started on the ride to Bangkok along the tree-lined two-lane highway that ran between flat rice paddies. There were drainage canals -- *klongs* -- on both sides of the road -- needed to drain the low-lying land that is only about six feet above the water table. As we learned later, there were no speed regulations -- Thais drove like bats out of Hell resulting in many serious accidents on this road. A car either crashed into a tree or landed head first in a *klong* -- perhaps turned over, sometimes drowning its occupants. Since then Thailand has built a four-lane superhighway from the new air-conditioned airport -- but we hear they still have many accidents!

On this trip we didn't know of these dangers -- we were too interested in the sights. We saw the peasants at work in the rice paddies. They wore large straw hats that looked like lampshades. A huge black water buffalo wallowed in the mud -- he would pull a plow in the rice paddies later on. Across the fields we could see a village of straw huts with tin roofs -- also a Thai temple whose steep stacked pointed roofs rose above its whitewashed walls. The marvelous unique Thai architecture is hard to describe in words -- my photographs do it for me. The hot rainy season was coming to a close -- the coming fall and winter months would be dry and pleasant. At this time the rice would be harvested -- the fields plowed to be ready for the next planting. New rice seedlings would be carefully put in by hand before the next rainy season.

As we approached the city, we were swallowed up in terrible traffic -- honking cars darted around like midgets -- buses letting off horrible gas fumes -- *samlors* (pedicabs) dodging in and out. Men pulled carts piled high with produce -- others with yokes across their shoulders, balanced baskets or pails that danced as they jogged along. Saffron-clad shaven-headed monks added to the colorful mad picture. Mangy stray dogs, their ribs showing, looked for food in the gutters -- if they tried to cross the street -- they were dead!

The American Club

Instead of the government house we had been promised, we were first billeted at the American Club -- a kind of hostel. It consisted of a group of buildings in a large compound. It was one of our many surprises -- added to the cultural shock of living in the tropics. The main building was an old Thai house. Its ground floor was completely open to the tropical gardens beyond. It reminded me of the hotel in Fiji where Polly dumped the toads. Here were the lounges and dining room. The furniture was all rattan. Above, ceiling fans slowly pushed around the hot air. The many servants were barefooted. Our bedrooms were in another building, and were about as attractive as a Japanese prison

camp. The floors were concrete -- no rugs -- the furniture sparse -- a sheet covered each bed. No window panes in the windows. There were screens, but the mesh was of a size that allowed in the tiny mosquitoes that fed on our tasty new blood. The ceiling fan made a grinding noise -- that mixed in with the mosquitoes' hum. A single electric light bulb hung from the ceiling -- it was best turned off to discourage the flying insects. In the bathroom, a tall ceramic jar with a dragon painted on its side was full of water -- then we didn't know what it was for.

The children were so tired they slept through that first hideously hot night. At breakfast we met some of the other inmates -- mostly families like us -- waiting to move into a house. There was some comfort in all being in the same boat or rather the same *sampan*! Suddenly, Coy Hill turned up -- life took a turn for the better. We hadn't seen each other for several years -- we never stopped talking. I began to look forward to our new adventures with more enthusiasm.

Weather was the first adjustment. It was the end of the rainy season -- still very hot -- in the high 90s every day -- there were occasional afternoon rainstorms. The heavy monsoon storms of the summer were over. By mid-October -- for the next six months -- there would be dry, cooler weather with blue skies and no rain. Diplomatic receptions could be safely held outdoors. In December it was often cool enough for a sweater in the evening. But by April -- the heat, humidity, and rain would return with a vengeance.

Settling in

Robert left for the embassy in the morning, leaving me to cope. School would be easy -- the International School, with the curriculum of an American public school. Polly would start in the seventh grade -- Francie in the fourth. As David's birthday came in February, he was not accepted in the kindergarten -- while Coy's son -- two months older -- born in December -- was admitted -- very annoying! I had to keep David with me until we found a kindergarten for him. Later I found a Philippine kindergarten. The teachers spoke English -- but to my horror David lost his Australian accent and began to speak with a Philippine accent. It was not the best solution -- until I found a better school that was that -- such is Foreign Service life.

House hunting

Finding a house turned out to be a big problem. Larry Phillips, the Embassy Administrative Officer had quite improperly occupied the house designated for the Economic Counselor. Although Robert outranked him, he had done many favors for Ambassador Bishop; the latter would not move him out! We did not become friends with Larry! Most Embassy officers considered him a twerp and a toady of Bishop. As Robert was very busy at the office, it fell to me to find a house -- I looked at a lot. Before air-conditioning, the old-fashioned teakwood houses were best equipped for living in the tropics. Some Embassy personnel had found such houses available. Their living quarters -- on the second floor above the open ground floor -- let the air circulate. This also was a protection against the rainy season flooding. Such houses were built in a T-shape so that

each room had three exposures to catch any moving air. The large overhang of the roofs and the vertical wooden shutters kept out both sun and rain. Walls were a series of windows without glass or screens. The Thais felt screens kept out the air -- as to mosquitoes, one got used to them and became immune to their bites. Being good Buddhists, Thais did not kill anything -- certainly no hovering insect, bee, or bug. We were warned that when visiting a Thai family, we should never slap at the mosquitoes -- just gently push them aside. Never in a Thai house would you find a fly swatter or bug spray.

I learned that *chinchuks*, the small lizards (they looked like chameleons) that lived on the interior walls of the house, were a great necessity, in fact most desirable -- their favorite food was insects. They were most active at night -- they stalked anything that flew by -- they emitted a pleasant soft clucking sound -- tsk-tsk-tsk. In bedrooms, beds were placed in the middle of the room to catch any breeze from the many windows. Bathrooms had three fixtures -- the toilet -- a basin -- and the ubiquitous Shanghai Jar, standing waist high. Few bathrooms had showers -- and if there was one, it rarely worked, owing to poor water pressure; the Shanghai Jar was essential. Using a small bowl to dip up the water, you could have a kind of shower -- only cold water but that was OK in a hot country. We finally found a modern house tucked away on Soi Sarasin lane -- not far from the government house we eventually occupied. It was a cinder block rectangle -- not very attractive and certainly hot.

Ben and family

We needed a staff to run the house. By luck we heard of a Chinese family working for some US military who were leaving. Ben and family took great care of us for the next two years. Like many Chinese in Thailand, the family came from Hainan Island off the southern coast of China. In Thailand, they adopted a Thai name and became Thai citizens. Ben -- I never knew his Chinese name -- was the cook. He spoke some English. His wife, "Ma," did the cleaning; she spoke no English. The elder daughter, Lokka, was the "Number One Boy;" she ran the household, served drinks, and waited on table. Tipong, a slightly retarded daughter, helped with the cleaning. Their seven-year-old son, Sae, was at a Thai school. He kept his father's accounts -- and wrote the details down in English. More about Sae later. In the house, the family left their shoes by the door and remained barefooted. They dressed in black pants or skirts and a white or blue blouse. As in Bucharest, there was also a laundress -- we never knew her name, either! Living in a hot country, there was plenty to wash every day. When our car -- a gray Buick with a right hand drive -- arrived, we hired a driver -- he owned a lovely Burmese cat. The gardener was a dark-skinned Thai from the Korat area -- I never saw him smile. He was looked down upon socially by the other lighter-skinned Thais -- like the caste system in India. We moved into our house when our lift vans arrived from Australia.

The Soi Sarasin house

We were glad to leave the American Club. The new house still needed a few adjustments; it had its share of windows without glass or screens. The Embassy had screens put in the

windows and installed an air-conditioner in our bedroom -- its windows were fitted with glass to keep out the hot air. The bathroom did have a shower -- the water only dribbled - - frequently didn't run at all. So we had a pressure pump and a new water tank installed. But we kept our Shanghai Jar filled with water. The house was partially furnished -- the rattan furniture was more appropriate than our overstuffed chairs. We left some in storage in Australia. Our silverware was packed in the compartments of an ancient shoe trunk of my Grandmother's. When our goods arrived from Sydney, fortunately we opened the trunk in the driveway. To our horror we found its interior completely destroyed by creepy-crawly white termites -- they had made the trunk into a giant termite nest! The silver was still there -- they had not found it appetizing. We dug out the flat silver, teapots and candlesticks -- then we had a small Guy Fawkes bonfire. The poor termites went up in flames. I wonder if the Buddhist Thais would have opposed killing termites.

To complete the household, we sent for Mickey and Tarzan -- they traveled again via Pan-Am. When we picked them up at the airport -- no quarantine here -- they both looked rather stunned after the long flight. When we got home we saw something was horribly wrong with Mickey -- he just stretched out and closed his eyes. There was no vet -- Thais rarely had pets. We laid him on a towel in the coolest spot of the living room. For days he neither ate nor drank -- worse, did not use to the cat pan. He was dying! Coy Hill recently reminded me of that time in Bangkok. One night when John arrived home, she asked if there was any news at the Embassy that day. John replied, "Nothing much -- oh, YES, the Cleveland cat did PEE!" Of course we should have found a vet -- Mickey should have had a saline IV -- he had become dehydrated on the trip. Mickey was to live a long time and have many adventures. He had just used up one of his many lives. Not so lucky was the driver's beautiful Burmese cat. He ran over it, backing the car out of the garage. Polly remembered we had admired that cat -- thirty-five years later she brought a little Burmese kitten to West Chop for Bear's 80th birthday. She was very dark brown with golden eyes - - very tiny -- we called her Mini -- she died in 2000 -- only ten years old.

Ben and family lived in a separate kitchen area at the back of the house. He was very proud and pleased with the new imported GE refrigerator -- we gave it to him when we left Thailand. I think he found most of my many kitchen pots and pans useless. Whatever he used, he produced the most marvelous food we ever ate. The household ran well; some adjustments were necessary -- water had to be boiled for drinking -- there was no milk yet available. Ben did the shopping -- he bargained at the local markets. Many products were obtained from the Army Commissary -- beef and lamb from New Zealand -- dairy products -- cheese, butter, and bacon from Denmark -- from the US, items such as dry cereals, canned goods, paper, and cleaning products. Thais eat mostly rice dishes -- bread was not in their diet. Later an enterprising American opened a bakery for typical American products -- before that there was no way to make a sandwich. Foremost Dairy opened a plant that produced ice cream and reconstituted milk from powdered milk -- it tasted quite normal. Then an American, a Mrs. North, started a bottled-water company. The water tasted better than Washington tap water. Owing to these innovations, our hardship post allowance was reduced -- that was all right with us! We had to use canned goods from time to time -- when certain items at the commissary ran out -- but we ate very well -- even magnificently when Ben produced a Chinese dinner.

Social life

Official mandatory social activity soon began. There were few free evenings to dine quietly with our old friends John and Coy Hill. The Ambassador and the senior officers of the Embassy carried the heavy burden of the official entertaining. For us attendance was mandatory at most receptions and dinners for Thai government officials, other members of the Diplomatic Corps, and local American businessmen. Also those for visiting VIPs -- especially officials of the US Government and Congress -- who expected attention -- usually took themselves seriously. Some of them, though, were very interesting. The most annoying were questionable Americans who felt their importance would be enhanced by an Embassy invitation. They would show up with a letter of introduction, and were usually a bore. However, in the course of time we met some very nice people. About once a year stories on the excesses of traveling Congressmen appear in the press. Our experience over the years supports the stories. Many demand from an Embassy all sorts of services and favors for themselves and their wives -- these have no relation to the "fact-finding mission" of their trip. They expect dinners, receptions in their honor, shopping, and sightseeing excursions, and much more -- tying up Embassy staffs - - at Paris, Bangkok, and some other posts there are protocol officers whose job it is to take care of these folks.

At a luncheon at the Thai Foreign Office, I was most impressed by several beautiful petite Thai women dressed in Thai silk, wearing magnificent jewelry. One of the ladies explained to me that each day of the week had its own color -- you selected your jewels to match your dress accordingly -- rubies, emeralds, sapphires, and so forth. Poor me -- I had only my diamond engagement ring -- white, for every day of the week. I sat next to a Thai official -- who proceeded to sound off on the inaccuracy of some *New York Times* article on Thailand. I was shocked by his outburst -- I had always assumed the *Times* reported accurately. I passed on this tirade to Robert -- the Thai official knew I would. I was part of the diplomatic process!

Thai is a tonal language not unlike Chinese -- very difficult to learn. The script, though very beautiful, was impossible to decipher or write. There were language officers at the Embassy who had spent several years in intensive study. They could read the local newspapers and chat in Thai, if necessary. Actual interpreting and translation was performed by members of the Embassy's local staff. Few of the wives of Thai officials spoke English or French -- Robert often found himself seated between two of them -- rather a strain! A complicating feature of the language was that each social group required different styles -- you spoke to the King and the royal family one way -- to other educated people, another way -- to your servants in still a different way. Many Thai men had been educated in England and a few in the US. At a reception or dinner in our day, the Thai men generally came without their wives. Probably by now more Thai women participate in activity out side the home. We both learned a few words and useful expressions -- my favorite is -- "*Mai Pen Rai*," -- meaning, "it doesn't matter."

We had just moved in to our house when a small US Navy vessel sailed up the Chao

Phraya River and docked at Bangkok -- families was asked to entertain members of the crew. The Ambassador got the Captain -- we signed up to take four sailors for lunch. We thought the sailors would be very sick of naval chow -- we'd treat them to some real good Chinese food. Ben was proud to feed the American Navy. For this special occasion I went down to the Nakhon Kasem (Flea Market, or better known as the "Thieves' Market") where there were many tiny stores selling Oriental antiques. I found some fine antique blue and white porcelain Chinese teacups and a beautiful blue and white hexagonal teapot decorated with mythical animals; it now sits on a shelf in our bookcase at home. Florinda likes to polish its brass trim. When the sailors arrived they seemed happy to be in an American home. Ben produced a great Chinese meal -- I poured green tea from the new teapot. All appeared to be going well until one sailor looked at me rather wistfully; "Could I please have a hamburger?" he said.

Our first Thanksgiving dinner was more successful. Coy Hill suggested we join together and have it at her house. We were ten -- including children. I bought an eighteen-pound turkey at the commissary -- Ben cooked it. Polly made nice cutout place cards for each person. At the appointed hour we arrived at Coy's house. Robert reached carefully into the car, brought out our contribution and carried it up the steps -- it was our best silver platter -- on it sat a rather squashed version of an object with brown skin that resembled a bird. Coy was startled by the apparition. "What's that?" she exclaimed. "Mai Pen Rai!" I replied. "It's the turkey cooked Chinese style." I went on to explain.

Until that moment I had not understood the way Ben baked. We had no conventional stove. For baking he used a large square tin box -- about the size of a toaster oven -- it sat on a bed of hot coals -- more hot coals were put on the top. The turkey went into this hot box. Skinny small Chinese chickens fitted easily, but this huge bird did not fit. My solution had been to take a hammer and whack the breastbone so it was broken in several places -- we then shoved the big bird into the box and slammed the door. John Hill, at the Thanksgiving table, found there was no way to carve the turkey normally -- he skillfully chopped off a hunk for each person. Ben had baked the poor bird to perfection! Cranberry jelly from the commissary did help.

Christmas 1956

Christmas in Thailand was another novel experience. The last two Christmases were in the Australian summertime -- but here in tropical Thailand it was very different -- partly, perhaps, because we were in a Buddhist country. In Bangkok there were no signs of Christmas -- no street decorations -- no lighted trees -- no Santa Claus -- instead of Jingle Bells and carols on the radio -- only twangy Oriental music. On the other hand, we were spared the commercialism of the United States. At the commissary we found a tree imported from somewhere -- it was a dried out skeleton without needles. But it looked beautiful when decorated with our old familiar ornaments! Lacking a fireplace, the children tacked their stockings to the screened porch. There were some imported toys at the commissary. We found David a red tractor he could ride around on. The sons of our Thai driver had never seen a tractor -- they were amazed by it and had more fun than David riding it. For Christmas dinner we stuck to chicken -- no more turkey!

At New Year's there was a fancy dress ball at the Sports Club. We made up a party for it, including Arno Halusa, the Austrian Ambassador and his wife, Connie -- old friends from Bucharest days, as well as Coy and John Hill and the Australian Ambassador and his wife. Connie was half Thai -- daughter of a Thai Princess and a Scottish father who had been in the teakwood business in northern Thailand. She looked like her mother -- an oriental Princess. Arno and Connie went as a rich Chinese landlord and his wife -- they wore authentic Chinese garments -- the rest of us went as their servants. We wore black trousers and colorful Chinese shirts, custom-made for eighty cents apiece by a seamstress. At the basket market we bought the peasant straw hats that looked like lampshades. We servants even blackened our hair. At the dinner we gave before the event, Lokka kept an inscrutable Oriental face when she saw us -- she must have laughed behind the scenes. At the ball, when our turn came, Arno and Connie walked across the floor looking very regal -- their arms folded into the sleeves of their robes -- the rest of us padded along behind, heads bent, looking very submissive. We won first prize -- we got home at 3:30 a.m. Poor Robert had only a few hours sleep -- on New Year's morning, he dressed in morning coat and striped trousers to sign the New Year's Book at the Foreign Office -- he couldn't show up as a Chinese coolie!

February birthdays, 1957

David was ready for his fifth birthday on February 16th -- he had just lost his first two baby teeth and was feeling grown up. Polly painted a gray donkey -- perhaps a water buffalo would have been more appropriate -- that we tacked up for Pin-the-Tail-on-the-Donkey. We invited Sae and the two little sons of our driver -- they must have wondered at the donkey game -- they'd probably never seen a donkey. Grannie had sent David a cowboy suit -- the Thai children really liked that. Polly's had her twelfth birthday a week later -- we invited her school class of twenty-five! For dinner at the party Ben made excellent spaghetti and meat sauce. They all went later to the weekly square dancing at the YMCA. Francie was too young to go -- she was mad about that. The girls both had a crush on the handsome blond son of the Danish Ambassador. Polly had just grown a ponytail that made her look older. We gave her a Thai silver barrette and bracelet. For both birthdays Ben had produced wonderful cakes from that tin box oven.

Martin Herz's Wedding

Martin's wedding at our house was quite an event. We had known Martin, a brilliant political officer, in Paris. He had grown up in Vienna, went to Harvard, became an American citizen, and joined the Foreign Service. In 1956 he was stationed in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. One weekend, when he was in Bangkok, at dinner with us, he broke the news that he was to be married. On leave in Vienna he met and became engaged to Elizabeth, a gynecologist. There was a logistical problem -- he was about to be transferred to Tokyo via home leave in the United States. To have Elizabeth's transportation paid for, they had to be married. A wedding in Phnom Penh would be difficult -- there would be too many parties, very difficult for Elizabeth who spoke little English. A small wedding in nearby Bangkok would solve the problem. As Martin was

Jewish and Elizabeth was Catholic -- it would be a civil service. Could they be married in our house? Martin returned to Cambodia and left us to make the arrangements. The only persons at the ceremony would be: Steve Dobrenchuk, the US Consul, a Thai language officer -- he would officially certify the marriage to the State Department; Steve's wife, Anne; Austrian Ambassador Arno Halusa and his wife, Connie; they would give the wedding luncheon. In Thailand there is no such thing as a civil wedding ceremony -- for this you simply appear before the Nai Amphur, a Thai official, and sign a register of marriage. Somehow the Nai Amphur was persuaded to bring the register to our house -- not at all his normal procedure.

We reserved a room at the Erawan Hotel for the bride and groom a room for their wedding night. The Erawan -- meaning a three-headed elephant -- had just been built -- it was then the only air-conditioned hotel in Bangkok. For first stage of their wedding trip, Martin was to take Elizabeth to visit the great archeological temple ruins of Angkor Wat in Cambodia. They would go back to Phnom Penh, pack up, and leave for Washington.

Martin asked me to find him a wedding ring; I went to the gold market -- several blocks of tiny stores selling gold jewelry. For some reason Thais prefer 24-karat gold. I took three gold rings of different sizes -- Martin had no idea of Elizabeth's finger size. 24 karat is a bronze-color gold and very soft -- you could bend the ring. Martin had requested Austrian music. What could be more appropriate than Mozart! I found a LP recording of "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik." We were ready for the happy event. Elizabeth flew from frozen Vienna straight to the tropics. Martin, a romantic, flew to join her plane at Rangoon, Burma, to escort her on the rest of the flight to Bangkok, then directly to our house. We all assembled; the children had never witnessed a wedding, and were in their dress-up clothes. The men wore jackets and died from the heat. The ceiling fans hardly helped. Half an hour before the ceremony, Lokka went into our garden and picked several sprays of the orchids that grew on the fence. We turned on Mozart when we heard the car coming down our lane.

Elizabeth stepped from the car, looking radiant in a pale-blue chiffon dress. She took the orchids and on Martin's arm walked into the house. The Nai Amphur was there with his clerk -- the bride and groom signed the Thai marriage register -- by that act they became husband and wife! Steve Dobrenchuk witnessed the event -- photographs were taken -- we all cheered as Lokka passed the champagne. Then we drove to the Halusa house. Connie served a typical Austrian lunch -- a rather hot meal of meat and potatoes. There was only one snafu. Her Number One Boy, passing the soup, tripped and poured soup down the back of Steve Dobrenchuk's white jacket. "*Mai Pen Rai!*" The jacket disappeared to the back quarters. Lucky Steve! In his shirtsleeves, he was cooler than anybody. By dessert the jacket reappeared -- cleaned and pressed. After toasts in English and German, the happy couple left for the Erawan Hotel. It would have been nice if they had had a Buddhist wedding -- the bride and groom's wrist are tied together during the ceremony while the monks chant.

The next morning, the Erawan Hotel called to say that Elizabeth had left her wedding ring in the hotel bathroom. I picked it up and sent it on to the Embassy in Phnom Penh. A

few months later, I received a letter from Martin in Vienna with a drawing of Elizabeth's finger. She had lost her ring -- back to the gold market I went and bought another ring. Many months later -- sure enough -- I received a further letter from Martin -- this time from Tokyo -- "Elizabeth has lost her ring!" I sent five rings to Elizabeth via the diplomatic pouch. Unhappily, they were divorced many years later; Martin has died -- Elizabeth now lives in Vienna.

A new driver

Wiwat, a handsome young Thai, we hired to replace a previous driver. He was rumored to be an offspring of a royal prince -- he certainly looked the part. He always wore a white shirt and pants and remained a little aloof from the other staff. As in Bucharest, a driver was almost a necessity; because of the official activities of most senior diplomats. We always knew we were on the right street for a reception when we saw a line of cars with the drivers standing around talking -- it was their social life. During the day Wiwat took Robert to the Foreign Office, or me on my many errands, or the children to their activities. Wiwat loved driving our gray Buick, which could be completely opened up like an old-fashioned touring car.

Rajadamri Boulevard

Early in the New Year, the news came that the Political Counselor would be leaving -- we would finally have the Embassy house he'd occupied. It was a big old house -- one of three houses for senior officers in a large compound on Rajadamri Boulevard. Across the street and a wide *klong* was the racecourse of the Royal Bangkok Sports Club. Races were held Saturday afternoons -- we could always hear the thundering hooves of the horses racing by. A white wall, topped by a green fence, surrounded the house. The house was set back from the street, and reached by a driveway through gates; these were closed at night to discourage *kamoys* -- robbers -- from entering the grounds. *Kamoys* were a general problem in Bangkok -- some families hired Indian Sikh night watchmen to patrol the grounds -- Sikhs were taller than the Thais -- especially when wearing their turbans and hopefully would scare off a *kamoy*. Another method was to keep a pair of geese that honked when disturbed -- but they tore up the grass and made messes. Dogs could not be depended on -- the *kamoys* would throw them poisoned meat. We were the only family in the Embassy compound that was not burglarized. But we didn't know till later that our faithful Ben walked the grounds several times at night.

Around the house was a broad lawn -- green in the wet season, but brown in the dry season. The climate was too hot for traditional flower gardens -- in the rainy season the compound was often flooded. Our only flowers were white spider lilies and, of course, orchids and *Anthuriums* -- "little Boy" flowers. *Klongs* ran along two sides of the grounds -- ducks swam in them. On the grounds were several yellow or pink flowering acacia trees, a gorgeous flame tree, and bright crimson and purple Bougainvillea vines on the back fence. A traveling palm spread its leaves in a great fan near the *klong*. An orange-flowering hedge lined the driveway -- thanks to Lokka, we always had lovely flower arrangements in the house made from clusters of flowers from these plants.

On the outside walls of the house lived the *tokays*. During the night when they were on the prowl, they croaked a loud “tok kay, tok kay.” They were lizards -- much larger than *chinchuks* and we hoped they had bigger appetites for mosquitoes. They never bothered us unless we tried to touch them -- they were known to nip if harassed. Many snakes lived under the house -- in the rainy season, they came out, looking for higher and dryer ground. Coming home at night, it was wise to check the path with a flashlight for a sleeping snake. I understood the snakes were cobras -- but they seemed to be afraid of us -- they kept their distance -- although I worried when one of the dogs might sniff under the house and even worse if our cats might investigate. Behind the house, separate from it, was the kitchen and separate quarters for Ben and family. Here were produced his wonderful dinners. The legs of the kitchen table stood in saucers of poisonous liquid to keep the creepy crawlies from climbing them.

On the ground floor were the living room, dining room and den -- all quite large and high ceilinged. Their screened windows were never shut -- even in the rainy season -- the outside shutters that swung out protected against rain. Ceiling fans kept the rooms fairly cool except in early afternoon -- the hottest time of day. Off the living room was a screened porch that we often used in the evening -- I’d hung many small temple bells around it. As the sun went down at dusk, a breeze would come up and make the bells tinkle -- the best cooling effect of all. I would feel cooler -- but when Robert came home from the air-conditioned Embassy he’d complain about the heat. In the evening, the *chinchuks*, who’d been hiding all day, came out to look for dinner. Cockroaches and other beasties would also emerge and skitter across the bare teakwood floors -- it was cooler without carpets -- the floors were highly polished. Then Ma, Ben’s wife, would get into action. In her bare feet, she systematically slowly approached each bug and attacked. First with her right foot and then with her left, she would go -- squish -- squash -- and crunch -- if it were particularly large! Then she swept up the debris. Being Chinese, she harbored no Buddhist taboo against this nightly chore.

A lovely long banister was on the stairs -- great fun for the children. Francie, age nine, wrote her Grandmother, “I have fun sliding down the banister on a pillow, but Polly doesn’t use a pillow and I think that hurts.” Later in the letter she wrote, “There are supposed to be snakes here, but I have never seen one, so I hope I never do see one, but I think I will see one sooner or later” and “I have started riding, but I am the youngest, and I feel like a baby.” Lastly, “The only time I have seen snakes is at the Snake Farm where they were being fed.” She concludes, “There are monks in this country, monks are people who dress themselves in orange cloth and don’t like people looking at them. They live in temples and whirship there God.” This seems to be the only child’s letter that remained. Perhaps one day our children will write about their recollections of Bangkok.

There were three large bedrooms upstairs. All three children slept in the same room -- it had a porch they used in warmer weather. The room had a ceiling fan. Our bedroom had an air-conditioner that cooled the big room only slightly. Our bathroom was large -- no bathtub -- only a shower and of course a Shanghai Jar. In most Embassy houses only the master bedroom was air-conditioned. To glass in the many windows of these large houses

for air-conditioning would be prohibitively expensive -- besides there wasn't enough electric power available, anyhow! So we often played bridge in the bedrooms of our friends' houses.

Livestock

Life in our new house was very pleasant. Tarzan and Mickey were thrilled to roam around the compound -- but I worried about the snakes under the house. The cats came in at night to sleep on the foot of our bed -- they preferred it to the outside where large land crabs also came out of their holes after dark. A few other animals were already living in our compound when we moved in. From the previous tenant we inherited two generic dogs and a charming white gibbon named *Nit Noy*. He was attached by a long chain to a wire strung between the branches of the acacia -- he chattered as he swung from branch to branch -- he soon disappeared -- we never knew if he was stolen or just escaped. *Nit Noy* is another useful Thai expression I never forgot -- it means "that's nothing" or "a trifle."

There were several broods of ducks in the klong -- Ben took one now and then for his dinner. A family of cats lived out back -- they kept producing kittens. Polly's favorite was Goat -- a funny looking black-and-white cat with a short twisted tail. The two dogs lived in our compound. Cutie Pie would follow Polly to school nearby. For maximum coolness, the classrooms were open with no walls. Cutie Pie would saunter to the classroom, find Polly's desk, and flop down under it. The teacher complained about the dog, but Cutie Pie was impossible to control -- she had the run of the area. She finally had a litter of puppies under the house -- in the mud she shared with the snakes! There was also Bernadette -- another generic dog -- more about her later. The outdoor animals were fed on rice -- Ben thought meat too expensive. Of course Tarzan and Mickey had proper cat food from the commissary.

The Oakleys

A new family arrived -- Gil and Daisy Oakley and children. Gil headed a project to improve regional telecommunications; it was under a US aid contract. In 1957, no direct telephone service existed between neighboring countries in the area -- for example, a connection with Rangoon or Singapore went through London -- with Saigon, through Paris! Gil hoped to fix that. The Oakleys were staying at the Erawan Hotel -- the American Club was no longer needed. Robert met Gil at the Embassy -- told me to look up the family. I dropped by the hotel and joined them for breakfast. Daisy and their five black-haired children all talked at once. We soon became friends and have stayed close over the next forty years. Daisy put the children in a Mrs. Clayton's British correspondence school, using textbooks from England. As I didn't much care for the Philippine School, we enrolled David in the same school. The students wore a uniform of white shorts and pale-blue shirts -- this kept the wash amah very busy!

Sports

Horseback riding was very popular among the young -- there were no bridle paths -- only dressage in a ring. A German lady married to a Thai, a Mrs. Koch, had a stable of horses, probably retired racehorses. At the classes several times a week, children practiced dressage routines. Her loud Germanic barks when she gave commands didn't seem to bother the horses, but terrified the children. Polly and Francie enjoyed this -- David was too young to participate. There were various exhibition horse shows of dressage. The most fun was the game of musical (not chairs) sacks. The young riders rode their mounts around a large circle of bags. When Mrs. Koch blew her whistle, each rider had to dismount and sit on a bag. As one sack was removed each time, the rider without a bag was out of the game. The kids rode bareback. Francie came in fourth out of ten, and Polly second. In another race they had to canter between poles and pick up flags. Polly's horse refused to canter -- he shied at the poles and almost threw her -- Francie fared better -- she came in second.

The Royal Bangkok Sports Club was the focal point of many of our activities. In the Olympic-size swimming pool the children spent hours in the water. Many of the foreign community gathered around the pool, sipping iced tea and keeping cool under umbrellas - - the Thai rarely joined us -- they did not seem to enjoy the sun. Owing to the intense heat the tennis courts were only used in very early morning and the late afternoon -- only the very determined played. The golf course was laid out in the center of the racetrack, and its hazards were the many drainage *klongs*. The caddies were all young Thai boys; in addition to the caddies who carried the bags, there were forecaddies who dove for balls that landed in the muddy *klong*. They found some balls right away, but often waited to the end of a day to find balls they could sell back to the golfers. Robert was a steady customer -- no point losing a new ball just to buy it back -- he only used old balls. Saturdays were race days, a big social event for the Thais. The Thai ladies came beautifully dressed, wearing broad brimmed hats and long sleeves to protect them from the sun -- western women dressed otherwise -- they foolishly wanted a sunburn. The British originally had founded the club. Before the War they controlled the membership - - Thais were not admitted. An exception was made for the Scotsman, Mr. Munro, who had married a Thai princess. It was at the Sports Club that their daughter, Connie met Arno Halusa, an Austrian diplomat whom she married. Arno once showed us his Sports Club membership document -- all in Thai script -- he said he used it as a travel document to get back to Austria when World War II began!

Snakes -- milking cobras

The Pasteur Institute was a favorite place for the children. As many farmers in the rice paddies were bitten by cobras, the Institute kept snake serum for all such emergencies. Cobras were kept in a large pit at the Institute. They lived under cement-domed shelters. To obtain the venom, a man in knee boots (a cobra could not strike higher than the knee - - heavy rubber boots were protection enough) entered the pit, overturned a shelter, picked up a snake by the back of his head. He held a cloth-covered jar at the snake's nose -- the snake bit into it, and its venom would be caught in the glass. It was called "milking" the

snake. The venom was processed into a serum. Along with the cobras were kraits -- smaller but a more poisonous snake. As they didn't rise up and spread their hood, they were not as fearsome as cobras.

Street scenes

Bangkok stretched out along both banks of the *Chao Phraya* River. Except for the temples hidden behind high-walled compounds, it was a rather ugly city. After the rainy season, most buildings were left with peeling paint -- during the dry season, dust was everywhere. I never got tired of driving along the streets -- taking in the smells of Thai curry cooking, the twanging of Oriental music from radios, and the kaleidoscopic colors of the vendors selling all sorts of things. The traffic moved so slowly with the zigzagging of the *samlors* cutting in and out, that there was plenty of time to watch the sights. *Klongs* ran along aside of most streets -- children bathed in them -- or a large square fish net hung over the water that would be lowered to catch fish. There were a few wide boulevards cut through the maze of narrow streets. Some wide *klongs* were connected to the river -- along them water taxis chugged and *sampans* glided. In the dry season, most shops spread their wares out into the streets. There'd be pyramids of stacked hand-woven baskets of all shapes and sizes or stacks of clay pots, including Shanghai jars. Tin vendors piled high their cooking pots and woks. The flower shops sold mainly orchids. Not far from our house stood a collection of hundreds of gaily-colored clay spirit houses for sale. Most were birdhouse size in the shape of a small temple; they could be set on top of a pole and planted in the garden. Along with Buddhism was a form of animism -- most Thai families had a spirit house in the corner of their yard. Every day, to appease the spirits, flowers and fruit were laid before it. Inside a small, lighted candle would glow at night. Even the new Erawan Hotel had its spirit house.

Along the roads were the milling crowds of people. They made way for jogging men with wooden yokes across their shoulders -- from these dangled baskets of produce, live chickens tied together, or stacks of tin boxes of food. Sometimes there'd be a man dragging a live pig by a rope. As this was a Buddhist country, I wondered who slaughtered the animals -- certainly not a Buddhist -- probably a Chinese. Saffron-clothed monks with shaved heads were everywhere -- in the rainy season they carried black umbrellas. Early mornings they held out their begging bowls. Grace was gained by placing some rice or food into the bowl. A good Buddhist was expected to spend a three-month period once in his lifetime begging for food -- even the King had done so. I'd sometimes see an old woman squatting on the curb chewing betel nut. The juice, though red, made her teeth black -- when she smiled she seemed to have no teeth. Thai women always brushed their black hair straight back from the forehead -- in old age it resulted in a receded hairline.

Little children mostly ran around naked or perhaps with a shirt. Stray mangy dogs were everywhere -- in this Buddhist country, no animals were killed. Plenty of cats lived within the temple compounds -- they mostly stayed out of sight. I kept looking for a Siamese cat like ours, but never found one. However, some might have blue eyes or light beige coloring -- called *Sisawat* -- the name we gave to our late Tonkinese cat. At the bird

market, in bamboo cages, were captured wild birds; it brought good luck to a Thai to purchase a bird and let it go free.

At Lumpini Park near our house, kite competitions were held during the windy month of March. The Thai made remarkably beautiful paper kites with long flowing tails in the shapes of birds, snakes, and dragons. The object of the game was to fly your kite to the windward of another -- cutting off its breeze -- it would lose altitude and fall. Crowds gathered to watch these airborne fights. Wiwat took the children to fly their kites in the park. They always wanted a dragon kite.

Shopping

Bangkok had no department stores. Different areas of the city were designated for certain markets. The straw market was for hand-made hats and baskets. The gold district was where I bought Elizabeth Herz's many wedding rings. Silver products were in another area. The Thai made beautiful hammered, embossed bowls depicting the life of Buddha. One is on our dining room table. There were sections for the brassware. The Thais make very handsome brass flatware with bone handles, distinctive lamps and bowls, and of course temple bells of all sizes. Dress materials, especially silk, were found in one large district. For the tourists, there were pricey stores near the famous Oriental Hotel on the river. Blue star sapphires were always in great demand as well as rubies from Burma. Most tourists, thinking they were getting a bargain, would buy second-rate gems. The good quality was expensive -- you had to know where to go. I found a German jeweler who could be trusted -- he was not interested in the tourist trade. He made my jade ring -- a copy of my Milan earrings. An important item in demand was the famous Thai silk. Jim Thompson's store was a star attraction for tourists. More about Jim later.

The *Nakorn Kasem* -- the thieves' market was a Mecca for the foreign community. Many small shops, in an area covering several blocks, sold Thai and Chinese antiques -- porcelains, pottery, carvings, paintings and sculptures. I spent hours browsing among the junk, hoping to find something that looked good -- if I did, then bargaining would begin. Wiwat, the driver waited for me -- he must have thought I was crazy. Buddha heads, sculptured in stone, were the most in demand. It took over a year to find an authentic one -- the first one turned out to be a fake -- there was a big -- very profitable -- fake industry in Thailand. When Robert asked where I was going with the car, I would reply, "Buddha shopping." -- This became a family joke for browsing. Nowadays, Robert goes "Buddha shopping" on the Internet!

The Emerald Buddha

The amazing Thai temples -- *wats* -- are Bangkok's great tourist attraction. They are unique in world architecture. Laos and Cambodia have some similar buildings -- but nothing to equal the spectacular splendor of the Thai temples. Description is impossible -- only by photographs can you begin to appreciate the glorious profusion of color and intricate design. Bangkok was a photographer's paradise, especially in the dry season when the sky was a deep blue. I spent many hours strolling through the various *wat*

compounds -- I was always only too glad to take a visiting VIP on a guided tour -- hoping to get an even better photo than before. If only I'd had today's improved cameras!

The most spectacular sites were at the *Wat Phra Keo* -- the *Wat* of the Emerald Buddha. The buildings there were enclosed by a high, whitewashed wall -- only the tops of the golden *stupa* -- spire -- and the temple roofs showed -- so a visitor was quite unaware of the staggering sights within. Walking through the gate to the inner courtyards, you first passed between the huge brightly colored demon monkey guardians -- twenty-five feet high -- their faces grinning with bared fangs. Inside, there were the various temples -- the tall gold *stupa* and smaller *chedi* -- gold-leafed mythological statues, half bird -- half woman -- carved stone elephants -- fresco paintings of the life of Buddha -- on and on -- too much to take in on a single visit!

The Emerald Buddha was in the most important temple. Its outside walls were covered by tiny thumbnail-size pieces of colored glass set in geometric designs. The walls slanted slightly inward -- a typical Thai architectural feature. Above -- three stacked receding tiled roofs rose with curved gold finials pointing skyward. Around the eaves of the roofs hung hundreds of brass temple bells that tinkled in any breeze. The interior was very dark. For special occasions, a line of chanting monks would sit cross-legged on a bench, each holding a fan before his face. At the far end was an altar -- a high pyramid of stacked carved golden tables -- on each table were bowls of dried pink, purple, and white clover arranged in intricate geometric designs. There were offerings of orchids and food. Bowls of sand held burning joss sticks -- giving off the sweet smell of incense. On top smallest table of the pyramid-altar -- in a glass case -- was the Emerald Buddha -- three or four feet high -- carved from one piece of jade. This is the most revered Buddha in Thailand. His robes are changed three times a year by the King in a special ceremony -- a diamond-studded tunic for the hot season -- a gilded blue-flecked robe for the rainy season -- and an enamel-coated robe of solid gold for the cool season. In those days the Buddha was illuminated by a fluorescent tube -- perhaps by now a more aesthetic form of lighting has been found.

Other *wats* hid behind high walls in various parts of the city. I was a bit numbed by the brilliance of the Emerald Buddha Compound -- I actually preferred *Wat Po* -- the largest and oldest temple complex in Bangkok. Here were living quarters for monks -- there were always a few walking around -- it gave the temples a more personal feeling. Sometimes I'd see a mottled cat scooting around the corner -- the monks fed the temple cats -- they were fatter than the scrawny street cats. The various temples and *chedi* -- pointed spires -- and *prangs* -- rounded spires -- had not been restored -- their colors had become muted over time. Quietness and peace reigned in this compound. Fewer tourists found this spot. Here the large reclining Buddha resided -- a huge gold-leafed statue stretched out with its head resting on its arm. Guarding the gates -- instead of monkey guardians -- stood tall stone statues of men wearing fanciful Western cutaway jackets and top hats. I never knew the significance of these Western dressed characters.

Nearby were the old palaces in which Anna Leonowens lived when she taught King Mongkut's children in the mid-19th century. A very fine architectural gem was a lovely

building with a five-tiered roof -- flying finials and temple bells. The walls shimmered with small multi-colored glass pieces. On one side of the courtyard -- next to a sturdy gold pole -- stood a tall mounting step -- not for a horse -- but to mount an elephant tied to the pole. Mongkut, it is said, wanted to send President Lincoln an elephant for his inauguration, but Anna persuaded him otherwise.

The Chao Phraya River

Life on the *Chao Phraya* River and the side *klongs* was fascinating to observe. Good fun was a trip by boat in early morning to see the floating markets on the canals. Dozens of sampans -- filled with foodstuffs -- beautiful tropical fruits -- strange looking vegetables -- live chickens -- and fish were jammed together along the waters edge. Each boat hawked its goods to the occupants of the simple wooden Thai houses along the banks. Much bargaining went on. You would see men and women bathing -- the women seemed able to wash and expertly keep their bodies covered by their sarongs.

Festivals were held throughout the year -- nearly all involved the Buddhist religion. For the completion of a new house or the opening of a new business there would be a ceremony -- monks would participate -- chanting behind fans -- to bring good luck and ward off evil spirits. There was one charming event held at the time of the full moon in October -- little boats holding flowers and a lighted candle were placed in the *klongs* at nightfall, to drift down the waterways to the river. It was a great event for the children -- they loved to see the hundreds of lighted flowers floating along till the candle burned out.

For trips to see more river life, we went on the Naval Attaché's Navy-owned motor launch. He used it to entertain the Embassy's VIP guests -- we were often invited along. The boat was usually sent up the river in advance to the village of *Ban Pai-in* -- about thirty miles from Bangkok. There it awaited the Embassy people and guests. The group would leave Bangkok in the morning and drive north to *Ban Pai-in*. We would often stop for our guests to take photos. The country women were colorful in their orange skirts, dark blue shirts, and the lampshade straw hats. The ride through the rice growing area was always interesting at any time of year. In the wet season the water buffaloes plowed the paddies -- then rice plants were planted by hand -- in the dry season the rice was harvested and piled high in the *sampans* that were paddled along the *klongs* to the farm threshing floors -- there it was threshed to obtain the rice in hulls. The residue, the rice straw, was piled into stacks resembling our old-fashioned haystacks. We have a painting of a Thai girl -- her face gold leafed -- squatting on her haunches with a sickle -- a rice stack behind her. It was done by a well-known modern Thai artist.

When we arrived at *Ban Pai-In*, everyone photographed the lovely Thai temple situated in the middle of a lake -- its reflection in the water was complete. We then would board the launch for a picnic lunch and the trip back to Bangkok. Once we were moving, the boat had to take care to avoid floating teak log rafts. The logs had been harvested from the teakwood forests in the far north, lashed together, and floated down the river to market. On the stern of each raft was a straw hut for the man who used a pole to keep the raft on course.

We often passed long ribbons of *sampan* caravans -- sometimes up to twenty -- tied end to end and pulled by a small tugboat. Whole families, including children lived on these boats. Some *sampans* had an arched straw mat covering to protect people from the sun or rain. Laundry was strung out flapping in the breeze and on one boat were pots and pans for cooking. The children seemed happy -- always prancing around -- we never saw them fall in. At the bow of the lead *sampan* of one train, we saw a mottled cat washing its face. Rice paddies ran down to the banks of the river. Sometimes on the river edge or in the distance were small villages of wood and straw buildings with tin roofs and a simple whitewashed temple with a high-pitched roof. These villages marked the intersections of other *klongs* leading into the interior. There was always a lot of boat activity around these villages.

Closer to Bangkok's outlying suburbs, river traffic increased. Only one bridge crossed the river in 1957. On the left bank of the river toward the center of Bangkok were several grand old nineteenth-century residences. The French Embassy still occupied one -- it was a treat to sit on its terrace in the evening and watch the river life as it went by. The Oriental Hotel was next -- then only several stories high -- the oldest hotel in Bangkok. Its lounges and dining room were open to its garden and the river -- watching the river life from there was another pastime. We often went to luncheons in its restaurant -- despite ceiling fans it was terribly hot. The hotel has since been rebuilt into a skyscraper - - a modern world-famous luxury hotel -- air-conditioned and decorated with Thai antiques and Thai silk-covered furniture. A room costs several hundred dollars per day. All the amenities for posh living are offered -- five restaurants -- a health spa -- massage parlors -- a famous Bangkok pleasure -- and any other service demanded -- unhappily Bangkok is now known as the sex capital of the world. I loved the Oriental as it once was.

We docked just beyond the beautiful old Royal Palaces along the bank. Our guests were always delighted with their river outing. Their last photo would be the tall spire of *Wat Arun* across the river silhouetted against the setting sun.

The Culture Vultures

Thai culture fascinated me -- I did much reading on the history and art of Southeast Asia. The Embassy ladies formed a group called "The Culture Vultures." We persuaded Prince Suphat, Curator of the National Museum of Art, to take us to places not visited by tourists. Polly and Francie sometimes came along. Many very old *Wat* compounds were hidden in the remote parts of the city -- only Suphat knew about them. One great adventure was a trip to Ayudhya -- the capital of Siam before Bangkok -- to see the ancient temple ruins. We drove north about fifty miles -- then took a riverboat, and later, *sampans* to explore the many temples in this remote area. Sad to say, most of the temples -- they predated those in Bangkok -- were in poor repair or in ruins -- the tops of *cheddi* often broken off. According to Thai culture, more merit is derived from building a new temple than repairing the old one -- thus, throughout the country were hundreds of ruins. These ancient Ayudhya temples had a certain mysterious quality as they sat among

jungles or overgrown rice paddies. Far from anywhere sat a stone Buddha -- high on its altar in the open air -- the temple around it completely in rubble. To me this solitary figure had more majesty than those hidden in the dark recess of a temple. At one place we saw the remains of an old elephant stockade made of heavy thick poles. Here, had been kept the wild elephants that had been captured, to be trained for transportation and to work in the teak forests where they carried the logs down to the river. On our way back to the village, we saw a *sampan* where a lovely white gibbon was swinging from its straw roof covering -- maybe he was the reincarnation of *Nit Noy*, our lost gibbon. Reincarnation is a possibility in Buddhist religion.

Jim Thompson and his Thai Silk

Thai Silk has become a famous product of Thailand -- silk weaving had been a Thai cottage industry for many years -- the spinning, dyeing and weaving was done mostly by women, in their homes. Homemade vegetable dyes were the only source of color. The weavers copied the purples, crimsons, and oranges of the flowering bougainvillea vine and the many shades of the orchid plants. After World War II, few weaver families were left -- driven out of business by cheap machine-made products -- the art of hand-loomed silk weaving was dying out. Enter Jim Thompson -- Jim came from a well-to-do family in Wilmington -- went to Princeton -- later became an architect. During the war he was in the OSS -- the precursor to the CIA. OSS assigned him to Thailand at the end of the war. The country fascinated him -- he decided to stay. Jim had great artistic appreciation and imagination. When he saw some of the Thai silk products, he was intrigued -- he believed the Thai silk industry could be revived. He encouraged some weavers to return to their looms. As vegetable dyes were hard to obtain and faded easily, he imported modern chemical dyes from Switzerland to replace them. Colors were standardized and dye lots could be duplicated. With his eye for design he reintroduced patterns from the past. Beside solid colors, he designed plaids using various interesting color combinations. He copied the intricate geometric designs seen in so much of Thai art. In addition to lightweight dress material, he introduced a heavier product for upholstery. To market the silk, Jim used his contacts and business acumen, and was able to interest the fashion and interior-decorating world. Thai silk was used in the costumes for both the musical and movie *The King and I* -- later in the movie *Ben Hur*. His Thai Silk Company, Ltd., had arrived.

After Jim's great success, some of the local Thai powers got into the act and established other silk companies, but Jim's store was where most celebrities and tourists flocked. It's still going strong as shown in the travel section of the NY Times, February 2004. He worked hard -- and was always present -- dressed in one of his plaid silk shirts. His enthusiasm and charm persuaded his customers to buy lots of silk, often more than they wanted. His operative word was "sensational." One time Barbara Hutton, a beautiful petite blonde, came into the shop when I was there. Barbara was one of the richest American women -- heiress to a Wall Street fortune -- she had just divorced her fourth or fifth husband -- Cary Grant, the movie actor. I watched Jim persuade her to buy bolts and bolts of silk to be shipped to her home in the States.

We became great friends with Jim -- we were often his guests for dinner. At that time his home was a small wooden Thai style house by a *klong*. He had no air-conditioning -- no glass or screens in the windows to obstruct the breeze -- it was a pure Thai life-style. We were always hot there -- but at least the mosquitoes were kept under control -- coils of burning citronella were under the chairs. Jim always served a long cool rum drink -- it gave me a headache the next morning. But it was worth it just to be in this strange magical house. In every corner of the house you saw some fascinating piece of art. Ever since he came to Thailand, Jim collected Siamese, Burmese and Khmer art -- he had paintings, statuettes, furniture, ceramics, and Chinese blue and white porcelains. His little house was a tiny gem of a museum. Jim eventually owned probably the finest private collection of Southeast Asian art.

Jim never had more than five guests at dinner -- six was all his dinner table could handle. It was made of two hand-carved Thai gambling tables, bridge table size, put together. They bore the insignia of King Chulalongkorn. Around the walls was a series of nineteenth century Thai paintings depicting scenes of the life of Buddha -- he had found them in an old *wat*. Each was matted in orange Thai silk and framed in bamboo. The chair cushions and place mats were Thai silk. I give some detail of this room because a colored photograph of the dining room is in the book illustrating the house Jim finally built. It is exactly as I remember it. I can almost smell the Thai curry that was usually served.

I was a good customer of Jim's. I bought a lot of material for new dresses made by my dressmaker to replace my many black dinner dresses. Black was not worn in Bangkok. (White was the color of mourning.) The dressmaker was very good -- she copied the designs found in French fashion magazines -- all for forty dollars. A half-yard of the same material could make a matching pair of shoes for six dollars. I felt I was pretty snappy looking -- I was still thin and young in those days.

Robert adopted one custom of Jim's to fight the mosquitoes. Jim always wore white socks -- mosquitoes were attracted to dark spaces and anything black. The usual attire for men at Jim's dinners was a pastel plaid sports shirt -- Thai silk, of course -- and white socks. A dinner at the Embassy residence called for more formal dress -- suit and tie. Robert, always an impeccable dresser, now wore white socks. After one Embassy dinner, the wife of a VIP guest took me aside and said, "Mrs. Cleveland, you should tell your husband that gentlemen never wear white socks!" I gritted my teeth -- gave my best diplomatic smile -- wished her husband's black-clad ankles would be chewed alive by mosquitoes.

From Jim I learned a great deal about Thai art. I was always asking his advice. I wanted to acquire a sculptured head of Buddha. My first acquisition was a fake. When I saw in a shop the Khmer head that now sits on the glass shelf in the living room, I wasn't sure about it. Jim took the trouble to go look at it. He was most impressed and told me that if I didn't want it, he did. I immediately got Wiwat to drive me back to the *Nakorn Kasem* to buy it. Jim found it so interesting that he asked to photograph it for his archives. The next problem was whether it could be taken out of Thailand; the Thais were beginning to

recognize the importance of their art -- did not want to lose it all. I invited Prince Suphat to dinner and showed him the head. I was a bit nervous -- I had already checked at the museum and had found only a very poor damaged Khmer head. He kindly gave me permission to keep it. I hope my children will take an interest in my few pieces of Oriental art. I had lots of fun acquiring them. Jim framed for me the Thai temple painting of elephants in the front hall -- he did it just the way he did his own paintings -- matted with Thai silk in a bamboo frame. Jim would have bought it himself if I had not found it first!

Jim was also in the process of a major artistic effort. His little house was becoming too small for his ever-increasing art collections. He conceived the brilliant idea of putting together six old teakwood Thai houses to make one large house. He found the old buildings in several parts of the country -- some were floated down the river. Several outside walls he had reversed so the wood paneling would show on the inside -- all walls inclined slightly inward in typical Thai fashion. The original houses were constructed of prefabricated sections, hung without nails on a frame -- they were easily taken down and moved -- this was often done in olden days. The thresholds to each room were raised to keep out evil spirits. The teakwood interior walls were left untouched, but the exterior walls were coated with dull red creosote for protection against termites. The heavy overhang of the roofs kept out the sun and rain -- there was no air-conditioning except in the bedroom. Before we left Bangkok we were able to see the general outline of the new house -- Jim gave me several photos of the on-going construction -- but the house was not finished until a year after we left. At the start of construction, Jim undertook to organize the customary religious ceremonies felt important to the future comfort and security of the owner. A Brahmin priest and nine Buddhists priests from Ayudhya chanted prayers and placed bowls of food around the property to persuade the earth spirits to keep the house safe. When the house was finished, monks also chose a suitable location for the spirit house -- an added protection. Sadly, several years later, Jim lost his protection by these animistic spirits.

A few years later -- on a business trip to the Far East -- Robert saw the completed house. Jim had him there to dinner -- I wish I could have been with him -- Jim autographed a book for me describing the house. As the Thai government wished his unique collection to be preserved, Jim said he had made a will leaving the house to Thailand. It would be opened twice a week to the public, the proceeds from the admission fees going to a local charity for the blind. It has become one of the leading cultural attractions of Bangkok.

A terrible event happened several years later. On Easter weekend in 1967, Jim and some friends went to the Cameron Highlands, a hill station in the mountains of Malaysia. After lunch, while the others took a nap, Jim went alone for a walk along the trails in the nearby jungle. He was never seen again -- he mysteriously just disappeared. An extensive search was made but no body was found. All sorts of rumors flew. Had he fallen into a tiger trap, a deep pit covered with leaves? Had a tiger eaten him? It would have left a skull and clothes. Were his OSS activities involved? There was some discussion of problems with the Thai silk business -- maybe this was some sort of revenge -- Oriental style. Perhaps he had been kidnapped and died because he did not have his heart

medicine. Nothing was ever determined. It was an unsolved mystery -- that was that -- the spirits of the spirit house had failed him. I visited the house in 1969 -- there was sadness about the place -- I expected Jim to appear any moment -- saying, "I must show you my newest find -- it is sensational!"

It later turned out that Jim had become angry with the Thai Government, and wrote a new will leaving the property to his family -- it was contested -- the house is still there, but some of the original collection is missing -- the building is rather dilapidated.

The Encyclopedia Britannica says the following about the house:

"Jim Thompson's Thai House, named for a U.S. entrepreneur and devotee of Thai culture, is composed of several traditional Thai mansions; it contains the country's largest collection of 17th-century Thai religious paintings. There are also collections of Dvaravati and Khmer sculpture, in addition to examples of Thai and Chinese pottery and porcelain."

Royalty

The King attended the official ceremony at the completion of the *Chainat Dam*, 250 miles up the *Chao Phraya River*. It was an important event. The Diplomatic Corps and top officials of the Thai government were expected to attend. A special train took us to the dam site. At this spot was a special pavilion with a golden throne for the King. Beside it was an altar with a statue of Buddha surrounded by flowers. Before the altar, sat nine saffron-clad Buddhist monks, their faces shielded behind large fans. With much fanfare, the King arrived. The monks offered many incantations, and the King presented each with flowers and food offerings. This was followed with speeches -- then the King pushed a button to open the gates of the dam and release the water. There was a buffet reception, followed by Thai dancing -- beautifully costumed girls did ritualistic Thai dances, their fingers made longer by the curved brass fingernails. We have some that Christopher used to like to put on his fingers. After a display of fireworks, the train took us back to Bangkok.

Himalayan expedition, April 1957

The British Colonial government officials of India, Burma, and Malaysia in the nineteenth century were badly affected by the heat and tropical diseases -- many died young, especially the children. To get away from the oppressive heat, they built resorts -- "hill stations" in the foothills of the Himalayas and other high places. Sanitariums were built for the sick -- followed by bungalows, hotels, and eventually, boarding schools. In the cooler climate gardens could be grown similar to those back home in England. The hill stations became a little bit of England for homesick British families. The government at New Delhi moved to Simla during the hot months. The French in Indochina and the Dutch in Indonesia also built hill stations. As Thailand was never colonized, it never seemed to feel the need for hill stations. When hot weather came back, we thought a vacation in a cool spot would be pleasant.

Mount Everest, the world's highest mountain, is on the Nepalese-Chinese border. For years Nepal was closed to the outside world -- ascents had to be from the Chinese side up the north face -- none were successful. In 1950 Nepal opened its borders, allowing ascents from the south face. Edmund Hillary and the Sherpa, Tenzing, made the first successful ascent from the south face in May 1953. This fascinated me -- some of my escape reading was about Himalayan expeditions -- I went vicariously on every trip! When Jim Thompson told us of his vacation in the hill station, Darjeeling, India, I was ready to go -- maybe I might see Mt. Everest. Robert, less enthusiastic about alpinism, was more interested in the cool climate of the area.

The trip to Darjeeling was timed for the children's spring vacation -- it would be a new adventure and a cool one. We borrowed extra warm clothes from Coy. We took a British plane to Calcutta. David took along his Easter rabbit. Under my watchful eye -- I made sure the animal was not left on the plane this time. At Calcutta's *Dum Dum* airport, all of India hit us. Never had we felt such heat -- 110 degrees -- nor seen such masses of humanity. Even the taxi ride from the airport was very different from Bangkok. With its horn blaring, the cab charged by Sacred Cows meandering down the center of the road, along with goats, mangy dogs, geese, chickens, and children. The filthy, ragged, and diseased people came as a shock. I told the children that the figures stretched out by the roadside were not dead -- just sleeping. Even the cooking smells were different. On the sidewalks we saw men being shaved or getting a haircut. As we reached the outlying districts, we had to dodge pedicabs. Once in the city were the familiar rickshaws we had first seen in Hong Kong -- these had beautifully polished brass handles. At the old-fashioned British-style hotel we were delighted to find a bathtub -- the children were even willing to take baths -- their first since the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo.

The next morning we took a small plane to Bagdogra in West Bengal. There we all piled into a rickety car for the three-hour ride to Darjeeling. We would travel over a spectacular road, climbing from sea level to an eight thousand foot pass before dropping down to Darjeeling at seven thousand feet. After leaving the dusty plains, we began the climb, zigzagging first through rain forests, then past terraced tea plantations where the tea pickers carried huge wicker baskets on their backs -- held up by a head band. Alongside our road lay the narrow-gauge tracks of a Lilliputian railroad. A tiny ancient steam engine with brightly polished brass pulled six miniature cars packed with passengers -- they waved madly at us as we went by. The train had a long hard climb -- it made many switchbacks and figure eights. It is now the only operating steam train in India -- it has become a great tourist attraction.

All of a sudden we felt a cool breeze coming in the car window -- climbing higher, we had an almost forgotten sensation -- goose pimples -- out came the sweaters. Soon white prayer flags fluttering on tall bamboo poles stood as sentinels along the crests of the hills. After much chugging of its engine and scraping of its gears, the car finally reached the top of the pass -- we saw Darjeeling below -- perched on terraces along the slope of the ridge. We were in the foothills of the Himalayan range. These rise abruptly from the plains -- ridge after ridge -- and culminate in the Sikkim range where *Kangchenjunga*

rises into the stratosphere. After Everest and K-2 it is the world's third highest peak, only a thousand feet lower. But we could not see it. It is hidden during the spring months by a heavy haze of dust from the dry plains south. Sometimes it can be seen at dawn -- before the clouds gather. After the monsoons, in October -- against a blue sky -- the whole range stands out sharply in all its glory. At this time of year most Himalayan ascents are made. Francie knows all about this -- little did she know at age nine that many years later she would lead backpacking trips in Nepal as high as seventeen thousand feet!

Darjeeling

We stayed at the Windamere, an old-fashioned bungalow-style hotel that Jim Thompson had recommended. It was set in a typical English garden of European flowers. It had been a favorite of the British Raj. Our luggage was taken by women porters -- they carried it on their backs, like the tea pickers, held by a headband -- the method of portage used by the hill tribes. There were only twenty-seven rooms -- so the guests were an extended family -- we got to know each other pretty well. We arrived at teatime and joined other guests gathered by the wood fire. We all sat in chintz-covered easy chairs and clinked our teacups -- as if in England. The famous Darjeeling black tea was being served. The guests were mostly refugees from the heat of India, Pakistan, Burma, and Southeast Asia. With no central heating it became very chilly after sundown -- there were fires blazing in every room. The children were delighted that after dinner a servant in Indian dress and turban came to light a fire in the bedroom and put a hot water bottle between the sheets. They were most happy to go to bed, turn off the lights, and tell stories as the fire slowly died down. We certainly had arrived in a new world.

Owing to Darjeeling's excellent climate and beautiful location the British East India Company established it in the nineteenth century as a hill station. It also became a school center for children whose families lived in the tropics. After Nepal was closed, many Sherpas, a brown-skinned, almond-eyed hill tribe, moved to Darjeeling. They specialized in organizing Himalayan climbing expeditions. Later, after the Hillary-Tenzing ascent of Everest, a mountaineering school was established. Tezsing's house was open to the public -- there we saw his equipment from the Everest climb. His daughter carried in her arms the first *Lhasa Apso* dog I had seen. We signed the book at Government House, and were invited to tea by the lady Governor. There we sat next to Mrs. Tenzing -- a jolly plump woman who spoke little English but kept us laughing by sign language.

Darjeeling was a rather ugly town -- the streets ran along the hill terraces, often connected by stairs. Buildings were no more than two stories high, with peeling paint and rusting corrugated tin roofs. But the fluttering prayer flags rising here and there gave it a certain mystery. Because of its climate, wonderful flowers were everywhere -- such a pleasure after the non-flower gardens of Bangkok. Best of all was the smell of the pine trees that covered the foothills. It was also the many different races of people that made it fascinating. Besides the Indians, were the hill tribe people -- the Sherpa, the Lepcha, the Sikkimese, and so on, all with Mongoloid features. As Darjeeling is on the route from Lhasa, Tibet, to India, many Tibetans had settled in this region and were in business. A Tibetan lady was part owner and manager of the Windamere Hotel. The mixture of

people caused many different languages and religions to practiced here -- of the latter, mostly Buddhism and Hinduism. There were many monasteries of different sects.

The real action was at the bazaar. Here, in the open, along with the usual display of vegetables and meats, vendors squatted beside piles of the many highly scented condiments for Indian curry -- quite different from Thai curry. There were stacks of tin ware and copper ware. Strolling along were all sizes and shapes of mountain people. The women usually wore some kind of sari with much gold jewelry, gold bangles, earrings, in some cases, nose rings. The Nepalese men wore round quilted pillboxes. But it was the Tibetans that caught our attention. They were taller than the hill tribes, the men often over six feet tall. The women wore heavy quilted tunics crossed over their chests, long shirts with a handsome striped apron, front and back. Their jewelry was usually heavy necklaces of coral, turquoise, and semi-precious stones. For cold weather they wore tall, embroidered fur-lined hats with earflaps. The men we saw could have stepped out of a cowboy movie. They wore high yak skin boots with colored stitching up the back. Their main garment was the quilted tunic, topped by a large brimmed felt hat. In both ears were large silver and turquoise earrings. If we found them interesting -- they certainly seemed intrigued by us. The women especially kept turning around to stare at our blond daughters in blue jeans.

The curio shops interested me the most; they sold Indian, Nepalese, and Tibetan artifacts. In one we bought the lovely Tibetan copper teapot with a turquoise on the spout that sits on the bookshelf, the carved ivory prayer wheel with prayers written in gold inside, and a Nepalese bird and dragon studded with coral and turquoise. But what most attracted us were several Tibetan monks who had brought Tibetan *tankas* for sale. *Tankas* are paintings on scrolls that hang in the monasteries. The medium is gouache on cotton, depicting the deities of the Buddhist Tibetan pantheon. The painting follows the prescribed interpretation of the iconography. The colors are always orange, dark blue, green, and white. It is mounted on brocade of red, yellow, and blue borders. When hanging on the walls of the monastery, the painting is covered with a thin silk piece of cloth to protect it from the smoke from the yak-butter lamps.

Usually, the paintings depict serene Buddhas seated with hands folded in their lap, but more often some fierce demon with bared fangs. At the time we knew nothing about Tibetan art. One *tanka* we found irresistible. Along the top were rows of seated placid Buddhas, but the centerpiece was a beautiful monster-demon with three bulging eyes in his forehead, skulls in his hair, and orange flames shooting from his head. He wore an animal skin over his shoulders. He had eight arms -- some hands held skulls brimming over with brains. The monster was stamping on victims. There were many other smaller representations of the same demon and many skulls spilling out brains. This deity is *Mahakala*, a favorite with Tibetans. He is found in many paintings and sculptures. We bought the *tanka*. We were told that the monks needed money for their monastery back in Tibet. I often wondered if it bothered the monks to sell this marvelous Tibetan *tanka* to a non-Buddhist. I have several books on Tibetan art if any one wants to read about it. I hope one of our children will keep it -- otherwise it should be offered to the Freer Gallery.

An interesting guest at the hotel was a German, a Professor of Oriental Art at the University of Washington, Seattle. He was among those we joined for tea before the fire. He was in Darjeeling to help establish a museum of Tibetan Art. This was the period when China was moving in to occupy Tibet. The Tibetans were trying to save as much art as possible by bringing it out of the country. He confirmed that our *tanka* was a very good one. Robert made a special frame for it -- it hangs in the front hall. Even today when I look at it, I can find something extraordinary I hadn't seen before -- the many demons are wonderful! I hope they protect our house!

We spent most of our time in Darjeeling walking or horseback riding. The children were delighted to go riding every day. A Sherpa girl led them over paths through the pine forests and trails along the ridges. One day, we joined them. The horses were retired race ponies -- actually rather small for Robert -- his feet dangled below the stirrups. We were led by the rosy-faced Sherpa girl along narrow paths on the outer edge of the mountain. At one point, as we were passing a lovely Tibetan monastery with fierce grinning stone lions at the front door, my elderly pony found new life -- decided he was in a race and broke into a mad gallop -- I couldn't stop him. His four hoofs kicked dirt over the edge to fall thousands of feet. I was terrified -- sure I would be hurled down to the tea plantations below. When he decided he had won the race, he slowed down to a casual walk and allowed me to enjoy the magnificent scenery.

The children decided to make their own Darjeeling Tea. Polly had gathered pockets full of fresh tealeaves. In the bedroom, she spread them out before the fire to dry. When thoroughly brown and curled up, the tea ceremony took place. However, when hot water was poured over the leaves, nothing happened -- no aroma -- no taste -- only dirty water. Obviously some important step had been omitted -- it's still a Darjeeling secret. Of course tea tasting is a very serious business -- as serious as wine tasting in France.

Sandakphau -- what an intriguing name! Jim Thompson said that if we wanted to see Mt. Everest -- this would be the place to go. It would involve a three-day trip along the Indian-Nepalese border to an elevation of twelve thousand feet. We went to the Sherpa office to arrange for our Himalayan Expedition. We were to engage a Sherpa as *sirdar* -- he would hire the cook and porters, buy the food, and order the pack animals. The first two nights of the trip would be spent in Dak bungalows. On the third day, there would be a stiff climb to reach the final Dak bungalow. The next morning at sunrise -- if the clouds lifted -- we would see the whole Sikkim range -- the five peaks of *Kangchenjunga* -- twenty miles away -- and Everest -- sixty miles away. I began to worry whether David, aged five, could make that steep climb. The Sherpa said -- no problem -- he would carry David on his back! We took a deep breath -- it was a fascinating idea -- but probably not very sensible. At this time of year maybe all would be covered by clouds. So we decided against the trip -- only Francie has seen Everest.

Kangchenjunga would be visible at sunrise from Observatory Hill above our hotel -- if the clouds lifted. That involved getting up at 4 a.m, dressing in the cold, and climbing the hill in the dark. No one else in the family wanted to get up. Only I -- armed with my

camera -- made the effort. At the top, in the dim light, I saw the only other person there -- a lone Tibetan monk whirling his prayer wheel in one hand and rolling his prayer beads in the other while muttering "*Om mani padme hum*," the Tibetan mantra, repeated over and over, meaning "Hail to the jewel in the lotus." Prayer flags were everywhere, some on poles and others strung among the trees. As the day brightened I saw nothing but clouds -- they filled the valleys and covered the nearby ranges. Then suddenly a blinding sun broke through the clouds -- hanging in the sky far above I saw the icy peaks of *Kangchenjunga*. It was a moment I'll never forget -- alone with *Kangchenjunga* and the old monk.

We finally settled on another, less adventurous, Himalayan expedition -- an auto trip to *Kalimpong*, another hill station, and *Gangtok*, the capital of Sikkim. The Sherpa office organized the trip -- there would be a Sherpa guide-driver. Permits were obtained to enter Sikkim. We also had to sign a paper saying we would pay any costs arising from frostbite! As we set out early in the morning, I happened to look out the car's rear window -- there -- high in the sky -- hung *Kangchenjunga*! for a few minutes. Someone piped up -- "You see, you didn't have to get up at 4 a.m."

Kalimpong

That day our route to *Kalimpong* took us up over high passes and down past tea plantations to the tropical valleys below. We spent the night at *Kalimpong* -- a lesser hill station -- more remote than Darjeeling. Many Tibetans also live there. It is a terminal point for one of the trade routes from Tibet. Pack-mule trains, led by Tibetan muleteers, bring in salt and yak wool to be exchanged for manufactured goods. In the bazaar we saw a greater variety of people than we had seen before -- including the Bhutanese. Tibetans just arrived from the high plateaus of Tibet found the weather hot -- they shed outer garments -- tied them around their waists -- and turned up their fur-lined earflaps. As usual, the Tibetan women were intrigued by our children -- the latter were more interested in the many cute black-and-white baby goats wandering through the bazaar.

Kalimpong is near the border of Bhutan, then the most primitive and remote of the three Himalayan kingdoms -- Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan. The people are mostly of Tibetan descent; they live in the high mountains in great isolation. As in Tibet, the government is theocratic. In southern Bhutan, in the hot valleys, Nepalese have immigrated. Even in this remote part of the world there is a cultural clash between the northern mountain people and the Nepalese, who are so disliked that it is becoming a political problem. Only recently have modern roads been built -- tourism is being encouraged on a small scale. It is a great country for exotic birds and butterflies; beautiful postage stamps are bringing needed revenue. In our day, 1957, Bhutan was closed to the outside world. Our Sherpa drove us to the border -- only a wooden bar across the dirt road kept us from going farther. It would have taken five days on mule back to reach the capital from there. We could see a beautiful monastery set in a pine forest, with the usual white prayer flags. I had stepped out of the car to take a photo and found myself staring into the face of a very tall Tibetan with his arm around his friend. They probably had led a pack train in from Tibet -- they seemed quite drunk -- this was R & R time for them before the long trek

back to Tibet. We heard they enjoyed watching American cowboy movies. They didn't seem to mind my taking a picture of them. They wore beautiful turquoise earrings. The tallest man stuck his tongue out -- a friendly Tibetan greeting. We stood briefly on Bhutanese soil. Bhutan will always remain an unattainable mystery country for me. I was sorry to read (1999) that the government has finally permitted the introduction of TV.

In *Kalimpong* we spent the night at the Himalayan Hotel, a former private residence, owned by an Anglo-Sikkimese family. That evening Polly felt the need to wash her hair - - there was no hot water upstairs -- it was brought up pail after pail from the kitchen below. We were the only guests -- we joined the family before dinner. The old father had for many years been British trade commissioner in *Gangtse*, Tibet. What stories he could tell! The living room walls were hung with *tankas*. Several shelves held a large collection of the brass and copper teapots Tibetans use for their rancid yak-butter tea. We were offered *chang*, the local drink of hot fermented millet. This is drunk through straws from a common bowl. It had the consistency of mushroom soup -- but the taste was something else! In the best Foreign Service tradition, I got it down without making a face -- an example of manners for my children -- they would have made a face and spat it out! I am sure at next evening's "*chang* hour" our nice hosts had much to say about this odd American family.

Gangtok, Sikkim

Sikkim, our next destination, is a small country sandwiched between Nepal and Bhutan, with Tibet on the north. It is a country of great climatic and geological extremes -- tropical valleys along the Tista River at seven hundred feet, rising to the great heights of *Kangchenjunga*, at over twenty-eight thousand feet. There are few villages -- most people live on farms on the sides of steep mountains. Sikkim is the world's largest supplier of cardamom, a spice used in cooking and medicine. *Gangtok*, its capital, is the center of most activity. Like Kalimpong, it is a terminus of a Tibetan trade route. The Sikkimese are a mixture of many hill tribes, with a large percentage of Tibetans. Interestingly, its Tibetan library is the third largest in the world, after the ones in Beijing and St. Petersburg, Russia. Our Sherpa drove us from Kalimpong down to the hot valley along the Tista River on the Sikkim border. There we had to show our pass and sign a paper that we would not attempt to enter Tibet! As we climbed to Gangtok at six thousand feet, we had another view of *Kangchenjunga* looming over the nearby ridge.

Although smaller than at *Kalimpong*, the bazaar was more interesting. We caused a sensation as we walked along the main street -- we were the only foreigners around. Polly, Francie, and David in jeans, were a novelty in those days. We saw women wearing costumes and jewelry we had not seen before -- they were so busy looking at us that they didn't mind my taking a photo of them -- but it bothered Robert. There were street musicians with strange instruments, an Indian tailor at his sewing machine, a beautiful young Tibetan girl in all her finery, and muleteers unloading a mule train. The lead mules had large red woolen tassels over their foreheads and bells tied around their necks. We could have stayed at the local fleabag hotel; a large sign advertised "SIKKIM MUSK BRANDY -- Keeps Your Heart Warm at High Altitudes!" Instead, we had a picnic lunch

sitting on the hillside, shared with grazing goats and mules. I wish there had been a shaggy-haired yak -- I've never seen that extraordinary beast.

On a ridge above the town was the palace where the King of Sikkim and his American wife, Hope Cook, would live after their marriage in 1965. We had known her family. Many people from Washington attended the wedding -- the reception was held at the Windamere Hotel in Darjeeling. Not too surprisingly, the marriage did not last, but there was a son from a former marriage who would be the next Chogyal, King of Sikkim.

We drove to the top of the crest. Here was the official residence of the Chogyal. Farther along was the compound of a monastery. At the gates stood a marvelous looking guard wearing a tall black-peaked hat and a beautiful red-and-black jacket over a plaid kilt. He stood at attention with his rifle. We walked up to the monastery, which was set on the grassy slopes midst fluttering prayer flags and from where the views of the distant ranges were spectacular. We were totally alone except for several monks in red robes standing around -- they seemed happy to be photographed. The children of course were more interested in the goats grazing among the prayer flags. We heard a tinkling of bells -- looking down on the road below, we saw a long train of fifteen pack mules on its way to town, led by two lead mules with the red woolen tassels. They knew the way -- the muleteer was walking along at the end of the train. They had come down the dirt track from the far hill -- we could see it zigzagging from the mountain pass, the Tibetan border just fourteen miles away as the crow flies. I wished we hadn't signed that paper -- it would have been easy to cross over into Tibet -- I would have found my yak. I wonder how many days a mule train took to walk from Lhasa. Nowadays many tourists go to Tibet -- somehow it seemed more intriguing when it still was a forbidden country. I hated to say goodbye to this mysterious part of the world and return to the heat of Bangkok. My cousin, Grace Howard Spring, is a Buddhist. When she visited Tibet she brought me a prayer wheel. Every Friday morning she demonstrates in front of the Chinese Embassy against the Chinese for occupying Tibet.

Haute Cuisine in Bangkok

Ben was a marvelous cook -- he even prepared canned vegetables well -- in Bangkok fresh green salads were not considered safe. For a dinner party of twelve or eighteen he produced a magnificent banquet. A first course was often melon soup, a thin Chinese-type soup served in individually carved out melons. Ma did the carving as well as the folding of the napkins into fancy shapes -- a bird or a lotus flower. Next were individual crayfish for each guest. For a main course, Ben took my Charleston Junior League recipe for Chicken Country Captain and changed it into a marvelous Chinese concoction. The original recipe calls for chicken parts served on rice in a tomato sauce with almonds and raisins. Ben had to substitute peanuts, but added some ginger and other Chinese spices -- I wish I could duplicate it today. Extra sauce was served in a basket-shaped carved-out melon. Our Thai guests always took second helpings. The dessert was his *pièce de résistance*. Each guest received a half-pineapple carved out and filled with chunks of pineapple previously soaked in brandy -- French -- not Sikkim Must Brandy! On the fruit was a layer of vanilla ice cream with peaks of meringue on top. The pineapples were

browned in Ben's charcoal box oven -- more brandy was poured over them and lighted. As the flaming pineapples were brought in, the lights were turned off. There were many "ah's" from the guests.

Cats -- Siamese and others

The Thai Agriculture Minister was our guest at a dinner party. As Thailand is an agricultural country he had an important job. He sat on my right, talking in French -- he had been educated in France. The cats were kept out back when we entertained -- but Tarzan appeared unexpectedly -- and the subject of cats came up. The Minister invited me to be his guest next day at the Thai National Agricultural Fair. There would be a large cat exhibit. The next day, when I arrived at the fair, the Minister escorted me in. We finally reached the cat exhibit -- there were rows upon rows of cats in cages -- black, gray, white, yellow, striped cats, fat cats, scrawny cats but no Siamese cats. I asked the Minister where the Siamese cats were. He looked rather puzzled, thought a minute, and replied, "*Mais, Madame, les chats sont tous Siamoises!*"

According to *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, the ancestry of Siamese cats may well be distinct from other domestic breeds, representing a domestication of an Asian wild cat. In fact, nothing is known of the ancestry of the Siamese types, and there is no living species of Asian cat that would serve as ancestor.

While the breed is certainly reputed to have originated there, we knew of only one other Siamese cat in Bangkok other than Tarzan and Mickey. He belonged to a Mme. Rajamaitri, whose husband had been Thai Ambassador to Britain. Even he was not Siamese born -- his ancestry was British!

Angkor Wat

Angkor Wat is one of the world's greatest archaeological complexes. *Angkor* means 'capital,' and *wat* means "monastery" or "temple." *Angkor* is located in the jungles of northwest Cambodia -- its area is about a hundred and twenty square miles. For more than five hundred years the ancient city of *Angkor* was the capital of the Khmer Empire -- a kingdom that ruled most of present-day Indochina, southern Thailand, and the Malay Peninsula. It reached its height in the thirteenth century. In the next century the Thais captured and sacked *Angkor* -- the city was abandoned as the capital -- but remained a Buddhist shrine. The great buildings were swallowed up by the jungles, and were hidden by the dense tropical foliage. The vines that grew up and over the buildings cracked the stone walls. When the French took over Indochina in the nineteenth century, they recognized *Angkor's* importance. French archaeologists -- Groslier was the greatest -- began to clear away the jungle growth and reconstruct the damaged buildings. A visit to these temples was a must.

Our opportunity came while Secretary of State Christian Herter, visited Southeast Asia in 1957. He came for ceremonies inaugurating the independence of Malaysia -- it included Singapore at that time. Mr. Herter had to return to Washington, but Mrs. Herter wanted to

visit *Angkor*. A special trip was arranged for her. Her small escort group included the new American Ambassador to Malaysia, his wife, Jane, and us. We welcomed them at the airport on their flight from Kuala Lumpur. Jane, a frightful snob, had been in school with me. She descended from the Air Attaché's plane wearing a hat, stockings, and gloves -- she was obviously displeased by my appearance -- nobody in Bangkok wore stockings -- much less hats -- in the heat. In contrast, Mrs. Herter was a sweetheart -- never put on airs -- appreciated everything done for her. She was a true aristocrat! Our Air Attaché's plane took us to *Siem Reap* -- a few miles from *Angkor Wat*. Cambodian officials met us and escorted us to the ruins. It's hard to describe those unique jungle ruins -- photographs best tell the story. There was only time to visit the important temples, particularly the great *Angkor Wat* itself.

The *wat* was built in the twelfth century by King *Suryavarman* as a temple and administrative center of the Khmer Empire. It was distinguished by five bulging stone towers representing the mountain peaks of *Mount Meru* -- according to the Hindu cosmology, the celestial abode of the gods. At this time in history, the spread of Hinduism from India was at its height. All architectural religious motives were derived from Hinduism. Adorning the walls and galleries were thousands of bas-relief sculptures, some of the finest in the world. The temple was dedicated to the Gods, Shiva, Brahma, and Vishnu. The approach to this temple was by a long causeway, originally over a moat, but now filled in -- cows grazed in it. Along the causeway, the stone walls were carved with typical representations of thick large snakes ending in huge raised cobra-like heads called *Nagas*. This snake motive was seen in much of Hindu-Buddhist art. To reach the inner sanctums, the only way was to climb straight up the sides on very steep steps. At various levels, the galleries lead off around the four sides of the temple complex. On these walls were the marvelous bas-reliefs depicting scenes of battle with their neighbors -- also religious deities. We climbed high, up many flights of stone steps. Our group had the temple to itself -- except for a peacock sitting on a balustrade and watching us. The descent presented a major problem. Going down the steps with no handrails was very scary. The poor American Ambassador suffered from vertigo -- the only way he could manage was to crawl down backward on his hand and knees. He was most embarrassed. Only the peacock was a witness. He couldn't have cared less.

Angkor Thom was the next stop. In the wars of the twelfth century, Angkor was sacked. The ruling king felt his Hindu Gods had forsaken him. So he built a new capital, *Angkor Thom* or *Bayon*, dedicated to Buddhism. Even some of the old Hindu sculptures at *Angkor Wat* were replaced by Buddhist deities. The great Buddhist temple, *Borobudur*, in central Java, had been built in 800 B.C. The importance of Buddhism had spread northward and supplanted Hinduism. *Bayon* was a kind of step pyramid with galleries and steep steps. This time we didn't climb any more steps. *Bayon's* most striking feature was the forest of stone towers, heavily sculptured with huge faces staring out in all four directions; eight feet high, with headdress and earrings, slant eyes and thick sensuous lips, giving an enigmatic kind of Mona Lisa smile -- they were thought to represent some Buddhist deity. Around the plaza area were the usual *naga* heads and large statues of lions with bared fangs.

Another attraction was a wide ceremonial roadway -- about a quarter-mile long. At each end were large intricately sculptured archways. On each side of the road was a row of huge seated statues of deities wearing the usual Khmer headdress. They were holding the body of a large stone-sculptured snake. I have no explanation of this remarkable road. This was just another example of the favorite snake motive seen everywhere.

We continued our drive through the jungles, passing other structures, some in ruins, others covered by vines, waiting to be excavated. It would have taken days to see everything. Our last stop was a walk near some temples still covered by jungle overgrowth -- its purpose was to show the difficulties of excavation. A restored building, if not constantly maintained, would again be swallowed up by the fast-spreading jungle growth. Enormous fig trees with their huge roots were the chief causes of damage to the temples. Just as we walked up to the gate, blocking our way was a huge water buffalo mounting a cow -- we took a wide berth of the two. Obviously, nature still carried on, as often was depicted graphically in the Hindu bas-relief.

Angkor Wat was badly damaged during the Vietnam War. With the Cambodian instability and lack of maintenance, the jungles began to take over many temples. There was much pilferage of the sculptures; heads were cut from the bodies and sold to tourists. All restoration work on Angkor Wat came to a halt during the civil war of the sixties, seventies and eighties. Stories and photos in the *New York Times* showed damage from strafing of the temples. War has ended, but Cambodia is in a very shocking state -- its economy, a basket case. Now that the country has some stability, work to restore the temples has started again, supported by assistance from several outside sources. Tourism to *Angkor* is being encouraged.

We made a brief visit to Phnom Penh, the Cambodian capital. It is much smaller than Bangkok. The architecture of its temples was similar to Thai -- but not as glorious. We visited the National Museum -- that held much art taken for safe keeping from Angkor Wat. We attended a show of Cambodian dancing to twangy Oriental music -- very similar to Thai dancing. The young girls were so pretty in their costumes and their heavy gold carved headdresses. There are many similarities between the Thai and Cambodian cultures -- but the languages and writing differ.

Saigon

The French surrender at Dien Bien Phu had occurred in 1954. They were defeated by the Communist North Vietnamese led by Ho Chi Minh. At the time we were living in Australia -- our French friend told us it would be a great mistake for the Americans to become involved -- we would be defeated too -- we put it down to Gallic pride! When we visited Saigon in 1958, life there seemed to be fairly secure -- though there were undercurrents of the problems to come. On a trip to a French-owned rubber plantation, we had a police escort for security. Owing, of course, to years of French occupation, Saigon seemed more European than Bangkok. There were no *wats* or orange-clad monks, only a Catholic cathedral and a Chinese temple. Most of the upper class Vietnamese had been educated in France or in French schools -- French was still the official language.

The women were handsomely dressed in the *Ao dais*, the Vietnamese style -- a long slim skirt slit up the sides to the waist -- worn over long pants. There were some excellent French restaurants. While Robert conducted business, I did some "Buddha" shopping. In an antique shop I found the two magnificent silver Cambodian animals -- a lion -- and a cat with china blue eyes. They have lived on our dining room table ever since. There was a third piece for sale -- a large silver sacred cow with a huge plumed tail over its back -- it seemed too expensive. I've kicked myself ever since for not buying it -- never again have I seen such a beautiful piece of Cambodian silver. My other smaller animals, elephants, rabbits, birds, and so on, were bought in Thailand. Years ago the Cambodian Ambassador in Washington said he had never seen china-blue eyes in Cambodian silver -- my beasts are special!

The Sacred Cat, Sisawat, I, II, III

Sisawat, our Washington Tonkinese, doesn't know he is the third Sisawat. The first Sisawat was one of the many kittens born out back in Ben's quarters. The second one was a *sampan*! The children kept asking for a boat -- we were surrounded by water -- the *klongs* and a large pond behind our house. I bought them a *sampan* -- On each side of the bow a blue eye was painted -- a guarantee against evil spirits. Many Chinese junks have eyes painted on the bow. With great ceremony, the children christened it, "SISAWAT II." But -- after paddling it around for several days in the heat with no place to go -- they lost interest. We certainly were the only Americans in Bangkok with a *sampan* -- no one wanted it when we left. I read in a cat book that *Sisawat* has another meaning -- "Sacred Cat." Since Sisawat III found this out -- he's had delusions of grandeur -- constantly demanding attention -- deliberately jumping up on the mantel -- there he knows he looks both beautiful and sacred.

The Sacred White Elephant and other beasts

A white elephant was found in Northern Thailand -- considered a very good omen for the King. White elephants are rare and considered sacred. This elephant was brought to Bangkok and exhibited in a special enclosure. The children wanted to see this remarkable beast. We waited in line for a long time -- and finally stood in the white elephant's presence. To us, he just looked like any other elephant -- the children were very disappointed. When I asked about him, I was told that he was indeed a white elephant -- he had white eyelashes and white pubic hair!

There were many U S and World Bank assistance programs in progress -- helping to build Thailand's infrastructure: besides the dam on the Chao Phraya River, modern roads were being built under the supervision of American engineers. We visited one of several American camps in a remote area in northeastern Thailand. Some of the engineers had their families with them. I have always admired the courage of families who undertake to live so far from civilization. The wives taught the children using the Calvert Correspondence School system -- their morale was high. At this camp in the forest, there were two Asian black bear cubs that were found -- alone -- without their mother. They were very tame -- had become the camp's mascots -- the children loved to feed them.

They were entirely black with a long nose and a yellow Vee marking on their chest. When the bears became too large, they would be returned to the forest.

The Water Leopard -- a small type of leopard that loves to swim -- is indigenous in this part of the world. An American engineer had found an abandoned baby Water Leopard in the forests -- brought him to Bangkok and kept him as a pet. In the daytime, the family let him swim in the *klong* behind their house. He became a celebrity -- people came for drinks to watch this creature take his evening swim. He was called Ike, after President Eisenhower. When he began to grow, it became obvious that something had to be done about Ike. The family contacted the National Zoo in Washington -- it agreed to take him. Gil Oakley was going to the US on business, and agreed to escort Ike to Washington. Gil and Ike had seats together in first class. The plane stopped at Hong Kong and then at Tokyo. The media had heard about Ike -- a press photographer was at the airport to take a photo. Gil was fond of the beast -- took him out of his cage -- held him in his arms -- a perfect photo op. Ike had been cooped up all day in his cage. He let go with everything -- down the front of Gil's suit -- a horrible mess. His fresh clothes were buried in the plane's baggage hold. The airline had cleaning fluid used to clean aircraft cabins. Gil removed his clothes -- they were dipped in the cleaning fluid. Back on the plane the first class cabin reeked of the awful benzene smell that lasted all the way across the Pacific. I don't know what Ike ate -- in first class he and Gil were entitled to champagne dinners.

Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson

In February there was a changing of the guard -- Alex Johnson, our new Ambassador had arrived. Robert became very fond of him -- he remained a great friend until he died in 1998. When he presented his credentials to King Bhumibol, the senior Embassy staff, including Robert, accompanied him. The very colorful event took place in the morning in the gardens of the palace -- it was cool enough so nobody had a heat stroke. Being a most formal occasion, the Embassy Military wore dress uniforms -- everyone else wore white tie and tails -- all wool! The Palace entourage wore traditional Royal Thai uniforms, similar to those worn in the movie, "The King and I". The ceremony was fairly brief -- all were introduced to the King. Of course they did not shake hands -- one bowed deeply and placed the hands together in a *wai*. The photo of our Embassy people all looked hot -- even in the morning -- the coolest time of day. The photo also shows that Robert was the best-dressed man in his tails -- they were properly cut to show the shirt cuff below the coat sleeve! The suit was made in 1947 by Anderson and Sheppard, Savile Row -- a fine London bespoke tailor. He paid about seventy-five dollars for it -- now it would be over a thousand dollars. The photo of our Embassy people all looked hot -- even in the morning -- the coolest time of day. The photo also shows that Robert was the best dressed man in his tails -- they were properly cut to show the shirt cuff below the coat sleeve! The Queen was not present at the ceremony but we met her several times when she opened charity benefits. Several years later we attended a reception for her at the Thai Embassy here. She was still very beautiful.

A new Ambassador meant even more social activity, right on the heels of the farewells to his predecessor. There were the usual receptions and dinners for him and his wife to meet

Thai government officials, the large Embassy family, the diplomatic and business communities. Pat Johnson took her social life very seriously -- for the Embassy wives this meant many tiresome "at home" mornings. Perhaps our grandchildren won't believe such things could happen. Every Tuesday morning, Pat was "at home" to receive ladies from the diplomatic and business communities, plus any eager-beaver woman visiting Bangkok who felt it would enhance her social position to visit the Embassy -- also hoping to be invited to a dinner. Embassy ladies took turns in helping on these occasions. After leaving her calling card at the door, a guest would be met by one of the attending ladies, who would introduce her -- first to Mrs. Johnson -- then to the other guests. All were seated in a circle on rattan chairs in the large sitting area open to the gardens. Servants served cold drinks and cookies. Pat required them to wear shoes -- they must have pinched! In my turn, I would try to remember as many as eighteen new names for the introductions -- it needed quite a power of concentration. Looking back, all this seems a bit asinine -- but it was a way to meet people -- sometimes it was worth it -- quite a few interesting people came through Bangkok. Such social customs have since been abandoned -- most current Foreign Service wives now have paid jobs -- helping with the entertainment has decreased. Even I had my "at home" mornings the first Thursday of the month. Junior ladies were expected to call on me -- we were a very large Embassy -- others in the American community would also call. Lokka would pass around cool drinks. She always was barefooted -- I never forced shoes on her.

The German doctor

A new young American doctor had been assigned to the Embassy. That was good news -- although so far the children had had good health -- no earaches. It was Robert who first needed medical attention. He had a very bad siege of some intestinal upset. After taking a specimen for analysis, we returned for the verdict. The doctor was sitting with a huge medical book before him -- flipping through the pages. He told Robert that he appeared to have liver flukes. He read the symptoms -- ending with -- very serious -- usually fatal! He said Robert must be immediately medically evacuated to the US military hospital at Clark Field in the Philippines. That took the stuffing out of us -- we returned home to consider the next step. We had met a German doctor with a British wife, who practiced medicine in Bangkok. We called him with our bad news. He said liver flukes? Impossible! They are contracted from eating watercress that has grows in water polluted by sheep droppings. He had lived over ten years in Bangkok and had never seen a sheep -- they can't take the heat! His diagnosis was amoebic or bacillary dysentery -- he prescribed an antibiotic and all was well in a few days

Next, Polly had two strange large red sores on the inner side of her arm. The American doctor shook his head -- he had never seen anything like this before. As he reached for the large medical book I stood up and said never mind. I called my German friend. "Ah, that comes from a particular tropical moth that carries very poisonous powder on its wings. If it touches your skin, there is a nasty reaction. Obviously a moth flew by Polly's arm. Put some calamine lotion on it -- it will be fine." Some months later, David broke his leg -- my German friend set it. After a painful first night, David got along just fine with his huge cast -- he clumped around everywhere. He made a terrible noise sliding

down the stairs on his behind with the cast thumping all the way. As the cast limited his activities, I gave him a camera -- he used it on the life out back -- mostly the many kittens that kept appearing. I didn't ask how Ben dealt with the excess cats.

Polly

Late one evening -- after Robert and the children had gone to bed -- I was sitting downstairs reading. I heard footsteps on the stairs -- it was Polly in her nightgown padding toward me. Luckily I didn't bark, "Why aren't you in bed?" She sat next to me on the couch. "I just wanted to be with you. You are so nice to talk to!" she said. How many thirteen-year-old daughters say that to their mothers? If only Polly had somehow managed to develop a closer relationship with Abigail, maybe this would have avoided the present sad situation. We long for the day when they can be friends.

The rainy season

After the great heat of April, the rains were welcome -- they momentarily cooled the air a bit. First came the "Mango Showers," rain in the form of a mist, often while the sun was shining. Then came the real rains -- usually in the afternoons. The summer months were hot, muggy, and wet. In the mornings there would be blue skies -- but sure enough -- rain would come in the afternoon. The monks walked around with black umbrellas. It was much too hot to wear a raincoat -- better to just get wet -- a little more work for the wash amah. The monsoon rains came once in a while. First came strong winds that made the temple bells ring like mad. Then black clouds swept in and the heavens opened. Once Coy and I went to the wonderful movie, *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, with Alec Guinness. It was based on the true story of a Japanese prison camp in Thailand -- there, British prisoners were forced to build a bridge over the river *Kwai* -- the Thais finally blew it up. When we emerged from the cinema we found ourselves in the midst of a real monsoon. The rain came down so hard it was actually painful -- to reach the car we waded through water rushing above our ankles. The *klongs* around our compound overflowed -- the grass was under six inches of water. These were the times you watched out for snakes -- they sought higher ground. On July 2, 1957, however, the rains held off for Francie's tenth birthday party, held on our terrace. Ben as usual produced a beautiful cake baked in his funny tin oven.

Bernadette

David's best friend was one, Billy Mullins, son of the Military Attaché -- they lived just behind us. Like any five-year-old, he was charged with energy. Rushing through the living room one day, he knocked over my best Chinese lamp, "*Mai pen rai!*" But what he did to Bernadette was another matter. She was a charming mutt who lived outdoors with Cutie Pie. Behind our compound the school tennis court was being resurfaced. Fresh tar had been poured over the court. Bernadette walked near where David and Billy were playing. Whether she slipped or was pushed, she landed in the tar. Fortunately the tar had cooled a bit -- but trying to extricate herself, the poor beast became even more entangled. She finally emerged covered with black tar from the tip of her nose to the tip of her tail; it

had begun to harden! The boys were frightened -- David rushed home with Bernadette staggering behind. We didn't know what to do -- but Wiwat had a good idea. In Bangkok there was no veterinarian for house pets -- but Wiwat knew where to find the racehorse veterinarian. We wrapped poor Bernadette in a towel and laid her on the back seat of our car -- the whole family jammed in with her. We found the doctor at the stables -- Wiwat interpreted. The Lord Buddha knows what the doctor thought of this strange American family and its dog. He wasn't sure what to do. He began by cutting off the dog's long hair, but Bernadette became frightened. She never growled but began to whimper and thrash. There was only one solution -- she had to be anesthetized. The vet worked on that poor dog for hours -- the hair had to be cut off and the skin cleaned of tar. It took until eleven o'clock that night to finish the job. Bernadette looked awful -- a cross of plucked chicken and skinned sheep. The vet said she would be OK -- but without fur she must be kept warm. We carried her to the car in her zombie state. At home, Ben took over -- laid her on the floor in the kitchen and covered her with towels. Ben lit the tin box oven to give off heat. I really thought she was finished. I have a feeling that Ben tended her all night and kept her covered. In the morning I dreaded what I would find. But Bernadette had come to -- was tottering around the kitchen wagging a stick of a tail. It was just as well she couldn't see herself in a mirror! At first, Cutie Pie growled at her -- she neither smelt nor looked like Bernadette.

A vacation

Leaving the children behind, Robert and I flew to Hong Kong on a shopping spree. We stayed at a hotel in Victoria, the main island. At the time Hong Kong had a serious water problem -- as water at the hotel was turned on for only a few hours a day, we kept our bathtub filled with water. Communist China was the source of Hong Kong water -- it was a potent bargaining tool -- political or economic -- if the Communists were so inclined they would turn off the supply. In 1957 the Hong Kong building boom began -- skyscrapers were being built that would change the skyline forever. There was a continuous noise of pile drivers making foundations for skyscrapers -- every street was dug up.

We tried many restaurants -- they served totally different food from what you got in most Chinese restaurants at home -- no *chop suey* or *chow mein*. I enjoyed the shopping -- we both had new clothes made in three days. We had linen towels and napkins monogrammed for twenty-five cents each. We found our two red Chinese chests and our old *Coromandel* lacquered screens -- black, red, and white. One side usually has waterfowl and flowers etched in gesso -- on the other a domestic scene of a Chinese household. Ideally they should be room dividers -- so both sides can be seen. In the Garfield Street house they are hung on the walls. We also ordered furniture made there -- the rosewood dining room buffet and several smaller tables -- these are copies of the simple Ming Dynasty furniture. Later, when we arrived back in Bangkok, we discovered we had acquired a fourth Coromandel screen, which a friend had found for me. It is the gold one hanging in the dining room. I hope some child can find a use for them.

The Peoples' Republic of China -- forbidden to us in those days -- was close by. I was

envious of our colleagues who had lived there before the Communist takeover. It would be eighteen years before we could enter China. Hong Kong was of course full of refugees from China -- many escaped by swimming at night down the Pearl River to freedom -- many didn't make it.

Macao

Macao, a Portuguese Colony forty miles west of Hong Kong, is also on the Pearl River estuary. We booked a berth on the overnight ferry to Macao. We were the only foreigners -- it was no cruise boat -- we just lay down in our clothes. For hours I watched the loading of its assorted cargo -- including the livestock. We sailed late at night and arrived the next morning at this strange outpost. The city of Macao itself occupied about two square miles on one of three small islands across the estuary from Mainland China. Many of its old buildings reflected the architecture of Portugal, built by the Portuguese when they occupied it. Over the centuries it had been an entrepôt between the outside world and Mainland China. It was rather similar to Hong Kong -- but on a smaller scale. Its chief legal exports were clothing and firecrackers -- but its true business was gold smuggling and gambling. One of the Macao sights was watching the Chinese card game Fan-tan being played. The players had a constant shouting match -- we had no idea of what was going on. Mahjongg was of course being played -- we could hear the clicking of the *mahjongg* tiles through open doors as we walked down the street. Away from the street noises and smells, we spent a very pleasant night at a hotel with a veneer of a European culture. Our balcony overlooked the China Sea. Nowadays, gambling is an organized tourist attraction -- hydrofoils bring tourists from Hong Kong to the casinos.

Singapore

After buying souvenirs for the children and packing our new clothes, back in Hong Kong, we took an Italian boat for a three-day trip to Singapore along the coast of southern China and Vietnam. We ate good Italian food -- we were ready for it after experimenting with Chinese food and struggling with chopsticks. Singapore was then still part of Malaysia. It didn't break away until 1965. Owing to its strategic location at the crossroads between continents, Singapore is the fourth largest port in the world. It is populated mainly by ethnic Chinese -- there are Malay and Indian minorities. We stayed at the famous Raffles Hotel, named after the British founder of Singapore. During our brief stay, friends from the Consulate General showed us around

Fall and winter 1957

The cool dry weather brought relief -- sweaters in the evening were a novelty. Fall was the height of the social season. Receptions and garden parties could be held outdoors without worry of rain. The Thais loved to string colored lights through the trees -- not for Christmas -- but for a festive appearance. At one function, a handsome white-haired Thai gentleman engaged me in conversation. I had no clue who he was -- usually I would ask - - but I had adopted Robert's diplomatic policy not to ask but muddle through. This time I saved myself great embarrassment -- he was the new Prime Minister of Thailand -- as of

less than twenty-four hours -- there had been a political *coup d'état* during the night. I had not noticed the military tanks parked outside our gate on the main boulevard that morning -- Thai *coup d'états* were almost always bloodless.

December was a very busy time as we prepared for the holidays. I had found strings of colored glass beads. The children and I strung these on fine wire to make Christmas-tree ornaments. We made many extra to be sold at the YMCA Christmas Bazaar -- they sold quickly -- there were none to be had in Bangkok. I still hang on my small tree in Garfield Street the fish and snake made by Polly. I also found some beautiful gold-and-silver foil tree-like ornaments -- some two feet tall -- to decorate the house. At each place on the dining room table I put a pretty gold foil tree. A Thai friend saw them -- she asked why I had put funeral ornaments all around the house -- she said they were used only for Buddhist cremation ceremonies.

Mother and Harry came for Christmas. Our old friends from Australia -- Art and Evie Emmons and their two daughters -- also arrived on their way to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. For a few days we were eleven for every meal -- but Ben rose to the occasion. For many years afterwards, Evie and I would laugh over the funeral-Christmas ornaments -- I used them every year until they fell apart.

Christmas meant nothing to Ben and family -- they took off one day a year for Chinese New Year's at the end of January. The day before, the streets downtown were jammed with vendors selling live chickens and ducks. Some walked along carrying a gaggle of chickens with their necks tied together -- others had a yoke across their shoulder -- each basket filled with cackling or quacking fowls. Vegetables and fruit were tied up in banana leaves. For their family celebration, Ben arrived in a *samlor* carrying several cackling chickens and mountains of Chinese vegetables. It reminded us of the days in Romania when Maria had the gypsies cut off the chicken heads. David recalls that Ben whacked off the heads -- the chickens ran headless around the back yard till they dropped. Probably someone ate a duck or two from our *klong* -- my favorite duck was missing the next day. I'm sure we'd have enjoyed their Chinese feast. That night we took the children to dinner at the new Erawan Hotel -- they thought it was just great but thought the air-conditioned dining room was too cold -- the first they had experienced.

Mother and Harry found the heat unpleasant -- even in the coolest month. They enjoyed being waited on by Ben and Lokka. Horse racing was a bit of a problem -- no English was spoken at the Sports Club track. I found an old timer -- a British lady who spoke Thai -- she couldn't wait for Saturdays to take Mother and Harry to the races. I guess if you enjoy the races, it makes no difference if the jockey clucks to the horse in Thai or English. At the races at home, the minimum bet was two dollars -- in Bangkok it was fifty cents. Harry found the stakes too small and boring -- the racing program, written in Thai, was impossible to read. He preferred Australian racing.

One day Mother rushed into the house saying there had been a terrible accident out front. A car had been driven into the *klong* -- the back wheels stuck straight up out of the water. I said, "*Mai Pen Rai* -- that happens now and then -- I'm sure the driver has crawled out

and a tow truck will soon pull out the car.” The first time this happened I rushed out with my camera and took pictures. Wiwat never ended up in a *klong*!

Mother’s greatest pleasure was shopping for Thai silk -- she found Jim Thompson charming -- he found her a rewarding customer. There was also jewelry -- Mother was on the lookout for a star sapphire. I found her a beautiful one at my German jeweler. I hoped to inherit it some day -- I was quite annoyed that Mother gave it to some horseracing friend -- *Mai Pen Rai*! Mother missed dinner of a good lamb chop, fresh peas, and baked potato. Potatoes were available in the commissary only occasionally. Mother got tired of Oriental sticky rice. Mother had never tasted Chinese food, much less Thai food, and was not about to try any. The lack of a bathtub bothered her the most. She had to take a shower for the first and only time in her life -- the Shanghai jar was an anathema. Except for the shopping, she preferred Australia.

Bangkok schools

Schooling was more or less satisfactory. In his British school David was learning to read from British books that had a vocabulary entirely different from American first-grade readers. At the time I didn’t realize this would cause a problem -- but when we returned to the States, David did not know the words in the American “See Spot Run” primers. He was more advanced in arithmetic -- he didn’t fit! Francie had no problems in school -- she always got A’s and B’s. Polly, as usual, had problems with the teacher at first. She said she couldn’t understand Polly -- she was always daydreaming in class and “that dog under her desk was distracting the children!” When I told her about the experiences of Polly’s American and Australian teachers, she had a new attitude toward Polly. Sure enough Polly got straight A’s for the rest of our time in Bangkok. Many years later I received a letter from this teacher asking about Polly. “She was the brightest student I ever taught,” she wrote. I was happy to write her that Polly had received early acceptance to Radcliffe and was her school’s first National Merit Scholar.

Malaysia: Singapore -- Kuala Lumpur -- Penang

For the children’s spring vacation, we took them on a trip to Malaysia. We had an invitation from the Emmons to stay with them in Kuala Lumpur. First we flew to Singapore -- there we saw the Chinese quarter with its Chinese Temple -- nearby the colorful Hindu Temple. The children loved hotel living -- particularly that they could choose from the dinner menus. David came down with a fever -- I couldn’t reach the doctor -- it was Ramadan -- he was out fishing! Fortunately, the fever soon went away.

From Singapore we flew to Kuala Lumpur, capital of Malaysia -- stopping briefly at Malacca -- no longer the great seaport of the past -- Singapore now has that distinction. As a child I had collected stamps from the Straits Settlements, including Malacca. Malaysia was a new world -- not at all like Thailand. You could see remnants of the British Colonial era -- but with independence there seemed to be a new atmosphere. The Malay Peninsula is at the maritime crossroads of the world -- this, and its natural resources made it a target for European imperialism over the last centuries. It is also an

Asian melting pot -- populated by three major ethnic groups -- the largest are the Malays -- they are the indigenous people of the whole area. Around a third of the people are Chinese -- imported as laborers in the nineteenth century to build railroads and work in the tin mines -- as usual, they became a strong economic and political force. South Asians -- Indians, Pakistani, and Ceylonese make up the balance. There are many different languages and religions -- but Malay is the official language -- Islam, the official religion. Malaysia was once the world's largest producer of tin and rubber. Because of these products and its strategic location, the British East India Company started trading there in the eighteenth century -- it eventually became a British Colony. During World War II, Australian troops aided the British in its defense against the Japanese. After the fall of Singapore, the Japanese occupied the area. There were terrible horror stories of the Japanese prison camps. The Australians bore the brunt of these hardships. Malaysia became independent in 1957 as the Federation of Malaysian states. The new U.S. Embassy opened at the capitol, Kuala Lumpur.

The Emmons met us at Kuala Lumpur. Driving through the city we were surprised to see buildings in Moorish architecture, including a mosque and minaret. But there was a definite British atmosphere in the colonial architecture and the gardens -- a reminder this had once been part of the British Empire. One day we watched a cricket match -- very British. Women of all races -- in cotton flowered dresses and large hats were in the grandstand. Tea and cut sandwiches were being served. Robert had several rounds of golf with the Ambassador on an excellent course -- no *klongs*! I went shopping with Evie. It was good to find a bookstore with a large selection of books in English. One did not exist in Bangkok. I found the British Noddy books, perfect for David's age -- I bought every one they had.

Our friend the American Ambassador -- who had had vertigo at Angkor Wat -- suggested we visit the Cameron Highlands -- a former British hill station. He lent us an Embassy car to take us there -- an all-day trip. We started early because there was a 6 p.m. curfew for security reasons -- Chinese-backed guerrillas were still active. They were really ethnic Chinese bandits -- part of China's subversive efforts in all of Southeast Asia. Even our picnic lunch was affected by security measures. Bottles and cans had to be opened before we left -- so the guerrillas would not get any food if they attacked us. The Coca-Cola was hot -- no fizz -- juice leaked out of the can of pineapple pieces. Our route followed the coast -- then climbed into the mountains -- not high -- like Darjeeling -- but high enough to need sweaters.

At the Cameron Highlands we stayed at a sprawling family-style hotel, similar to the Windamere Hotel at Darjeeling. The altitude produced cool days -- it was a pleasure to sit around cozy fires. We certainly enjoyed the cooling off and the change of diet. The altitude was high enough to permit the growth of temperate-zone flowers. Sitting on the steps in the garden, I began reading the Noddy books to David. Polly -- always an attraction for bees -- managed to be badly stung on her finger by a wasp.

Penang

From the Cameron Highlands, we drove up the coast, passing through small fishing villages. At *Ipoh* we saw strange limestone needle-like mountains similar to those in *Kuelin*, China. Polly was so intrigued by the town's name, that she would name the newest kitten, *Ipoh*. At a place called Butterworth, we said goodbye to our Embassy driver and took the ferry to Georgetown on Penang Island. Georgetown is Malaysia's chief port. Like the rest of the area it carries the vestiges of occupation by the Portuguese, Dutch, and later the British -- the spice trade brought them all to this part of the world. In 1786, the Sultan of Kedah ceded the island to the British East India Company -- they named the chief town Georgetown -- after King George III. In 1957 it became one of the states of the new Federation of Malaysia. Its population is over a million -- with the usual mixture of Malay, Chinese, and Indians. The American Consul had us to lunch in his handsome compound. Speaking of the British influence, he remarked that the British Club still would not admit Malaysian members -- even in their own country! Shades of the *Raj*! On Penang there is a Catholic Convent where our Thai Princess, Connie Halusa, spent her school years.

After the cool mountain weather, we found the heat of Georgetown oppressive -- especially without air-conditioning. The children wanted to go swimming, but changed their minds when they saw some nasty jellyfish in the water. So we visited the various temples. The Kek Lok Si Temple is a very beautiful Buddhist temple. I found it fascinating -- but as usual the children thought the huge colorful carp swimming around the ponds and moats were far more interesting -- especially when they stuck their heads out of the water looking for food. On the flight back to Bangkok, we soon lost the mountains of Malaysia and flew over the green, green rice paddies of Thailand. It was pleasant to get back to familiar sights.

Japanese prison camp

The following is a true story about friends we made in Bangkok. It's included to show that World War II was still part of our lives -- although those times must seem to be in the dark ages of history. Dodie and Jack Fee were members of the US business community. He represented Standard Oil. Their first post overseas had been in the Philippines just before the WW II. After Pearl Harbor -- before Manila fell -- our last High Commissioner, Francis B. Sayre, Sr. -- father of our Frank -- was evacuated in a submarine with General Douglas Mac Arthur. The Fees were not as lucky. They were crammed into a ferryboat, trying to get away; it capsized. The Japanese rescued the passengers, but threw them into prison camp -- separating the men from the women. Dodie Fee was pregnant -- and her daughter was born in the camp. Although the two camps communicated in many devious ways, Jack Fee never saw his child till she was three years old. A happy twist to the Fee story -- years later in Washington -- Dodie became a widow -- our Ambassador Alex Johnson was a widower -- Dodie and Alex were married.

A cremation

The Chinese bury their dead -- a problem in Bangkok because of the very high water table. The Buddhists cremate their dead according to certain rituals. When passing a wat compound, we would sometimes see smoke rising above the walls -- a cremation was in progress. The extent of the cremation ritual depends on the wealth and social status of the decedent. Described here are only the rituals for an important or well to-do person. At death the body is placed in a fetal position and put into a large urn. It is left in this position for a year or longer. A hole at the bottom allows the juices to drain -- eventually the body dries out. During the year of mourning the urn is kept in the house. When a member of the royal family dies, the mourning period may be several years. Then comes the day of cremation. Among the other members of the diplomatic corps and other dignitaries, we were invited to attend the cremation ceremonies of a Thai Minister who had died the year before. We assembled in the courtyard of a *wat* -- in its center the funeral pyre had been erected. The urn had been placed on a throne-like dais under an elaborate canopy. Around the base were masses of flowers. Each family member and guest walked around the urn and added more flowers. We then took our seats; on each chair was a black-bordered booklet with a photo of the deceased and a résumé in both Thai and English of his life's activities. A line of saffron-clad monks were seated behind their fans -- then began to chant. They rose and walked several times around the pyre. The head of the family then lit the pyre. We did not stay to see the final burning. The ashes were later collected and placed in a small urn to be kept at home. In every Thai house, an altar was set up in one corner, a pyramid of carved tables with a seated statue of Buddha at the top. Nearby were one or more urns of the deceased members of the family.

2500 years of Buddhism

"Buddha" means "Enlightened One." The founder of Buddhism was Siddhartha Gautama, born in Nepal around 563 B.C. He was a prince, member of the warrior and ruling caste. At age sixteen he married and lived in luxury and comfort. But by age twenty-nine he renounced this way of life and became an ascetic, wandering throughout India looking for Enlightenment. This he accomplished while sitting cross-legged under a banyan tree around 528 B.C. He became a supreme Buddha and resolved to teach other men what he had found. Known as Buddhism, his teaching became one of the great religions of the world.

Our stay in Bangkok happened to coincide with the twenty-five hundredth anniversary of Buddhism. Year long, many events commemorated this occasion. Even the finding of the white elephant was considered most auspicious. For months the Emerald Buddha compound was in a state of restoration. The rainy season always caused damage to the outside of any building. Where the gold was missing on the sculptures, including the huge stupa, and other smaller chedis, small two-inch-square leaves of gold leaf were painstakingly attached, making everything look like new. The many missing pieces of glass on the temple walls were replaced. The paint on the monkey demon gatekeepers had been almost washed away by the rains. They were repainted in the original brilliant primary colors. The Emerald Buddha compound became a spectacle of dazzling gilded

temples, flashing in the sun -- dark glasses were needed.

The three Royal Barges and the attending barges had not been seen since before the war. As part of the celebrations for Buddha, these several dozen longboats were freshly renovated and made ready for a procession to sail down the Chao Phraya River. On the appointed day, an enormous crowd gathered along the banks of the river. We took the children. These many boats were low to the water, long and narrow, but wide enough to hold seated pairs of oarsmen, between twenty-four to sixty men, depending on the length of the boat. All were dressed in old Siamese costumes of tunics and pants, where the material from behind is brought up between the legs and tucked into the waistband. Their black or red high hats had flared earflaps.

Leading the procession were matching pairs of smaller and less-decorated barges. Some boats were painted black, the oarsmen wearing white tunics and red hats, others in black tunics, their paddles painted red. At the stern two men stood with poles on either side to steer. In the center of the boats separating the oarsmen was a covered dais where a Thai official sat, wearing 19th century dress. Some were war canoes with gold shields hung along the side and a black cannon pointing from the bow. Another pair of boats were black with gold flowers, at the bows a wonderful figurehead of a grinning garuda.

The procession came to a climax with the three largest ceremonial barges, magnificently gilded with typical Thai ornamentation and Buddhist symbolism. Of the three, my favorite was painted with a long undulating gold-and-black snake running along each side and ending at the bow with a fierce snakehead with bared fangs, a golden Naga. In each of the three longboats sat at least thirty pairs of oarsmen with gilded paddles, separated in the center by a high dais where an official sat. Several seven or nine-tiered elaborately decorated ceremonial umbrellas stood above the paddlers. A drummer beat a drum to keep the rhythm for the oarsmen. As part of the ritual the men held their gold paddles above their heads. They flashed in the sun. On a drum roll they were lowered, and the men began to paddle. The bow of the last barge was a tall, long-necked golden bird's head, with a long white tassel hanging from its mouth. (See Francie's postcard of this barge sent to us in the 1990s. This is a favorite motif seen in the garuda birds that sit on my hall table -- they have lost their tassels but they do hold my key rings.) On this last barge a throne for the King was built high on an ornate pedestal. A huge fan shielded the seated figure. The children thought it was the King. It wasn't, but I let them think so. Just recently, in the newspaper (1996), is an article from the Thai tourist agency announcing the Golden Jubilee Celebration of King Bhumibol Adulyadej's 50 years on the throne. There is to be "an elephant extravaganza of a 100 trained pachyderms, a display of Thai kites, and a Royal Barge Procession down the Chao Phraya River, with 53 longboats powered by hundreds of brightly dressed oarsmen." Maybe this time, the King will ride in the ceremonial barge.

Piano lessons

An upright piano was under the stairs in the front hall. Polly wanted lessons. I found a teacher who lived in the residential suburb of Bangkapi. So twice a week Wiwat drove

Polly and me out to her house for an hour's lesson. Listening to a beginner practice the piano is hard on the ears, but Polly was determined and began to show progress. One day Lokka asked if she could go with us to the lesson. She put on her sandals and joined us. During the lesson she just sat quietly in the corner and said nothing. To my surprise she came with us every time. One afternoon I was reading in my air-conditioned bedroom. I heard someone playing the piano. This was odd, because Polly was out visiting a friend. I opened my door and looked over the banister. Lokka was seated at the piano, playing as well as Polly! How amazing. This girl had never heard western music except when we played records. Too late, I regret that I didn't give her lessons also. Lokka was a bright young woman, but being a girl, she had little education. She had learned English on the job but could not write it. She should have had an education.

A success story

Seri Seriwathanophas is Lokka's younger brother and Ben's son; he was known to us as Sae. When I first saw him, I thought, ah, a playmate for David, though a bit small. How wrong. Sae was three years older than David, but being Chinese, he was of course much shorter than David. At eight years old, he kept the account books for his father, writing everything in English -- I never found a mistake. I did not know Ben's real name, but as an immigrant family they had had to adopt a Thai name, long and unpronounceable, Seriwathanophas. Being a son, Sae was given the education not afforded to Lokka and her sister, Tipong. He was still in school when we left. Ten years later we heard he was at Chulalongkorn University leading student riots! In another ten years he came to visit us here in Washington. He was an official of the Thai Farmers Bank living in Los Angeles! In 1995 we had a call from the luxurious Carlton Hotel downtown. It was Sae, rather Seri!! Could he come to see us? Well, well. He still was small of stature, wearing blue jeans and a tee shirt, hardly the dress of an important banker! What was he doing in Washington? He was at a Bankers' Conference, the International Monetary Fund. He handed me his card, Seri Seriwathanophas, First Senior Vice President! He had married a titled Thai lady, a Mom Rajwong. They had two little boys and lived in the fashionable suburb of Bangkapi, obviously with a house full of servants. A Mercedes car came for him every morning to take him to the bank. I hope his father, Ben, lived long enough to rejoice in the success of his son. Another surprise! Seri and his wife had bought a very large strip of land along the Gulf of Siam. Here, they have plans to build a luxury hotel with a golf course. He had already talked to an architect in Hawaii. Why on the Gulf of Siam? Because the luxury Eastern Orient Express train from Singapore to Bangkok goes right past his property. Everything is go! Will Seri become President of his bank? We worried about Seri and the Thai Farmers Bank in the Asian financial crisis a few years back, but Thailand recovered from it. I hope that means Seri continues to be successful.

Assignment Washington

Our Bangkok tour was coming to an end. This is often a time of anxiety, but not this time. Robert received word of his assignment to Washington as Deputy Director of the Office of Southeast Asian Affairs. It looked like a most promising and important job owing to escalating problems in the whole area. The office covered Burma, Thailand,

Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Malaysia. He certainly was on the fast track. Robert took orientation trips to Burma and Laos, and I went along.

Burma

We visited Burma in the spring of 1958. The country is sandwiched between India and Bangladesh on the West and Thailand on the East. China is beyond the mountain ranges in the North. There are two geographic regions. The southern plains, watered by the Irrawaddy River, are the rice growing area. In the northern mountains, hill tribes in small isolated communities grow opium poppies in an area known as the Golden Triangle. The opium is funneled south to Thailand for sale and distribution.

Burma was originally settled by tribes from Southern China -- Tibeto-Burmans and Shans. India provided many cultural influences, including Buddhism. In the eighteenth century Burma's efforts to expand eastward into Thailand were stopped at Ayudhya by the Thais. In the next century, the British took over Burma as a province. It remained a colony till the British gave it full independence in 1948

During World War II, allied air forces flew over "The Hump" -- the northern Burmese mountains -- from Burma to Kunming, China, to support Chiang Kai-shek's fight against the Communists under Mao. After independence, Burma experimented with many kinds of government. In 1960, the military under Gen. U Ne Win took over (earlier the same year, Ne Win was Robert's guest for golf at the Chevy Chase Club. Robert found him delightful). The military repressed human rights under martial law. The country is still in turmoil, but its future looks a bit brighter. Martial law was lifted -- universities reopened - - some political prisoners released -- and the economy is improving. But Burma -- now called Myanmar -- is still a basket case

In Rangoon we stayed several days at the Embassy residence. While Robert was being briefed, the Ambassador's wife took me sightseeing. The major interest was the Shwedagon Pagoda, a very huge golden stupa built on the top of a hill in the center of town. Ninety percent of the people are Buddhists -- this shrine is of great importance to them. We walked up from the street to this amazing creation. Looking skyward I was surprised at the height of this golden stupa -- temple bells around the top were tinkling in the breeze. At the base a continuous ring of small shrine-like buildings encircled the stupa, each surmounted by a golden spire similar in design to the large stupa. It produced a veritable forest of golden spires. In front of each door stood pairs of gilded lions, statues of Buddhas, monkey gods, and Bodhisattva. Water has a special meaning to Buddhists. Over the head of one seated Buddha was a showerhead that permanently dripped water from a hidden pump hidden by flowers. A wide marble walk encircled this whole complex. Along the path padded yellow-clad Buddhist nuns carrying the ubiquitous black umbrellas. Around the outer ring were crowded temples with tiers of golden roofs and spires. Inside many buildings were large seated Buddhas -- in white enamel -- instead of gold leaf as in Thailand. I saw the pagoda only during the rainy season -- the gilt spires against the black clouds were spectacular -- but I can imagine what a dazzling sight it would be in the sun. As Jim Thompson would have said, "How sensational!" I wanted to

visit Mandalay in the north but it was closed to tourists as well as the ancient capital of Pagan with its many ruined temples.

Burma is noted for its lacquer ware. We have many Burmese ducks and bowls around the house. Like the Thais, the Burmese also weave very interesting dress materials. I bought some cotton material with embroidered designs to make skirts for the girls. We took several trips to visit factories to give Robert an impression of the economy. In 1958, the economic situation seemed to be functioning reasonably well. But there were signs of the political unrest and military crackdown to come.

Laos

We took a small plane from Bangkok to Vientiane, the political capital of Laos. The country is a large landlocked mountainous area, bounded by China on the north, Vietnam and Cambodia on the east and south, and Thailand to the west, across the great Mekong River flowing down from the Himalayas. It was then and is now under-populated and undeveloped -- it was often referred to as a "Geographical expression" rather than a sovereign country. Its early history is mostly about the struggle between Thais and Vietnamese to control the region. The Lao themselves are similar to the Thai in language and customs. At one time, Luang Prabang -- in 1958 the Royal Capital -- was capital of the kingdom of *Lan Xan* -- meaning "Million Elephants", that included much of present-day Thailand and Laos. Buddhism is the major religion. For centuries, all Southeast Asia was in turmoil -- a continuing struggle among all the races in the area, including the Lao.

In the late nineteenth century the Lao kingdom became part of French Indochina, along with Vietnam and Cambodia. French became the official language. During World War II, the Japanese occupied French Indochina along with the rest of Southeast Asia. After the war France gave Laos limited independence. In 1954 it received full sovereignty -- as a constitutional monarchy, with a king as chief of state. While it was not divided into north and south as Vietnam, its eastern part was under Vietnamese Communist control -- they were beginning their efforts to take over the rest. In 1958, the United States was starting an economic and military assistance program to help it maintain its independence. In the Laos of the fifties and sixties, there was constant political turmoil -- power struggles between pro-Communist and anti-Communist factions. Our policies to deal with these problems in Laos and the rest of the area would be Robert's work for many years to come.

Vientiane

I've always liked the Laotian flag -- it doesn't have the million elephants of Luang Prabang -- but it does have three elephant heads. The overgrown village of Vientiane really felt like an outpost of civilization in the jungles. You could see a smattering of French culture -- but not on the scale of Saigon -- a large thriving city. Nothing is shabbier than a poor city in a hot jungle. However, a nice golden *stupa* in front of our Embassy reminded us that this was a Buddhist country. While Robert spent time being briefed by the Ambassador, I visited the few places of interest escorted by an Embassy

wife -- she was delighted to have a new person to talk to. She wanted to know what was going on in Bangkok! Like the wives of the engineers living far from civilization, the few women I met in Laos were good sports and made the best of it. They exhibited the fine *esprit de corps* that then was expected of Foreign Service families in difficult posts. Things have since changed for the better in the Service -- there are still difficult and dangerous posts -- but better medical care, improved communications, and other amenities have made family life easier. Also there are many career opportunities for wives -- impossible in the fifties. Laos, although a Buddhist country, was different in its own way from Burma or Thailand. A very interesting site was a colossal statue of Buddha seated in solitary splendor in the jungle -- the walls of its temple long since fallen down. In contrast to the usual slightly curved nose of Thai Buddhas, this one's was long and sharply pointed. Nearby was a large temple with curved tiered roofs and balustrades of huge carved snakes ending in a *naga* head. It lacked the decorative brilliance of Thai temples, and was in need of repair -- not used for anything. In the same compound was a community of yellow-clad monks living in wooden houses built on stilts. Was this to be cooler, or to escape the real snakes? Maybe it was floods -- if the Mekong were to overflow. I was the only tourist -- one monk came over and smiled at me. I have a lovely photo of him carrying his black umbrella. We drove to the bank of the Mekong River -- the other side was Thailand. A flat wooden barge-ferry was the only activity. Looking upriver I saw the outline of the distant mountains -- almost on the border of China. Again I wondered if I would ever see China -- so near -- and yet so far!

Time to go -- Souvenirs of oriental art

Our time in Bangkok was coming to an end. Below I mention some things I brought back so if some one in the family wants anything, they know where they came from. With Jim Thompson's advice, I ordered bolts of Thai silk in celadon and cobalt blue for draperies and upholstery for our next house. I bought hand-blown hanging oil lamps -- they still hang in the Garfield house. My last "Buddha shopping" was my final sortie to the thieves' market, *Nakorn Kasem*, and antique shops. One find was an old pair of Damascene scissors -- gold beaten into the steel -- ceremonial scissors used in past days to cut the long hair of a Thai Prince at puberty. They don't cut very well but are very rare and kind of interesting. We envy our friends, Jack Lydman and his wife, for their fine collection of museum quality Chinese porcelains and pottery which will go to a museum - - we have only a few items in that league -- the Tibetan tanka -- the Khmer head -- the small gold Buddha on the gold throne -- and the large pieces of Cambodian silver -- I hope some member of the family will want them. Jim had wanted the Thai *wat* painting of elephants in the front hall of the Garfield house -- if I hadn't bought it, he would have. In the back room are several carved tables, parts of an old altar, carved with inserts of glass. The painting of the gold-leafed rice girl wearing a Thai straw hat is modern. Coy Hill, Daisy Oakley, and I went to the artist's studio -- he had won prizes in Rome -- we each bought a painting. You can see I had fun acquiring these things -- but I'm afraid the next generation may not be as interested in them. Lastly are the four antique Coromandel screens, red, white, and two gold. I should mention the Buddha statue with a brass crown on the top glass shelf, that I think is Chinese, bought at the turn of the century by Aunt May when on a trip to China. Also, there is the large, very nice, Chinese Manning

christening bowl, on the sideboard, bought by Captain Manning on a Navy tour in the Orient. One gets caught up in the culture of another world. I was very sorry to leave the Far East -- of all our foreign posts Bangkok was the most intriguing. I learned a lot in those two years, but it was only the tip of the iceberg. Bangkok was the last post abroad where our family would all be together.

Departure Time

Many friends gave farewell parties for us. I've always found it depressing to say goodbye to friends in the Foreign Service community whom you may never see again. We would see the Hills, Oakleys, Lydmans, and many others at home, but it turned out that I would never see Jim Thompson again. Arno Halusa would be Austrian Ambassador in Washington some years later. In Australia we had made friends with many Australians, and kept up with them over the years -- but owing to cultural differences, close friendships with Thais people didn't develop. In Washington, we were often invited to the Thai Embassy, and were on friendly terms with the Ambassador and staff. It was always fun to eat real Thai food again.

We would miss quite a few of the foreign friends we met in Bangkok. The Indian Ambassador had introduced us to great Indian food. At one dinner he spoke at length about birth control in India, all the while dangling and playing with an IUD contraception device. As good diplomats we showed no surprise! India and Australia celebrated their National Day on the same date. As we were expected at both receptions, we always went to the Indians' first -- they served no liquor -- then to the Australians -- there we had champagne and delicious Australian beer. Through the extremely friendly Japanese Ambassador we ordered the red lacquered soup bowls we like so much. The British Ambassador we knew less well, but it was amusing to dine at the British Embassy. The Embassy Residence was a sumptuous Victorian Thai house on the river -- operated in the style of the great British *Raj*. The servants wore ancient Thai uniforms. No air conditioning -- *punkahs* slowly swung back and forth over the dining room table to stir the air. A rope attached to the *punkahs* went through a hole in the wall to an invisible *punkah wallah*, who operated it, reputedly by attaching it to his toe and rocking in a rocking chair. The British have an historic relationship with the Thais.

Han Li Wu, from Taiwan, was perhaps the most interesting Ambassador. At his dinners we both learned to master chopsticks. At one dinner, a Chinese artist demonstrated Chinese painting -- he drew a beautiful pine tree. *Han Li Wu* gave it to us -- it now hangs in the oriental room downstairs. Ambassador *Han* had been Minister of Education in Beijing before the Communist takeover. He rescued vast quantities of Chinese art -- paintings, sculptures, and porcelains from the museums in China -- and got them to Taiwan. He did this by hiding the art works on sampans and small boats -- these were sailed through the canals of China and across the straits of Taiwan to Taipei. They lay hidden in Taiwan for years -- then a magnificent museum was built to house them. It has one of the greatest Oriental Collections in the world -- we visited it in 1969. The one piece *Han Li Wu* failed to acquire was the wonderful "Flying Horse" statue still in the Forbidden City Museum in Beijing.

Writing about Thailand was fun -- it brought back many fond memories, but a lot has been left out. Perhaps my life as a Foreign Service wife sounds frivolous today -- but then -- with few exceptions -- most Foreign Service wives felt fulfilled by participating in their husbands' careers -- there was great *esprit de corps*.

The packers arrived -- they wrapped in excelsior every item from delicate porcelains to iron frying pans -- then packed them in wooden tea chests -- nothing was broken. The gray Buick we sold to our Thai friend Chuchat -- the Minister of Irrigation. Our GE icebox went to Ben -- he eventually opened a restaurant. We arranged for Tarzan and Mickey to be shipped to Washington. Our most treasured farewell present -- a Thai silver box with "Mr. and Mrs. Cleveland" inscribed on it -- was from Ben and Family.

On departure day we said goodbye to Cutie Pie, Bernadette, and the many cats -- hugged Tarzan and Mickey -- hoping their travel wouldn't be too stressful. I took a last photo of everyone -- including the unsmiling dark-skinned gardener. Ben was in great demand -- but we made sure he would work for the new Deputy Chief of Mission and his wife -- Len and Anne Unger -- she promised to give Lokka music lessons. Wiwat drove us to the airport along the dangerous narrow road. I wore a new Thai silk dress with matching shoes -- Polly and Francie wore skirts of pretty embroidered Burmese cotton. We have a picture of us waving from the top of the PAN-AM plane's steps. We were on our way.

Epilogue:

In 1960 Robert took a round-the-world trip for the State Department. In Bangkok he had dinner with Jim Thompson in his new museum house. Jim autographed his book of the house for me. He would be murdered in 1967. In 1969 Robert went on an inspection tour. I went along. We spent ten days in Bangkok. I sadly visited Jim Thompson's house, now a museum owned by the Thai government and opened for charity twice a week. It had become the Mecca for all tourists. The dining room was set for the usual six people at King Chulalongkorn's table -- I could almost smell the Thai curry. I expected Jim to enter, wearing his white socks and commenting, "Isn't this sensational!"

When we first arrived to Bangkok in 1956, I remember how excited I was by the strange and beautiful sights. At our first dinner party I commented on the fascination of the city. An old timer replied, "My dear, you should have seen Bangkok in the OLD days before the war. THEN, it WAS a city of great beauty, calm, and quiet without traffic and tourists. Now it is RUINED!" When we returned in 1969, we were invited to dinner by an Embassy couple, the young wife turned to me, asking, "Isn't Bangkok the most beautiful city you have ever seen?" I just smiled. I did not wish to destroy her enthusiasm by saying, "But you should have seen it in the old days!" Earlier that day as I had driven around the city, I was horrified by the filled-in *klongs*, the high-rise buildings, the traffic, and smog. The city was ruined!

Once, after Robert retired, we attended an Australian Embassy reception -- the Ambassador's last post had been Thailand -- everywhere were collections of Thai

artifacts -- including a large eight-foot standing Buddha. For a moment I had a pang of nostalgia, wishing we still shared Foreign Service life. Present, was a relative of Jim Thompson -- who had just visited Bangkok. She told me a sad story. She had visited Jim's museum -- the Thai government has let it fall into disrepair. It had become very shabby -- many pieces of art were removed. I wish I hadn't heard that.

Daisy Oakley once said what she thought had happened to Jim -- he had had some kind of secret life he would never talk about -- could he have been working for the CIA? A more probable explanation was that he had been kidnapped -- then died of a heart attack - - evidently he had left his heart medicine behind when he went on that fateful walk. Who was responsible for the kidnapping? Why? His death will always be a mystery.

A few years after Arno Halusa's tour as Austrian Ambassador in Washington, both he and Connie died. Of our closest American friends -- Elizabeth Herz, Coy Hill, and Daisy Oakley, are widows. It's been 45 years since our days in Bangkok. Elizabeth is now living in Vienna, Austria. Coy lives in Camden, S.C. and Daisy in Cambridge, Mass. We often talk on the telephone about old days..

In 1997 Francie had a business trip to Bangkok. She said she could hardly recognize the city -- with its skyscrapers and terrible traffic. She took a taxi along our old street, Rajadamari, past the Erawan -- now a fourth-rate hotel that will probably be torn down. Farther along the street -- looking for our old house, set in its large compound with its traveling palms and flowering acacia trees -- she was stunned to see only a row of high-rise apartments. The *klongs* had all been filled in. Buildings had also been built on the Sports Club side near the old racetrack. Nothing resembled the past -- I don't ever want to return to Bangkok -- I want to remember Bangkok as we knew it.

Washington 1958-1963

Homeward Bound

Because our transfer orders had come too soon, we had had to give up a planned trip to Kashmir, Pakistan where we were to live on a houseboat. Instead, we flew westward back to America on Pan-Am DC7 First Class -- routine in those days. We flew across India -- landed late at night at Karachi, Pakistan for refueling. We took the three very sleepy children off the plane for the two-hour layover. We sat like zombies in the terrible heat amid hundreds of milling people, some in saris and some in turbans. Back on the plane -- we slept a little. At dawn we were flying over the Iranian desert. Then imagine -- the pilot invited the children to the cockpit to "fly the plane"! The stewardess gave handouts to the children, plane models and games. Those were the days! We were treated as if we were members of the Shah of Iran's family!

We landed in Teheran. Ah, caviar! We bought a kilo -- very cheap -- the airport caviar shop tried to switch our tin of caviar to one of lower quality -- but Robert caught him! With much bowing and scraping, he handed us the right tin. Back on the plane, when breakfast was served, we added some caviar to the scrambled eggs, a dish fit for the

Shaw! We left the plane at Istanbul, Turkey. We stayed at the then new Hilton Hotel -- more luxurious than the Erawan in Bangkok. I was excited about seeing -- for the first time -- the great Santa Sophia and the Blue Mosque. I'd read about them in History of Art -- one of my favorite subjects in school. My enthusiasm was lost on the children -- they were more interested in the goats clacking around over the paving stones of the courtyard -- nibbling grass between the cracks. They did enjoy an excursion boat ride along the Bosphorus toward the Black Sea, passing typical Turkish villages with minarets rising above the mosques. On our last evening we opened up the tin of caviar -- it was much tastier than Romanian caviar -- it was the real stuff! The children were intrigued by our enthusiasm -- wanted a taste. To our annoyance they liked it -- we had to share some with them.

On the way to the airport we discovered we had left a bag at the hotel and had to rush back for it. The plane was held for us. Imagine that nowadays. After another slow flight across Europe, we landed in Munich, Germany. Here we picked up a new car -- a green Ford Taunus station wagon. We headed south through the Alps toward Naples -- from there we would sail on the SS *Independence* for New York. On the way, we stopped for lunch with our old friends the Halusas at their country house in the mountains overlooking Innsbruck. Robert had passed through the town on his way to Bucharest in 1947 -- then it was in ruins from the bomb damage of World War II. Ten years later the city was completely rebuilt. We drove over the Brenner Pass into Italy -- stopped at a deluxe hotel at Cortina d'Ampezzo in the Dolomites -- there the children had their first funicular ride. Then -- Venice. Leaving the car in the parking garage on the outskirts, we took a gondola to our hotel. The children were thrilled. I had hoped -- for the children's sake -- the gondolier would burst into song -- he acted like any cab driver hoping for a generous American tip! We glided along the canals to the Royal Danieli Hotel -- I had stayed there with Mother in 1938. The children were not too interested in the beauties of Venetian architecture -- David didn't fall in love with Venice until 1963 on our way to Belgrade -- but they loved feeding the pigeons in Saint Mark's Square. We went to the Lido for a swim in the Adriatic Sea, not too successful -- a great wind blew sand in our faces. Certainly it was the gondola rides they remembered the best.

From Venice we drove up and over the mountains toward Florence. Our first stop was Padua -- for my benefit -- to see the famous Giotto frescoes. We had a good lunch in Bologna -- many years later Patsy studied there -- Polly managed to lose her lunch on the side of the road as we swung around the curves on the way to Florence. We stayed at the Excelsior Hotel -- Mother and I had stopped there when I was seventeen. There were horse-drawn carriages on the street outside. So of course the children were much more interested in feeding the horses than visiting art galleries. The trip continued through the hill towns -- we spent nights at Siena and Orvieto before reaching Rome -- there the children saw the best-known sights. Maybe Polly, who was thirteen, remembers some details. Around Naples, the kids seemed to enjoy the Blue Grotto on the Isle of Capri -- a small boat takes you into a cave to see the wonderful blue ceiling, a reflection of the water. All children love volcanoes -- I know they remember the funicular trip up the side of Vesuvius to look down into its smoking depths. At Pompeii they learned how Vesuvius had erupted and covered the city with ash. But they couldn't wait to board the

ship for the trip home.

The voyage on the SS *Independence* was our last trip as a family -- a good time was had by all. For a hat competition, Polly designed a fish hat using a coat hanger -- she won a prize. It was good to see the New York skyline -- the last time was in 1950 when we arrived on the *Ile de France*. The Taunus was on the boat with us. After it was unloaded, we piled in with all our stuff and headed for Washington.

Washington, Kalorama Road

Mother was happy to take us in until we found a house. There was plenty of room -- but a lot of extra work for Elva -- her wonderful cooking was better than the fancy European food we had been eating -- she was the best cook Mother ever had. The school year was starting. Polly and Francie were all set -- they would return to Holton-Arms in the ninth and sixth grades. But David was a problem. I had corresponded with Beauvoir from Bangkok and had expected to put him in second grade. After some tests the Headmistress said he didn't FIT -- he was TOO advanced in arithmetic but did not know the vocabulary of the "Jump Jim Jump" primers used in first grade. Of course he knew the British reading books from the Bangkok school. I suggested he start in first grade, but that grade was filled. I was furious -- it was September -- too late to enter him in any other school -- this left only public school. That too was a problem -- we had no permanent address yet. The school that served Mother's neighborhood was in the Adams-Morgan area of the city -- not very desirable. I had to do something. I called on the Principal of the Oyster School at 29th and Calvert streets. A really nice woman said of course David could attend this school -- he could sit in the room for first and second grades and pick up the necessary reading skills. Six weeks later I had a call from Sheridan School -- there had been a dropout in first grade -- David would be welcome. The public school had been so understanding, I almost hated to move him -- but thought Sheridan would be best in the long run.

The next problem was teeth straightening -- Dr. Rice, the orthodontist would be part of our lives for the next four years. The latest method was to start by extracting four teeth, one behind each eyetooth. Polly went first to a Dr. Smith -- a children's dentist -- for the extractions. On his huge x-ray machine were painted large blue eyes -- making it appear friendlier -- this gave it life. Actually, it looked like a Tyrannosaurus Rex. Lurking nearby was another dinosaur -- the drill, hanging above the chair with its gleaming painted eyes -- a veritable Spielberg setting. With a little laughing gas, the deed was done. I took Polly back to Mother's -- she went to bed sucking ice. I'd spent so many years wearing braces as a child -- now in my old age my teeth are crooked again -- maybe I should have had the same four teeth pulled.

At home in America I hoped the children could now enjoy Halloween. We carved a big pumpkin -- a new experience -- David wasn't sure he liked it! In the evening I sent the three out on Kalorama Road with bags to collect goodies from the neighbors. In front of the French Embassy a gang of boys attacked them -- knocked them down and snatched their candy bags. They never celebrated Halloween outdoors again.

Robert went to work at the Department right away. His area -- Southeast Asia -- included six countries -- Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Malaya, and Vietnam -- very hot spots. His hours were ferocious -- late every night -- all day Saturdays and sometimes Sunday. After we had gone to bed there might be a phone call from the duty officer demanding his attention -- it was very stressful -- disaster struck -- he developed a terrible headache. We had no doctor -- often the case with Foreign Service families who have been living overseas. We went to see Harry's doctor -- a cardiologist. Robert's blood pressure was very high; the doctor said he might have a brain leakage at any time -- should go to the hospital immediately. That was scary! At the hospital that night, when I said goodnight to Robert -- he seemed to be OK -- an IV with medication was in his arm. The next morning when I called him, he had changed, shouting -- "Get me out of here." I rushed to the hospital. When I went into his room he yelled at me, "I don't want to see you. Get out!" I was stunned. As his doctor came down the hall, I asked, what had happened to my husband, and why was he acting so strangely? He just looked at me saying, "I never answer 'why' questions. Leave your husband alone. I'll be out of town for a week -- I'll talk to you when I get back!"

That was the beginning of a living nightmare that lasted many months. I'd had no experience how to help someone in a depression and at times I was angry. I had only known kindly pediatricians and obstetricians. No one in the family could offer advice -- Mother was absolutely useless. There were two villains responsible for this horror story -- : First -- the medication -- *reserpine* -- never used today -- it might reduce blood pressure, but its side effects could be lethal -- personality changes and clinical depression. Second - - the doctor -- he had a good reputation as a cardiologist -- but not an ounce of psychological understanding for his patient or the family. Robert was convinced he was going to die! The doctor refused to talk to me if he could avoid it. One Saturday morning, Robert was acting strangely -- I called the doctor. I tried not to use the forbidden word, 'why.' I described the problem. He was very unpleasant on the phone. "I never take calls on the weekend -- I'll talk to you on Monday," and hung up! Looking back -- I wonder why we didn't change doctors right away or even get a second opinion. But we were both neophytes about doctors. I had been informed this doctor was top-notch. Later we did change but great damage had been done -- with a different doctor much could have been avoided. Eventually a new doctor and a psychologist helped him but it was two years before the occasional depression stopped.

2303 California Street, Winter and Spring, 1959

We had started to look for a house. Living with Mother was never easy. Real estate agents became the bane of my existence -- they are so aggressive. After much looking around -- we finally settled on our California Street house. It was a large old brick house, with plenty of room at a price we could afford. We would have preferred Spring Valley, but most of the houses there were beyond our means. The California Street house had one attraction -- the girls could walk to Holton-Arms, and David's school was not too far. Our lift vans from Bangkok and Sydney finally arrived -- we removed from storage the stuff left behind in 1953, when we went to Australia. We discovered that some valuable Japanese prints and a few other items were missing. After five years there was nothing

we could do. Perhaps we were better off than some Foreign Service friends whose lift vans were lost in a typhoon in the Pacific Ocean -- one of the risks of life in the Foreign Service. We moved in the week before Christmas -- it was pretty chaotic -- but we did manage to have a Christmas tree.

The house was large with space for everyone. But the lack of a garage was a real nuisance -- parking was often difficult -- on rainy days the bottoms of the paper grocery bags would break through before I could get them into the house. It was hard to get used to living in the US again -- I missed Ben and Wiwat! There were two happy events -- Tarzan and Mickey arrived -- none the worse for travel. Irene came back to us -- she was happy to be with the children again.

We made an amusing discovery about the house -- we wondered why each bedroom door had a doorknocker. During our first months in the house, there'd be occasional telephone calls late at night -- always a female voice asking for Mr. Clark, the previous owner. After some detective work we solved the mystery. Mr. Clark was a most successful Congressional lobbyist. One of the services he evidently offered to lonely clients was his stable of ladies of the evening -- plus a place to enjoy them! That explained Polly's bedroom! Lush pink carpeting covered the floor -- a large mirror covered the wall by the bed! The doorknocker was a copy of the famous Lincoln Cathedral's imp with its wicked wink. Polly inhabited the room only with her pets. What a change though there was plenty of sex activity but only among the fish and the hamsters!

California Street 1960 - 1963

Family life settled into a routine. Polly and Francie made two school friends who spent a great deal of time at our house -- Mary Rodenberg -- who lived down the street -- and Joanna Pilavachi -- daughter of the Greek Minister. After school they'd come to the house and do their teen-ager stuff. Aristide Pilavachi, DCM of the Greek Embassy, picked up Joanna on his way home -- she was known as the "fixture." Another fairly permanent guest was Selçuk Esenbel, daughter of the Turkish Ambassador. The Turkish Government had decorated Mother for her work during the war -- she became a close friend of the Esenbels. It was a period of political unrest in Turkey. When the Esenbels were ordered home, they felt it safer for Selçuk to stay in this country. She lived with Mother for a while -- then moved in with us. She must have been unhappy, but kept it to herself. Thinking about Polly's and Francie's schoolmates, it is interesting that their favorites were foreign -- perhaps a result of the Foreign Service life. The fact that one was Turkish and the other Greek was amusing. In spite of historic Greek-Turkish animosity, the girls got along all right -- but we doubt their families were close friends. Selçuk eventually joined her parents when her father became Ambassador to Japan. David also had a good school friend -- Rowland Kirks -- he lived nearby and spent much time with us.

Cat Stories

Tarzan and Mickey -- usually Mickey -- were always up to something. They had adjusted

very well to California Street and enjoyed our back yard. They normally slept under the azalea bushes. One terrible day Mickey did not show up by dinnertime -- we really began to worry when there was no Mickey the next morning. I started by asking the postman to keep a lookout for him and asked neighbors if they had seen a Siamese cat. Days went by -- I was frantic -- I called the Animal Rescue League -- I put Lost and Found ads in both newspapers, the *Post* and *Evening Star* (a few years before it became defunct, thanks to television). It looked as though he had gone the way of Peter Rabbit. After two weeks I gave up. Then one afternoon, I received a telephone call -- a man speaking with an odd accent asked if I had found my cat. I said we hadn't. "Well we have a cat here at the South African Embassy that may be yours." I hopped into the car -- drove two long blocks to Massachusetts Avenue -- another few blocks past the new Islamic Mosque -- across the bridge over Rock Creek Park -- and another two blocks to the Embassy -- a long walk for a cat. I held my breath as I rang the doorbell. The door opened -- I was told to wait. Then a man appeared holding a cushion on which lay a cat -- more dead than alive. It was Mickey! He never explained where he had been during the past weeks or how he had crossed over that long bridge! Obviously, he had sought out another Diplomatic family.

A feral kitten later walked into our garden. He was striped like our Australian Tizzy cat. I put out food for him -- he would only eat when no one was around. Each day I brought the food closer to the back door. By degrees he became tamer. I finally caught him and brought him inside. Tarzan and Mickey growled at him -- but he finally allowed us to pick him up. Stupidly, it didn't occur to me that he should have shots. He became very ill like poor Tizzy -- the vet said that he had better be put to sleep. Later, a perfectly beautiful cat -- a pure Siamese -- came to our back door. I didn't feed it at first. After several days, I offered it some food -- it wanted to come into the house. It obviously was someone's pet. Again, I asked the postman to check with the neighbors. I advertised in the Lost and Found and called the Animal Rescue League. When no one claimed it after two weeks, I began to think we had a third Siamese cat. Tarzan and Mickey reacted to the Siamese quite differently from that to the feral cat. They didn't growl but became rather sexy, even though they'd been neutered. Tarzan began to spray on the lovely Thai silk draperies, the gold ones in the dining room. The cat was obviously a female! Something had to be done because even Mickey was acting up. At the end of three weeks, I decided that if there was to be any peace in the household, she'd have to be altered. All was well until I received a phone call. An anxious woman's voice said she had heard we had a stray Siamese cat. She had been away and had just come back to discover her Show Cat had run away. "Yes, we have her -- but I must tell you your cat is no longer a show cat." An altered cat cannot be shown -- and of course not bred. She was so happy to find her that she forgave us. Tarzan and Mickey missed her.

Politics -- The 1960 Election

As DC residents, we could not yet vote in the 1960 presidential elections. But we watched with fascination for the first time on our new TV, the campaigns of Richard Nixon and John F. Kennedy. I remember well their famous debate -- Nixon, looking as if he hadn't shaved, resembling a thug, and Kennedy -- all grace and charm. There was the

famous Nixon's checker speech. I remember election night when we sat up to three in the morning before the Secret Service moved into Kennedy's Hyannis, Mass. house, predicting he would win. The day before the swearing-in ceremonies, one of the worst blizzards hit the city -- high winds, snow, and freezing cold. Robert's route home from the State Department was usually a ten-minute drive. That evening it took over three hours -- cars stalled and broke down or got stuck -- gridlock at every intersection. Robert was lucky to get home at all! In Rock Creek Park, traffic finally came to a complete halt -- many drivers had to abandon their cars and walk out. Robert had a colleague with him. He spent the night with us. The next morning blue skies and sun shone down on Washington, temperatures dropped to the low teens. The Inauguration went on as planned. I shall always remember, on that freezing morning, January 1960, the swearing-in of President Kennedy with Jacqueline Kennedy holding the Bible. Kennedy gave a brilliant speech, standing bareheaded with no overcoat. I bet he was wearing long johns. The youthful President made an unforgettable impression. We felt great optimism for the United States. (Not the Republicans!)

On TV we watched our first space effort at the new Space Center on Cape Canaveral -- a monkey sent into outer space. It was thrilling to watch the first takeoff of the capsule. I can still see him strapped into his seat -- I hoped he would have a happy retirement. My wish came true -- in 1997 a update on his progeny showed cages of happy chimpanzees! We were in heavy competition with the Soviets at the time -- they had already launched SPUTNIK. Kennedy promised to put a man on the moon. The race into space was on.

Volunteer Work

As the children were all in school, I now had time to do some volunteer work. We had been out of the States so long that I had few connections. I decided to work with children -- my first year I joined the volunteer group at a ghetto primary school to help in remedial reading. This student body was about 93% black -- 5% Chinese -- 2% white. I worked mainly with the very nice second grade black teacher. She spoke proper English, but it was hard for me to understand the children. My pupils were all black except for one Chinese boy, Rudy Toy. The early sixties were a few years before violence and drugs took over the schools. But discipline was a problem. Almost none of the children seemed to be interested in learning -- they liked the attention I gave them, but rarely followed up on my suggestions. One Christmas, I took a present to the home of each of my children. For the first time, I saw the unbelievable conditions they lived in. Generally there was no parent around -- the homes were all filthy -- one house the stairway was missing many steps. I felt uneasy and left in a hurry. On the other hand, Rudy Toy's house was well kept. I certainly learned some things that only social workers are aware of. The few white children in the group seemed as badly off as the blacks. One of my charges was a ten-year-old white girl who came to school in filthy clothes. I brought her cookies -- she was always hungry. Her English was very primitive -- she was just as hard to understand as the Black children. Her parents were hillbillies from the Tennessee Mountains.

I had one success -- my Chinese charge, Rudy Toy. Why was that? His mother and father were ambitious for their son to succeed in school. The mother met with me occasionally

to see how she could help Rudy at home. His teacher was very pleased with his improvement. At Christmas he gave me a present -- very Chinese! The fact that I had lived in the Orient made a bond between us. The second year I worked with older children -- sixth graders -- it was much more difficult. By then their personalities were more or less hardened -- their attitude -- why work at all? Most of them were young teenagers -- held back two years before going to middle school -- who had serious behavioral problems. I monitored their lunch periods -- there were fistfights and other battles -- fortunately they only threw food at each other. One was not allowed to touch them physically -- I did push one child aside during a fight -- she turned on me -- said she would report me to the principal. Children would not clean up the messes they had made at lunch. I could not control them -- particularly the older bigger boys -- they frightened me. Things seem to have worsened since my day -- the use of drugs, guns, and knives are in the daily papers. Nobody seems to know the answer -- clearly the problem starts in the home. It is there that respect for authority and motivation to succeed has to be established.

A new principal, a black, took over the following year -- he announced he didn't want any white aides in the school. Perhaps he was right -- it's hard for untrained white volunteers and young blacks to relate to each other. But in the last analysis this is wrong -- it only exacerbates the racial problems. As no blacks volunteered, I never knew how students in need of help were handled. I was glad to leave -- my results had been minimal -- the general atmosphere had become unpleasant. I gained a hands-on knowledge of the problems in ghetto schools. These seem to have escalated into today's terrible conditions. Rudy Toy's family moved to the suburbs. Rudy completed high school; I hope he has led a responsible life.

Foreign Service Friends

Various friends came back to Washington for duty in the State Department. The children may remember some of them. For most colleagues, this duty meant loss of overseas allowances -- no help -- no live-in baby sitters -- and long hours at the office. All this was a limitation on social life. Coy and John Hill lived in McLean, Virginia -- we got together occasionally on the weekends. Evie and Art Emmons were back from Malaysia -- they lived nearby. Art and Robert were in Southeast Asian Affairs -- so we often saw each other at Embassy parties: the Malaysians, Thais, Burmese, Laotian, Cambodian, and Vietnamese. But fate was cruel. Art did not feel well -- it was found he had incurable pancreatic cancer. He stayed at home for several months until he had to be hospitalized. I mentioned earlier that Art had been one of a small group of alpinists who climbed in the Himalayas. He had been on the first successful American ascent of *Nandi Devi* -- 24,000 feet. Through this activity he had come to know Edmund Hillary, the New Zealander, who, with the *Sherpa* Tensing, made the first successful ascent of Mt. Everest in 1953. During Art's final illness, Hillary -- now Sir Edmund, was visiting Washington. When he heard the bad news, he visited Art in the hospital. Art died a few days later. In September 1999 I read in the paper that when President Clinton was at a conference in New Zealand, Sir Edmund invited him to dinner and then on to the Antarctic Museum, my favorite place.

Tomato-Meat Sauce

The Oakleys came to Washington to stay with us. Irene helped out at the occasional Friday night dinner party -- weekends were up to me. As children were involved, I resorted to my famous spaghetti and meat sauce I had learned to cook from a *Life Magazine* cookbook recipe. The sauce took three hours to make -- even today it is the best. Daisy and I decided the children would eat first in the kitchen, while we were having drinks upstairs in the library. Polly was in charge -- the kitchen table was set -- the spaghetti and sauce were ready to be dished out. The Oakleys and Clevelands were enjoying "old home week" upstairs when suddenly there was screaming and shouting downstairs. I rushed down -- Polly and David were in the living room looking at the mess. Polly said that after the food had been heaped onto the plates, she saw that David's hands were dirty. As Big Sister, she ordered Little Brother to wash his hands -- he refused -- words got hot and heavy -- a shouting match began -- a test of wills. David ran from the kitchen -- Polly -- holding a plate of food -- in full pursuit. When they reached the living room, Polly slung the plate of spaghetti and sauce at David. It missed -- landed on the blue Thai silk couch -- and splattered on the Thai silk draperies. I ordered Polly to her room -- to this day Polly feels aggrieved -- she said it was David's fault. Daisy Oakley and I have laughed over that event ever since. The stains on the Thai silk never came out.

Molly and Peter Abel and their boys stayed with us another weekend. Spaghetti and my meat sauce was the obvious meal. This time Polly was not in charge. I had worked on the sauce all afternoon. I proudly dished up dinner -- one of the boys -- I don't remember who -- said as he dug in -- "Ugh! I don't like this sauce -- my mother uses tomato sauce out of a can -- that tastes much better!" Molly was actually a very good cook -- I learned many shortcuts from her. I finally even resorted to canned applesauce rather than cooking fresh apples. I am sure my grandchildren have no idea how good old-fashioned applesauce -- made from scratch -- tastes.

Small turtles never lasted long. The children wanted a slightly larger one they saw at the pet store. He did not live with the fish -- he had a beautiful arrangement of his own -- an unused bathtub on the top floor was filled with water -- a rock or two made an island for him to climb on. He lived this way for months. One night Robert and I came home late and went to the kitchen. Horrors! Robert stepped on something, making a terrible crunching sound. The turtle had somehow got loose, and had slid or fallen down the two flights of the back stairs, one step at a time, and landed in the kitchen. If that hadn't killed him, Robert's foot should have finished the job. I picked up this critter -- his shell was fractured in many pieces with flesh oozing out. I couldn't bear to just throw him into the garbage can, so I left him in the kitchen sink. I'd deal with him in the morning. Before breakfast I rushed downstairs to get rid of the turtle before the children came. There he was -- walking around the sink. I picked him up and carried him back to his bathtub. He had never had a name -- so now we named him Crunchy. Not only did he live, but kept growing. The scars on his shell were very visible, but the shell got bigger and bigger. He lasted for almost a year. I felt very responsible for him. One day I decided to change the water in his tub -- I added hot water so it wouldn't be too cold -- maybe the phone rang --

somehow I forgot. When I returned, there was a very cooked Crunchy floating in the very, very hot water! That upset me so much that even after forty years I think of him whenever I run a too hot bath!

Summer, 1961

David went to Camp Kezar on a lake in Maine. Like his two sisters before him, camp was not a great success -- although David was pretty good at sports. Robert and I both loved camp -- none of the children did -- they did not enjoy the structured life. They all love the outdoors -- on their own terms. At the end of August, we drove to New England, stopped off in Cambridge for Polly to have an interview at Radcliffe, picked up David at camp, and drove through the White Mountains, and ended in Hartwood for Labor Day weekend.

The children's life at school I'll leave to them to describe. Polly did extremely well -- she was highly motivated. Francie was just as bright, but didn't work as hard. Both girls had piano lessons. Polly was conscientious -- she became the teacher's favorite. She told us recently it was hard for her to perform trills on the piano. She thinks this was an early sign of the Charcot-Marie-Tooth Syndrome -- our family hereditary neurological pathology. Because Francie's grades had slipped, we stopped her music lessons without consulting her first -- she was -- and still is -- angry about it -- we were wrong; it was one of the many parental mistakes we probably made! It was the sort of thing that can permanently affect family relationships. Neither girl was good at team sports -- perhaps it was C. M. T. They both took up horseback riding -- not dressage as in Bangkok -- they rode around the trails of Rock Creek Park, where their grandmother rode when she was young.

The Charcot-Marie-Tooth Syndrome

It's interesting to note that Robert and all three children have been stricken by this hereditary genetic pathology at different ages and in somewhat different ways. Robert thinks it was inherited through his maternal ancestry -- no history of it on the Cleveland side. While I was pretty good at sports, Robert says he wasn't -- even though his C. M. T. didn't become apparent until he was in his sixties -- it probably affected him as a child.

Holton-Arms

Holton-Arms was going through some turmoil. The decision had been made to buy property in Bethesda and construct new school buildings there. The city location was no longer viable for many reasons -- the property was old -- people were beginning to move toward the suburbs. There were still many excellent teachers -- Miss Brown, the Headmistress -- Miss Sherman and Miss Lurton who had taught me -- they were getting older. The school was falling behind in its curriculum for modern-day demands. Science and math badly needed updating. Certainly, more advanced courses in these fields should be offered. The computer world was just about to arrive. Education would be changed forever. Polly and Francie were both scientifically oriented -- they felt the lack of advanced courses. They had to wait for these until they got to Radcliffe. Today the school

has as fine an academic standing as any in the country. Theatre, arts, and music are encouraged. All ethnic groups make up the student body. Many scholarships are offered. I'm sure Mrs. Holton would be pleased.

Polly's Senior Year, 1962

Dale Fisher, a Foreign Service friend who had been in Paris with us in the 1950s, was killed in a plane crash in Ethiopia. His widow, Sarah, and the family had to return to America. Their daughter, Sally, was Polly's age. I was able to get her admitted to the senior class at Holton on full scholarship. She did well and went on to Smith College. As Polly had received early acceptance at Radcliffe, she had no worries about SAT scores -- they were in the very high 700s. She took the National Merit Scholarship Exam. I waited for her to come home after the exam -- she walked around in the rain fretting, thinking she had done badly! Polly became the school's first National Merit Scholar!! Three years later Francie became a finalist.

For spring vacation we drove the children to Florida, and took a house at Delray Beach. Their vacations didn't mesh -- Sheridan School was not too happy that David would miss a week. To satisfy Sheridan, I had him keep a journal -- every day he wrote about the trip. At the Florida state line, all cars were stopped, and each of us was handed a glass of freshly squeezed orange juice. Recently on TV, a story claimed that there was too much glucose (sugar) in orange juice and any dieter should not drink orange juice -- the orange fruit growers in Florida are very upset! The Delray Beach house was not on the beach, like the one at Surfers' Paradise -- too expensive. We took the children deep-sea fishing. How could we have wanted to do that? Now we hate to see a man pulling in some huge fish just to be photographed with it. The boat's captain baited a line for each of us -- we were terrible fishermen -- perhaps the fish knew we didn't really want to catch them. We caught nothing, thank goodness, except a big sea turtle -- we let it off the hook to swim away happily.

When the girls' vacation was over, they took a plane to Washington -- we drove home with David. It gave David something to write about! When we reached Augusta, Georgia we found the Masters Golf Tournament was being played. We spent the next day watching the play; it was a thrill to see Arnold Palmer and Sammy Snead, two of the greatest golfers, playing together in direct competition. Palmer won the 1962 Masters by a stroke.

Polly was in her final months at Holton. Miss Brown told me with great amusement she had found Polly reading a book hidden in her lap, while she, Miss Brown, was lecturing in her History of Art Class! No other pupil ever dared to do that! Miss Brown said nothing -- she knew Polly was just bored -- anyhow Polly got the highest grade in the class. That June was the last graduation at the S Street campus. Polly was the top student of her class. During the ceremony, when Miss Brown announced that Polly was a National Merit Scholar, the student body gave her a standing ovation. Donald Graham, now Publisher of *The Washington Post*, was the only other National Merit Scholar in this area that year.

A Trip To Canada

Polly had a summer job in a physics lab at the University of Maryland. I'm not clear what it entailed. We drove with Francie and David for a vacation in Canada -- Polly would join us later. We drove North through central Pennsylvania, stopped to visit the Steuben Glass Museum in Corning, New York, and then to Ithaca for the night. The motel insisted that Francie, fifteen, and David, ten, have separate rooms! We took a look around Cornell University -- Robert's great-uncle, William Cleveland, Lillian's father, had been the first Professor of Engineering there. We crossed the St. Lawrence River into Canada through the Thousand Islands and drove to Montreal -- it was our first visit there -- it was a surprise that many signs were in French only. We put the car on the boat for a trip down the St. Lawrence and up the Saguenay River. On the way we first stopped off at Murray Bay -- *La Malbaie* -- now *Charlevoix* -- to play golf and stay at a the *Manoir Richelieu* high up on a bluff overlooking the river. Robert often wore bow ties in those days -- but they were generally slightly askew. The cute young waitress, whose sash was tied in a bowknot, showed him how to tie it straight! We got on the next boat for the overnight trip up the Saguenay, sailing through beautiful Canadian wilderness. At *Lac St. Jean* we got off and drove to a fishing camp in the Laurentian wilderness. In the early morning we went fishing with guides. We were not very good at fly-casting -- but the guides caught one fish after another. We took them back to the camp and ate them for breakfast. Neither of us care much for fish, but those were the best we've ever eaten -- they were so fresh they didn't taste like fish.

Fall and Christmas, 1962

Polly went off to Radcliffe -- or Harvard, as the girls now call it. Radcliffe College is no more -- only Harvard. All that is left is the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies. We drove her to Cambridge -- exactly twenty-four years after Mother and Harry had driven me in 1938. Harvard Square looked the same. Polly was to live in Holmes Hall, a new dormitory built after my time. California Street without Polly was different -- she was missed. David's schooling became rather a problem. Sheridan School was building a new school, large enough for all grades through high school -- then it went only through grade four. I tried to enter David in other schools, but as he might only be there for a year, he was turned down. Fortunately, Sheridan moved its classes to a Synagogue for the interim -- and a fifth grade was added.

A New Assignment

Our life was to change again. Robert was assigned to Belgrade, Yugoslavia, as Economic Counselor and Aid Mission Director. We were to leave in February 1963. The Director's job was a Presidential appointment -- like an Ambassador, Robert had to be sworn in. At a brief ceremony at the State Department, this took place in the presence of the Yugoslav Ambassador and other officials of the Yugoslav Embassy. Technically, Robert could use *The Honorable* before his name, but he has chosen not to. This assignment meant the first real family breakup. David and the cats would go to Belgrade with us -- Polly was at

Radcliffe -- but for Francie the change would be traumatic -- she was pretty unhappy. She would have to board at Holton -- I would have loved it -- but not Francie! Evidently she wasn't comfortable with the boarders of her age -- they seemed uninterested in studies and preoccupied with boys -- she found them frivolous and boring. The Holton boarding department has long since been discontinued. She told us later that she was angry at being left behind. She eventually made friends with the few foreign girls. We'd expected that having her grandmother living nearby would help. Mother had no understanding of young people. Francie did not find Mother congenial -- they couldn't communicate. We planned that the girls would come to Belgrade in the summers.

Christmas 1962

It was to be our last Christmas in the California Street house. Debut parties were being given for many girls of Polly's age. Debuts were still customary among our contemporaries -- but not to the same degree as in my time. I joined with my cousin, Priscilla Sullivan, who gave a dance at Chevy Chase Club for Debby. We gave a dinner at the Sulgrave Club before the dance. Polly brought down a friend from Harvard as an escort. His only pair of shoes were dirty sneakers and of course, he had no black tie. Polly really didn't enjoy the process. No debut for Francie three years later -- instead she got a trip to San Jose, Costa Rica, to visit a schoolmate, a member of one of the country's leading families -- in fact her uncle became President. Our daughters were no social butterflies but they had other sterling attributes.

Moving overseas was the usual struggle. The California Street house was put for sale. Real estate agents hounded us. We would have government housing in Belgrade -- we had to decide what to store and what to take with us. For me, the Washington tour had had its ups and downs -- I was ready to go overseas again -- but it was hard to break up the family.

Yugoslavia 1963-1965

The SS Vulcania; New York to Trieste. February, 1963

Yugoslavia would be our last foreign post -- our lift vans were packed and ready to go -- but this time only David and the cats would go to our new post with us. Polly was at Radcliffe -- Francie -- unhappy at being left -- would board at Holton Arms -- that's Foreign Service life. We would have an official car and driver in Belgrade, but we would take our green Taunus for personal use. Thanks to a US shipping lines strike we would have the rare privilege of sailing on an Italian boat, the SS Vulcania. It would be a leisurely trip, a kind of cruise, from New York to Trieste, Italy. From there we would travel by train to Belgrade. Lucky us!

On a cold February day, we packed the Taunus, bade farewell to our California Street house -- it was to be sold -- and took off for New York. The night before sailing we stayed with Peter and Molly Abel and family in Englewood, New Jersey. We took great care not to let Tarzan and Mickey out of their cage. The Abels had a pet raccoon that

would not appreciate the cats. In the morning we drove to the pier to board the Vulcania. It was an old boat -- this would be its last voyage -- many of its passengers were old-timers, very nostalgic about the ship's final trip. Our good friends of Australian days -- the Luciollis -- were to be on board. It would be a wonderful trip -- but we were a little sad to leave the two girls behind.

Off we sailed across the cold Atlantic. Tarzan and Mickey were supposed to be caged on the top deck in outdoor quarters. Owing to the freezing weather, the agreeable Italian crew allowed us to keep the cats in our cabin -- the cats and we were happy about that! On warm mornings I carried them in their basket to the promenade deck -- they sat with me on my deck chair -- much admired by fellow passengers.

The ship stopped for a day at several ports on the way. The first was Casablanca, Morocco. There we had dreamed of walking into Rick's Bar and hearing "Play it again, Sam" from "Casablanca", the film. We hoped Ingrid Bergman and Humphrey Bogart would be there -- and Claude Rains would be "shocked, shocked", and order the roundup of "the usual suspects." But instead, we visited the villa where Roosevelt and Churchill met to determine the final strategy of the war -- planning the invasion of Europe after the defeat of the Germans in North Africa. Churchill's preference was reported to be invasion through the Balkans as well as Italy, rather than Normandy. Perhaps this might have kept the countries of the area from becoming Soviet satellites. In the Kasbah, David was happy to buy an Arab sword of rather questionable provenance.

At Gibraltar, we drove high on the rock to see the famous Barbary apes that watch over the harbor. They are very mischievous -- if given a chance, one could rip off a camera or a dangling earring and toss it into the sea below. At the Spanish Island of Majorca, we visited the glass factory to watch the hand blowing of glass. There I bought our tall-stemmed green wine glasses. Victorina Luciulli bought a beautiful string of the pearls for which Majorca is famous. Life aboard ship was most agreeable -- the Italian food excellent -- we had fresh caviar every night. Farewell parties were given celebrating the last voyage of the Vulcania. We organized an eleventh birthday dinner for David -- we have a picture of us dancing! He hadn't started to grow tall yet.

Then -- the Bay of Naples -- as beautiful as it seemed when we sailed through it on our way home in 1958. As we had seen most of the tourist spots, we took David to Herculaneum -- covered by lava instead of the ash at Pompeii. Many passengers, including the Luciulli's, left the boat at Naples. We sailed around the boot of Italy and up the east coast to Venice. It was a wonderful way to enter that city -- to glide past the Lido -- along the Grand Canal -- past the Royal Danieli Hotel and the Doges' Palace. The ship sailed into the wide commercial shipping canal and dropped anchor before a typical pink Venetian building on the corner of a side canal. Little did David know then that this was the Pensione Segusa. Twenty-one years later, he and Patsy would spend their honeymoon there!

Venice in winter was different from Venice in summer -- then tourists swarm everywhere. This February day was very cold. A light snow covered the roofs of

buildings. Ashore -- bundled up against a brisk wind -- we walked along the side canals, crossed the Grand Canal, and made our way to St. Mark's Square. The pigeons seemed very glad to see us. I took a photo of David with a bird sitting on top of his woolen cap. Of the many times I have been to Venice, I like to remember that day with no tourists -- the few people about were the real inhabitants going about their daily activities. We pulled up anchor in the late afternoon. As we sailed out the Grand Canal, Robert took a photo of David, the captain, and me on the boat's bridge, with St. Mark's campanile behind us.

We arrived at Trieste the next day. We were among the few remaining passengers to disembark at this far corner of Italy, at the head of the Adriatic. It must have been a sad day for the captain and his crew -- their last voyage of the *Vulcania*. We made our way to the huge Excelsior Hotel -- to spend the night before taking the train to Belgrade.

Mickey's attic caper

The Excelsior is one of the ancient grand Italian hotels. It has marble floors, large rooms, and high ceilings -- it covers a city block. In our spacious rooms, we let the cats out to enjoy freedom -- little expecting the traumatic events of the night to come! Leaving the cats curled up on our beds, we went downstairs to an elegant dinner. Back in our rooms, we prepared for the night. I opened the door slightly to check the lock. To my horror, Mickey shot out into the hallway. Barefoot -- wearing only my nightgown, I let out a holler and darted after him. Mickey slunk along the wall far ahead of me, traveling at a great pace. At the wide marble stairway, he bounded up one floor after another -- I had a terrible time following him -- I kept stubbing my bare toes and tripping over my nightgown -- I was freezing cold. With me on his heels Mickey reached the enormous unheated attic that stretched the entire length of the hotel.

Dim light bulbs hanging from the ceiling cast deep shadows over the assembled jumble of discarded hotel furniture, packing cases, and general junk. Robert -- in his pajamas -- had followed me. We called Mickey -- Mickey -- Mickey! Of course no respectable cat comes when called -- Mickey was no exception. Occasionally, we could hear a scratching of claws as he slithered under another piece of furniture -- we knew he was somewhere. Dust and grime covered everything -- I was filthy from my head to my bare toes. My nightgown had snagged on every piece of furniture. When we thought Mickey was trapped under a chest, we went down on hands and knees to reach for him -- only to have him shoot out of the way -- it was hopeless. We worked our way back across the attic. We made a final try -- I was on my knees with my head under a table -- my thinly clad rump in the air -- calling "Mickey, Mickey" -- when behind me I heard a door open. There stood a man in his nightshirt sputtering Italian! Some of the hotel help had rooms in the attic -- we had wakened him. Goodness knows his thoughts -- I knew no Italian and could only mumble "Mickey Mouse" by way of explanation. Perhaps he thought I was chasing a real mouse. I stood up in my disheveled state -- I needed only to be holding a candle to look like Lady Macbeth. Terribly embarrassed, retreat was all we could do -- despondently we returned to our room many floors below. Surely Mickey was lost forever -- probably he would go down the marble staircase to the ground floor -- scoot

out into the busy street -- and be killed by a car or freeze to death.

Shivering and miserable, I climbed into bed still wearing my filthy nightgown. Robert and I both spent a wretched night -- depressed that we would leave for Belgrade with only one cat. At daylight, I opened my eyes -- I thought I heard a noise outside our door - - it sounded like a scratch! Behold -- there was Mickey -- that cat had found his way back to our hotel room -- to this day I can't explain how!

We carefully locked the cats in their cage and enjoyed our day in Trieste. The American consul was happy to show us around. Trieste was a two-man Consulate -- they saw very few Americans. The Consul gave us tea at his home and then took us to the railway station. We had two compartments on the overnight train. Our large amount of baggage caused some confusion -- the cats were not too happy -- but we were ready for a peaceful night's sleep -- we even enjoyed the meowing from their cage of TWO complaining cats!

Arrival in Belgrade, February 1963

My first Impression of Yugoslavia was snow -- lots of it! On the trip from Trieste, we saw little of the mountain scenery -- the train went through the eastern end of the Julian Alps during the night. But when we first looked in the morning -- all the fields were covered with heavy snow -- it was still falling. We had certainly arrived in a new world. The train stopped briefly at Zagreb, capital of Croatia, then continued eastward across the plains along the Sava River to Belgrade -- where the Sava joins the Danube.

At the Belgrade station there was a rather large welcoming crowd -- all shivering in the cold wind. As Robert was both Economic Counselor and AID Mission Director this may account for the assemblage. As was often the case in posts in the Communist countries of those days, a new arrival was an event. Someone from the outside world could bring all sorts of news.

Charlie -- Dragan Djurdjevic was his real name -- was standing beside a Buick car. As one of the perks of the job, Robert was assigned an Embassy car and driver. Charlie would become part of the family. He was a typical Serb in appearance, sporting a black mustache. He knew how to do everything and he never stopped talking. We piled into the Buick -- rode through the shabby streets of the city -- and up a long poplar trees-lined road to our new home. It was in the residential section of Dedinje, near Tito's city residence. We turned into the driveway of the large house provided for the AID Mission Director. It had the marvelous address of -- 26 Bulevar Oktobar Revolucija -- an impressive Communist name. The mansion had been built by a textile magnate before the war. It had huge windows, a porte-cochère, and Palladian type statues on the roof. We had the first two floors -- on the top floor was the apartment of a Yugoslav Government minister. The property extended in the rear to the walls of Tito's residence -- always under security guard watch -- a good protection for us. Until recently, it was called "Milosevic's Palace," -- it was hit during the 1999 bombing of Belgrade. Perhaps 26 Bulevar Oktobar Revolucija took a few hits too.

As Charlie drove under the porte-cochère two smiling women welcomed us -- Tilda, our cook -- and Rosa -- our housekeeper. We were lucky -- they turned out to be the best household staff in Belgrade. Tilda reminded me of Maria -- our cook in Bucharest -- she was a short and heavyset Croatian -- she spoke no English, but understood most cooking words. Like Maria, she was an excellent cook -- but without the fiery temper. She loved the electric stove put in by the Embassy -- but she kept the old wood-burning stove for the times of the fairly frequent electrical blackouts. Rosa -- a large sunny-faced Slovene -- spoke good English -- she ran the household very efficiently. Unlike the terrible ethnic battles we had had among the help in Bucharest, there was full cooperation among Rosa, Tilda, and Charlie. T Rosa and her husband lived in a small house on the property. He was the driver for the Yugoslav minister. Their son, Zlatko -- a year older than David -- was a good playmate for him. Radovan was the gardener -- in the first few weeks after our arrival, he did nothing but shovel snow from the driveway. The skies were always gray -- every other day more snow fell -- a very dry snow that made everything look beautiful.

The Embassy

The American Embassy was of medium size -- not as large as the one in Paris -- Paris was the center of many additional activities -- but it was much larger than the Legation in Romania. Our Ambassador, George Kennan, was a delight to know. His wife, Annelise, was Norwegian by birth -- a nicer person never existed. The Kennans also had left two daughters in the States. Their son, Chris Kennan -- we saw him briefly in Belgrade -- was at boarding school in England.

There were several officers who will be remembered by the children -- Walter Roberts, Counselor for Public Affairs -- Gerry Livingston, a First Secretary in the Economic Section and his wife Jeanne -- they have been close friends over the years -- Larry Eagleburger, a Second Secretary, was the star of the Economic Section. He went on to have a spectacular career. Before our arrival, he received a poor performance evaluation from an incompetent superior. He considered resigning, but Robert quickly found him exceptionally able. Robert made this clear to the visiting inspectors during a regular Embassy inspection. From then on, Larry was on his way to the top, eventually becoming Secretary of State in the Bush administration -- the only Foreign Service officer ever to hold that position.

Early in 1963 some intriguing events developed. Larry's wife was unhappy -- quite unsuited to Foreign Service life. She took their ten-year-old son and returned to the United States. It soon was obvious that something was brewing between Larry and Marlene -- Robert's tall, very capable secretary. They took their vacations at the same time -- pretending to go to different places -- Larry to Italy -- Marlene to Vienna. We were sure their paths would somehow cross! Several years later, Robert attended their wedding in Chicago.

Settling in

The wandering Mickey! Once the snow was gone, the cats were let out to explore the garden. Because of a high wall they couldn't get into Tito's grounds. Although spring had not arrived, Mickey got spring fever and went wandering -- we became worried when he didn't come home -- what was the matter with that damn cat -- why couldn't he be content like Tarzan, who was looking for him everywhere? How in the world could we find him in this strange place? We didn't know our neighbors -- they lived behind high walls -- there was no postman to ask to spread the word -- we were afraid he was gone for good -- maybe one of Tito's security guards shot him! After six days I gave up -- but Mickey still had one life left! Rosa went to the Residence to help out at a dinner for Secretary of State, Dean Rusk -- she told the sad story to Alexander, the Kennan butler. As he was walking the Kennan's dog the next day, the dog started barking at a bush -- in the brambles huddled a miserable cat hardly able to meow -- it was Mickey! As every property was behind walls, that cat must have gone by the main boulevard around and over the hill a mile away. Charlie fetched him and brought him home in triumph.

We were lucky to enter a household already in working order. Charlie took Tilda to market most mornings. I went only once -- soon realized -- as in Bucharest -- marketing was beyond my or any foreigner. Foods were spread over countless tables on trestles in a large market area. Chickens walked around and strange fish swam in dirty water. The meat had been butchered into hunks -- I couldn't recognize beef from lamb. Everyone bargained in rapid Serbo-Croatian. With Zlatko's help, Rosa did the accounts in English. There was a small commissary at the Embassy for American products like dry cereals and coffee. We ate well -- Tilda could and often did produce a sit-down lunch for twelve on several hours' notice. For larger dinners and receptions Rosa always found extra help -- often Alexander, the Russian butler at the Embassy Residence. The household ran smoothly.

David had not been to school since before Christmas. He joined the fifth grade at the International School of Belgrade, housed in an old mansion. Charlie took him to school -- it began at eight o'clock. It wasn't much of a school -- most of the Western European children -- the British, French, and others -- returned to their own countries to school. Except for a few of our military children, David was the only American boy. Most other students were from Third World countries -- spoke little English -- holding back the learning process. The Indonesian Military Attaché had eight children in different classes -- all very cute but struggling with English. Most teachers were Yugoslavs who spoke with heavy accents. During our first month the snow was so heavy that the afternoon classes were canceled. No sports were available. David didn't complain about the school -- but it was really not the place for him. For the time being there was nothing to do -- but for the next year something better had to be found.

The Twib

Private housing for most Embassy staff was not available in Belgrade. Owing to the difficulties of living in a Communist country, the State Department had built an

apartment complex attached to the Embassy. It included a snack bar-restaurant and an entertainment area for the use of the diplomatic community. It was called the TWIB, after This Week in Belgrade, the Embassy's weekly sheet about current activities. Happy Hour began at 6 p.m. -- it was a convenient place to meet. Outside the few private homes, there were few agreeable spots for Americans in this shabby city. At the TWIB there were all kinds of events, including American movies supplied by the military. On Sunday mornings there was a church service with visiting clergy, including military chaplains, a different denomination each week, flown down from Germany. (More about this later.)

The TWIB served a typical McDonald's fast food meal of hamburger, French fries, and ketchup -- it was a perfect spot for David's second birthday party. He invited his fifth grade class. They all ate the above delicacies -- plus birthday cake and ice cream. For the entertainment David chose the movie *The Colossus of Rhodes* -- full of horror and gore -- nothing to compare with the horror movies of the nineties. Appropriate birthday presents were hard to find -- David received five handmade chess sets, a very popular game in Yugoslavia.

Pupski

David said he wanted a dog -- we wanted one too. Unlike Western Europe -- where pets were part of the culture -- in this poor Communist country, you rarely saw a dog on the streets -- perhaps an occasional German shepherd, usually used as a guard dog. I felt that breed might be too difficult with the cats. Charlie -- always on David's side -- went looking. One evening he and David burst into the house saying they had found a dog to buy -- come quickly! We drove to a dilapidated house in strange part of the city -- we were ushered into a dank basement with a wet concrete floor. From a corner came a kind of mewing out of a pile of furry little things. "There!" exclaimed David, "I've put a string around his neck." It was a four-week-old boxer puppy. When the owner saw I was a foreigner, he tried to raise the price -- but Charlie talked him out of it. The man put the morning paper under the piddling puppy and handed it to me. Suddenly he exclaimed, "No, no, no," sputtering in Serbo-Croatian the name of Kennedy. The puppy was sitting on a big photo of President Kennedy on the front page! The man returned with another piece of the paper. Did he admire Kennedy, or was he being diplomatic? What if the photo had been of Tito? Would I have been politically correct and objected?

We took the tiny pup home. Everyone -- but the cats -- fell in love with him. We had his tail docked but refused to have his ears cut to make them stand up. An aide at the embassy -- a former veterinarian -- told us this procedure was very painful to dogs -- only for the pleasure of the owner. It is forbidden In England -- no dogs with clipped ears may be entered in a dog show there. We couldn't think of a name -- we tried many -- he remained just "puppy" for the time being. Tito would have been an appropriate name -- but it was out of the question -- there would be trouble if Tito's guards heard me calling "Tito" in the back yard. After a trip to Macedonia, we came up with a suitable name -- Pupski -- using a common Macedonian name ending: -ski. On his mother's side he was from the wrong side of the tracks -- but his father was a true blue blood -- owned by the Turkish Ambassador.

Serbo-Croatian

Although Rosa spoke English, I felt I should study Serbo-Croatian. Mrs. Angelic -- a very attractive Serb lady -- gave lessons at the Embassy. She was beloved by all her students over the years. We hope she survived the Belgrade bombing -- we wish she had come to the States to live. She came to the house once a week to give me a lesson. First I had to learn the Cyrillic alphabet, very similar to the Russian -- that was fun. It is used in Serbia, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Montenegro, including the Voivodina and Kosovo. The Latin alphabet is used in Croatia and Slovenia. Most Yugoslav names end in *ic*, pronounced *itch* I soon could read many street signs, the easiest being the word for telephone -- *TELEFON*. The vocabulary was strange and intriguing. Unlike English, there is only one way to pronounce a word -- each letter had its own phonetic symbol. Some words had no vowels: for example, the word for mustache is *BRK*. My favorite word was the Cyrillic for restaurant -- *PECTOPAH* (*RESTORAN* in Croatia). The Latin-looking Cyrillic characters had different sounds: i.e. -- *P=R*; *C=S*; *H=N*, resulting in the pronunciation as *RESTAURAN*. However, when we went out to dinner we would say -- for fun -- we were going to a *PECTOPAH*! The vocabulary was sort of a game, but the grammar was rather like Romanian or Latin. The word for dog is *PAS* in Croatian and *PAK* in Serbian; it, or any noun, is declined -- can have about fourteen different endings depending on its use in the sentence. In school I found Latin grammar difficult -- I found Serbian grammar impossible.

Croatia and Slovenia -- April 1963

Robert's job As Aid Mission Director included inspecting plants and activities where the United States had provided technical assistance or equipment to improve productivity. Over time, this took us to all six of the Yugoslav Republics. Our first trip was to Croatia and Slovenia. Gerry and Jeanne Livingston went with us -- he spoke the language. Big Mr. Popovic and small Mr. Spacic -- who sported a huge Serbian *BRK* -- were our official escorts. Charlie -- who drove us in the Buick -- was in his element until we reached Croatia -- the road signs were in the Latin alphabet -- he couldn't read them. The first leg of our trip was about 400 miles northwest to Zagreb -- capital of Croatia -- a much more handsome city than Belgrade. In Zagreb -- Croatia was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire before the First World War -- many buildings were painted yellow and white in the distinctive style seen in Vienna and Budapest.

In each Republic we visited several enterprises. Under the Tito Communist style regime, all the people of Yugoslavia theoretically owned all productive activities. The workers of each individual enterprise -- theoretically -- managed it. They -- supposedly -- elected its manager -- their own bosses. Actually, they were chosen by the League of Socialists of the Communist Party. We took a tour of each establishment -- then, at a meeting in the boardroom, we would be offered fruit drinks and tiny cups of Turkish coffee -- the same thick bitter stuff we got in Romania. One interesting enterprise was an aluminum plant. Aluminum is made by melting the ore, bauxite, in fiercely raging electric furnaces. Hell couldn't have been hotter. The bosses were our hosts at lunch and dinner -- many-course

meals with the specialties of the region -- washed down with local wines, ending of course with Turkish coffee and a small glass of slivovitz -- plum brandy -- tsuica in Romania. This was the pattern of all the inspection trips we took throughout the country.

The Dalmatian Coast April 1963

For Easter we took David by overnight train to Split on the Dalmatian coast. The karst limestone mountains along the Adriatic Sea are very rugged and rocky. During the height of the Venetian Empire, the Venetians built their fleets of wooden ships from the trees on these mountains. Since tree conservation was unknown, the final result was to strip the mountains of all their forests, leaving them barren, not unlike many areas of Greece. On the way to the coast the train wound around the mountains, over high passes, and through tunnels. This terrain was bleak and stark and extremely rocky. Over the centuries peasants had managed to clear the land of stones, using them to build their houses and the walls that crisscrossed the mountainsides.

After the snows and icy weather of Belgrade, the balmy sunshine of Split was most welcome. Here Diocletian, Roman Emperor, at the end of the Third Century, had built a great palace. Only the walls are left. What happens to ancient outmoded city buses in the West? They are sold to a poorer country. We were amused to see old red London buses rocking down the streets of Split. The buses were made for Britain's left-side traffic, so passengers had to board from the middle of the street -- rather dangerous! Later in Sarajevo we saw the old apple-green streetcars that used to run up and down Connecticut Avenue in Washington. In Split, we looked into chartering a boat to cruise the Adriatic in the summer -- but in those days that type of tourism was not available.

Romania Revisited May 1963

Our old friends from Paris, Barbara and Bill Crawford, invited us for a visit. Bill was the Ambassador to Bucharest. We took David with us since he had never known Romania. We were able to use the Embassy car -- Charlie was very excited. We left Belgrade by crossing the Danube and heading across the flat plains of the Vojvodina. As we neared the high plateau of Transylvania, we could see the Carpathian Mountains ahead. The terrain changed to rolling hills -- Count Dracula country. The little villages and cities took on a Hungarian look -- this had been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. We told David stories about Dracula.

We arrived late at Brasov -- found a grungy rundown hotel. It was fun to hear Romanian spoken again. Unfortunately, only one bedroom was available. Poor David had to sleep in a chair -- he had nightmares about Dracula, and was in a bad mood the next morning. We headed south -- stopped briefly in Predeal and Sinaia -- mountain resorts where we had spent happy weekends in 1948. As we wound our way down to the Danube plain, the small villages with their simple whitewashed farmhouses began to look very Romanian. The houses all faced south, set in yards with the proverbial plum trees. Dirt roads still led off of the main highway. They brought back memories of being stuck in thick mud after a heavy rain. The main road passed through Ploesti, whose oil wells and refineries were

bombed in World War II by the British and the U.S. It had been rebuilt with shabby Soviet-style buildings -- it didn't look much better than before.

As we approached the outskirts of Bucharest, I held my breath. We would pass by our old house sitting on the hillside, with the Eastern Orthodox Church at the bottom of the garden. There it was -- looking rather dilapidated, but memories flooded back. How could I forget the daily predawn lineup of the loaded carts drawn by snorting tiny horses that had gathered below our house? Here the peasants had stopped for a last swig of *tsuica* before heading into the city market. In our garden filled with thousands of rose bushes, our two small daughters had played. And of course, our menagerie: puppies, a cow, a chicken, ducks, and our pet white turkey.

Bucharest had never enjoyed the splendor of Vienna or Budapest -- it had no imposing grand architecture. Later, Ceausescu -- the Communist dictator from 1965 to 1989 -- would build a monstrous ugly palace for his own glory. On the edges of town were monotonous copies of Soviet high-rises sitting on un-landscaped bare earth. The local river, the Dambovitza -- a Danube tributary -- was still a dirty sluggish stream. Along the main boulevards were the same sleazy modern buildings -- now shabbier than ever. The old Athenée Palace Hotel -- where Robert had begun his tour in 1947 -- was still a second-rate hostelry -- Hilton took it over in 1999. Bucharest was still a pretty sad place.

The Crawford's Embassy Residence was in the best residential area. Their two eldest daughters were in the States -- the youngest children were with them, attending the newly opened International School. Barbara Crawford was spending much time on organizing its curriculum. Now -- thirty-five years later -- we hear it has become quite a good school. But in 1963 we agreed with the Crawfords that their son, John, and our David ought to go to a British boarding school the following year. We were eager to return to the Baneasa Country Club -- we had first learned golf on its 14-hole course. It was still the exclusive domain of the Corps Diplomatique -- no others allowed! The Crawfords had also taken up golf. When we met on the first tee the next morning, there was Tomitsa, the golf pro -- we greeted each other as long-lost friends. And there was Florica, our former lady caddy. Perhaps, as in 1948, they were still required to report to the police. The only missing character from the past was Vasili -- the donkey who pulled the water cart -- maybe his grandson was in service now. Tomitsa gave David a golf lesson -- somehow it didn't take -- later, tennis certainly did! Twenty years or so later Tomitsa came to the United States to visit all his old clients -- we welcomed him at Chevy Chase Club for a golf game -- he played at his age -- 72! We gave him a dinner with many of his old students. He brought us a present all the way from Bucharest -- *tsuica*, of course!

I visited the local flea market with Barbara -- there I found my prize icon -- the Last Judgment -- painted on glass. It hangs in our house in Washington. I am sure that Barbara wanted this icon but was kind enough to let me have it. I particularly like the monster waiting for us in Hell!

Life is full of surprises! A good friend of the Crawford's was the British Ambassador -- no less than my old boyfriend, Dalton Murray. He invited us to lunch at the British

Embassy. His first wife had died -- he then married Rose, a niece of the British Prime Minister, Anthony Eden. Lunch seemed a bit strained -- both Dalton and I were sizing each other up after so many years. Robert and Dalton maintained their diplomatic composure -- the Crawfords smiled to themselves -- but Rose -- obviously not amused -- never spoke to me. The engagement ring I once wore briefly was on her finger! I wondered if she knew there was a flaw in the three-carat diamond!

Our few days in Bucharest brought back many memories. We were delighted to hear that a Crawford servant knew our old driver, Alexandru, and his wife, Regina. We wanted to see them, but were told they were afraid to come to the Crawford residence -- Romania was still very much a police state -- they would meet us at a certain spot on the main avenue. At the appointed time Charlie drove us up and down the avenue for half an hour - - no Alexandru! We sadly returned to the Crawford house. Charlie was very affected by this event -- declared Tito's Yugoslavia was better! Later we received a present -- a bag of coffee and a dozen eggs, from Alexandru -- that was the only gift he could afford to give us -- I could have wept!

Macedonia May 1963

We were fascinated by Macedonia. Now independent, but rather unstable, it was the southernmost Yugoslav Republic -- bordered by Bulgaria, Greece, and Albania. Its area was a part of Mediterranean civilization through three millennia -- Philip of Macedon and Alexander the Great had brought Greece to the height of its power in the third century B.C. The early Macedonian tribes were part of the Greek polis, but the Athenians considered them barbarians -- they did not speak proper Greek. Later Macedonia became part of the Roman Empire -- then the Byzantine Empire. During this period various Slavic tribes infiltrated the area. In the ninth century, the Byzantine Patriarch ordered the Greek monks -- Cyril and Methodius -- later sainted -- to Christianize Russia and the barbarian Slavs. They translated the scriptures into Slavonic -- using Greek letters that later became the Cyrillic alphabet. When the Ottoman Empire gained supremacy of the area, it introduced Islam. To escape the Ottoman Turks, the Christian Slav monks built their monasteries high in the mountains away from the routes of invasion. They still exist today. The five hundred years of Turkish occupation -- with its continuous uprisings and battles -- culminated in a final Slav victory in 1867. Owing to its tumultuous history Macedonia is a mixture of cultures, languages, and religions -- a gold mine of archaeological treasures from its long past. Its current population is roughly two-thirds Orthodox Christian Slavs and one third Muslim Albanians and Turks.

A victim of the Balkan wars over the centuries, the boundaries of Macedonia were forever changing, keeping it in a state of confusion and underdevelopment. After World War One, present-day Macedonia became part of Yugoslavia. Its language is a Slavic dialect. In our day it was the poorest and least developed of the six Republics. Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs in the north looked down on Macedonia as an economic millstone and resented having to contribute to its economic support. The US aid program to Yugoslavia provided support for economic development -- quite a bit of it went to Macedonia. A prime example was the choice of Skopje as the site for a steel plant. Within the Yugoslav

framework, Macedonia built up important production capacities in the sheet and strip metal, ferrous alloys, zinc, lead, and copper industries. It was also producing textile fibers, finished textiles, pharmaceutical products, and construction materials. But agriculture was central to the Macedonian economy, especially the production of tobacco, rice, fruit, vegetables, and wine.

In May 1963 we went on a two-week inspection tour of Macedonia. Charlie was happy to be on the road again -- proud to be the driver of the black Embassy Buick -- American cars received much attention wherever we went. Embassy Officer Charlie York and his wife -- they both spoke Serbo-Croatian -- accompanied us. Two officers of the Investitiona Banka and Vera a Macedonian interpreter -- a cute lady with black hair -- made up our party. From Belgrade to Skopje, the Macedonian capital, was an all-day ride on the Autoput -- a two-lane highway -- the Yugoslav version of the Interstate. It ran through the central plain of Yugoslavia, on the route used over the centuries by invading armies. There was not much traffic, but we often saw huge double rigs carrying vegetables from Bulgaria to Western Europe. At Niš -- junction with the eastbound road to Bulgaria, we had lunch. This was Charley's birthplace. We stopped to see some interesting Roman ruins, with beautiful mosaic floors. But, Charlie couldn't wait to show us the revolting tower built of a thousand human skulls. As a good Serb, he made it clear to us that the skulls were those of heroic Serbs killed by the evil Ottomans 500 years before. We continued south. The villages took on an oriental flavor. As we approached the towns we could see the minarets of the local mosque -- the houses had the typical Turkish overhanging second story.

We spent several days in Skopje; it was a rather shabby dreary city in the process of changing from a primitive rural town to a modern city. New schools had been built; there was a university -- several American professors were teaching there. Our party was kept busy with professional contacts and visits to places of historic interest. We saw several mosques and a medieval monastery with a wonderful iconostasis and walls of ancient frescoes. The archaeological museum was located in a sixteenth century Turkish Han -- an enormous caravansary with many domes through which star-pierced holes permitted light -- it was a perfect setting!

On the streets were many Albanian Muslims -- Shiptars -- they called themselves. They were identifiable by their white skullcaps. Across the river from the main city was a sedentary community of gypsies. Here, when we drove along the dirt road, the gypsies were intrigued by our American car and surrounded us to get a glimpse inside. They were dressed very colorfully in baggy Turkish pants with jewelry made of ribbons and coins. These were not the nomadic gypsies who wander around in horse-drawn caravans. They lived in simple mud huts, certainly not earthquake proof as later was shown. The seemingly happy children entertained us by doing tricks such as walking on their hands. Charlie scorned them. They were dark-skinned -- considered inferior by other Macedonians -- the reaction of most Europeans. Hitler had sent thousands of gypsies to the gas chamber.

For the next ten days, we drove to every corner of Macedonia visiting industrial sites and

businesses that had received US aid. For example, we saw a new steel plant under construction. Tobacco growers seemed to want to make a good impression -- much of their Turkish-type tobacco went to the United States to be blended with Virginia tobacco. We met with the local government officials and directors of the business enterprises -- party men all. After a plant visit we were served the usual slivovitz, Turkish coffee, and rose-petal jam.

The countryside was wild and beautiful -- the narrow roads ran through deep river gorges and over high-mountain passes. We saw very few cars but many donkeys -- the usual mode of transportation. They were either plodding along, with mounds of produce on their backs so that only their hooves showed beneath, or they were jogging, carrying some mangy character with his legs dangling below. We passed fields of tobacco, cotton, and rice; also some areas where white poppies were growing to make opium.

Every night a special feast was prepared for us. The food was generally quite edible -- a mixture of Greek and Turkish dishes -- better not to ask too many questions. One delicacy was fried brains. One evening, the specialty was an entire lamb that had been baked in a sealed colossal earthenware pot -- the pot had been buried for a day while a fire above it had burned all day to bake it. When we were ready for dinner, the pot was unearthed -- the waiter broke the seal and lifted the lid off. The entire animal lay there in a fetal position, including its head, tail, and feet. Robert, as guest of honor, was offered its eyes and unmentionable parts from the other end. After eating so much strange food, we Americans expected to be ill, but it was the Mr. Popovic who became sick. He finally was willing to try our American medicine. We crossed our fingers -- the pills worked.

The Macedonian Government was interested in increasing tourism -- one official asked for our recommendations. In addition to clean modern hotels and better roads, we diplomatically suggested that hot water for washing was most desirable and that Turkish toilets -- a hole in the ground -- without toilet paper were not very agreeable to westerners. The novelty of primitive living does wear off.

As we traveled around the country, the scenery was always changing, but we were never out of sight of the rugged mountains. Along the Albanian border the mountains were the highest, with snow-capped peaks. At one remote spot, high up, just below the snow line, we could see the buildings of a monastery reached only by a donkey path. In this isolated spot two hundred monks had lived until recently -- well out of reach of the Ottoman Turks. In the small village nearby, there was a rug factory where both machine and handmade rugs were produced. Most of the women were Albanians. It was amazing to see how fast they tied the knots. These rugs were exported to the United States, but they did not have the quality of Turkish or Persian rugs. In this wild area many of the dirt roads were washed out and driving was hazardous. At one spot a wooden bridge across a gorge -- raging white water below. It was so rickety that we decided to cross it on foot, leaving Charlie to drive the car across. He was terrified -- there were just five inches on each side of the car. The wooden planks creaked. He left the car door open so he could jump if bridge gave way. Lord knows where he could have landed! The escort car was smaller, but both drivers were badly shaken -- they needed a swig of slivovitz!

Farther south, along the Greek border, the villages had the charm of the typical Mediterranean style -- whitewashed houses with grapevine trellises and arbors. Here the narrow flat fields were flooded for the growing of rice. In the south, fishing the lakes and rivers was an important industry. We spent one night on Lake Dojran -- there fishing is done with the aid of cormorant-like birds trained to dive for the fish, the method used in Kweilin, China.

The Lake Ohrid region was the cultural highlight of our trip; it combined the highest mountains, the deepest lake -- equaling Lake Baikal in Siberia, and a wonderful collection of Fourteenth-Century Byzantine monasteries. Underground springs keep the lake waters warm -- around 68-75 degrees. Here the salmon-like trout thrive, the pastramka, which are found nowhere else in the world. The best dinner we had in Macedonia was grilled pastramka, freshly caught.

Ohrid has a long and confusing history that goes back well before the coming of the Romans. The Roman Empire built a great highway through the area linking the Dalmatian coast and the Aegean Sea. From the Ninth Century, it was an Archbishopric established by St. Clement and St. Naum -- students of Saints Cyril and Methodius. The town of Ohrid was very Turkish in appearance, with its narrow cobbled alleyways and the upper stories of houses almost touching each other across the streets. The Byzantine monasteries were of great interest -- famous centers for the study of fresco painting. The local curator showed us around -- he was proud at the restoration of the famous Byzantine frescoes. The Ottomans had not destroyed the monasteries -- but only whitewashed over the fourteenth-century frescoes. A new process had just been developed by which the frescoes could be restored to their original glory. We watched the artisans at work. They were also repairing the gouged-out eyes of the icons -- Islam does not permit the representation of a human face.

After a seven-course banquet at the end of the trip, we bade farewell to our Macedonian hosts. Little did we know that six weeks later a horrible earthquake would make a rubble heap out of the city of Skopje.

Kosovo

Our route back to Belgrade was through Kosovo. It was then an autonomous region of Serbia, with considerable local autonomy. In 1990 Milosevic removed this autonomy -- eventually bringing on the Kosovo war in 1998-1999. It is still considered a part of Serbia, "temporarily" under United Nations control.

Kosovo was then and still is a backward and poor area. The Turkish-style dress of many of the people and its mosques gave it a lot of local color. Ninety percent of the population was ethnic Albanian -- the Shiptars. After the Turks had pushed the Serbs northward in the 17th and 18th centuries they induced the Shiptars to settle in this region. Shiptar is the Albanian word for the ethnic group. Near Pristina, the Kosovar Capital, is the Kosovo Polje, the battlefield where in 1389 the Turks defeated the Serbs. It was one of the crucial

battles between the Ottomans and the Byzantine Empire in the Middle Ages. Tales of this battle glorifying the defeat of Serb Prince Lazar and his outnumbered troops are still celebrated in popular ballads and folklore. To the Serbs, this defeat still is considered more important than any victory, before or since.

Goodbye to Ambassador Kennan May 1963

Ambassador Kennan's tour of duty was coming to an end -- there were many farewell parties. We wanted to find an appropriate Embassy staff gift for the Kennans -- not an easy task in Yugoslavia. We finally commissioned a well-known Yugoslav painter, Pedja, to create a painting for them -- they seemed delighted.

We were expecting Polly and Francie to arrive soon for the summer -- Belgrade did not offer many recreational activities for the young -- we thought it would be good to have a game we could play together as a family. In front of the house was a large lawn -- we thought it might be good for croquet -- even though it was far from level. We ordered a very professional British set from Jacques in London. We could hardly wait to be a complete family again and to introduce the newest member -- Pupski. When the girls arrived, we initiated the new croquet set. Pupski thought he was a member of the team and chased the balls. The same set became a very important part of our summer fun in Martha's Vineyard. It now is stored somewhere in Hartwood.

Croatia and Italy June 1963

As Robert and Jerry Livingston had to attend a trade fair in Zagreb, Croatia, we decided to combine business with pleasure. We took the three children with us. Jeanne Livingston also joined the party. Mr. Popovic from the Investment Bank was our escort official. He had a very heavy beard even after just shaving, making him look like a thug. However, he was a very nice thug. We took two cars for the long ride to Zagreb along the boring Autoput that stretched endlessly among flat farm fields. This two-lane highway was the Yugoslav form of Interstate -- very fast, but very dangerous. By law, horse-drawn wagons were not allowed on the road, but the peasants never paid attention to this rule and frequently used the road. We were very conscious of a recent terrible accident: our Naval Attaché had run into the back of a slow plodding horse and wagon. He became a paraplegic -- no seat belts in those days.

After attending the trade fair -- including a meeting with Marshal Tito -- we left Zagreb and drove south into the Karst Mountains. At Plitvice -- a great scenic area where sixteen lakes at different levels are all connected by waterfalls -- we spent the day walking and climbing from one lake to another. The blue Adriatic Sea beckoned -- we headed for its coast along a winding road up and over the high coastal range of the bleak, stony, bare Velebit ridge through the Vratnik pass to drop down to the little village of Senj. Owing to its location -- this small town -- bounded by the sea and the steep mountains -- was the source of many of the heroic tales and ballads told by wandering minstrels in medieval times. During the height of the Venetian Empire, the "pirates" of Senj preyed on their boats. In the Fifteenth Century they defied the Turk occupiers and kept them at bay.

There we found a secluded gravelly beach and went for a swim.

We continued north along the rocky Dalmatian coast. These lands had been fought over throughout the ages -- everywhere were ruins of medieval fortresses and walled towns on the tops of mountains -- the most famous of these was the walled city of Dubrovnik on the coast -- we would visit it later. Once, these coastal towns were part of the Venetian Empire -- the architecture of many buildings resembled those of Venice. As Robert had business in the shipping port city of Rijeka, we made our headquarters nearby at Opatija on the Istrian Peninsula. Opatija had been a major watering spa of Austro-Hungary in the previous century. The colossal Victorian hotel was a reminder of the days of its past glory. Now it was quite shabby and only one wing was used. Mimi several times attended international psychological meetings here. The architecture of this peninsula at the head of the Adriatic Sea reflected the past ages of history, from a Roman amphitheater to beautiful Byzantine churches with mosaics equaling those of Ravenna.

Italy, briefly

At Trieste we crossed into Italy. The enormous difference between shabby Yugoslavia and prosperous Western Europe struck us again -- good roads, handsome buildings, stores filled with luxury items, and so forth. We drove west to Vicenza to the U. S. Army PX to stock up with items not available in Yugoslavia. Vicenza is a handsome city with its magnificent Palladian architecture. Polly wanted to see the famous mosaics of Ravenna, so we backtracked to the coast where we spent the night. David, at eleven, soon had enough of sightseeing and grumbled at being dragged from church to church. To improve his spirits we found a lovely real sand beach for a swim in the Adriatic Sea. Robert had to return to Belgrade -- we left him at the railway station outside of Venice -- the children and I would return with Charlie. Why not a gondola ride? This was the quickest trip ever made to Venice. Outside the parking lot we climbed into a waiting water taxi to ride up the Grand Canal to Saint Mark's Square. Charlie was as excited as were the children. Even David no longer was grumpy. After feeding the ubiquitous pigeons and enjoying lemonade, we returned by gondola to the garage. As Robert had left, I could not use the Embassy car for our personal pleasure -- we would otherwise have taken a few extra days in Italy. We left Venice late in the day and were able to reach Lignano Pineta on the Adriatic where we enjoyed a last swim. The next day, we drove through Slovenia to spend our final night at a medieval castle in the mountains that had been converted into a hotel. Next day we got back to Belgrade, where we could enjoy the loot we'd brought back, some were presents for Tilda and Rosa. I had a new pair of shoes to replace those that Pupski had chewed up.

The Skopje Earthquake July 1963

The day we said farewell to the Kennans, a devastating earthquake struck Skopje, Macedonia. The Embassy spent hours assessing the damage and consulting with the Yugoslav Government about how the United States could help. We learned that the city was 85 percent destroyed. It was decided to fly in a military field hospital unit from Germany. As the airfield at Skopje was in ruins, our huge cargo planes had to land at the

Belgrade airport. A plane landed every fifteen minutes and unloaded a fleet of trucks to form a convoy to make the ten-hour trip to Macedonia. The American trucks were cheered as they drove through the streets. Two days after the earthquake this tent hospital was in operation, an amazing performance that only the military could organize. The American Red Cross contributed blankets and medicines.

Tito visited the scene of devastation on the first day. Two days later, the visiting American Secretary of Agriculture, Orville Freeman and his wife -- on an inspection trip -- flew on the Air Attaché's plane to visit the scene. Robert was busy communicating with our military in Germany and Washington on the relief effort, but I was asked to go along. We landed on a makeshift field near the tent hospital on a hill overlooking what had been Skopje. Clouds of dust were still rising from the city. A military car took us through the few cleared streets. Whole areas were completely flattened -- people were wandering around in a daze and poking in the debris. Many of the dead and wounded were still being pulled out of the rubble. I took one photo of the damaged City Hall with a huge chandelier still dangling in a void. The gypsy encampment we had visited recently was totally demolished, with terrible casualties.

Back at the hospital, the team of army doctors and administrators briefed us. There were three major problems: lack of interpreters for the Macedonian language; food -- army rations were unacceptable to Moslems; and lack of sufficient plaster of Paris to make casts for the enormous number of broken limbs. It was a great US tour de force that we could set up a field hospital within 48 hours of the catastrophe.

The doctors escorted us through the tent hospital to see some of the survivors; they were lying in rows of cots. Between the beds were tiny tables; on each was a piece of watermelon, the one kind of food everyone would eat. Just as well it was summer! The greatest number of casualties was among the gypsies, who had lived in mud houses. In the months to come, the US Army would set up a Quonset hut city in Skopje to house homeless people until new housing could be erected. Other countries also gave aid -- it took years to rebuild the city.

Summer in Belgrade 1963

There was not much for the children to do -- no one the ages of the girls. We played many games of croquet with our new professional set, using strict British rules. Pupsi was a bit of a nuisance chasing the balls. Polly went horseback riding and David took tennis lessons. Francie went down to Athens to visit her old school friend, Joanna Pilavachi. Then a real tragedy struck! Jacob, our gardener, arrived at the house with Tarzan in his arms. The poor cat -- born in our house in Paris in 1951 -- had wandered down our hill and out the gates to the main road -- a car hit him -- he didn't have Mickey's street smarts. We placed him gently in a shoebox and laid him to rest under a spruce tree at the foot of our garden. Like the Serbs, we put a photo of the dear deceased Tarzan above his grave. He still is the most beautiful cat we ever had -- sorry, Sisawat!.

The Terrible Taunus Trip -- August 1963

We had realized that the Belgrade school was impossible for David. In concert with the Crawfords in Bucharest, we decided we should send David to a boarding school in England. Johnny Crawford and another Foreign Service boy from Czechoslovakia would be at Branksome-Hilders, in Haslemere, Surrey. We decided we would drive to England to check out the school. Robert could not leave right away -- would catch up with us in Zurich, Switzerland. We loaded the old Ford Taunus station wagon. The car was so small -- most of our baggage went on the roof rack. The three children and I were off for Zurich. To settle seating arguments -- each child would have a turn up front with me. Tilda made a picnic lunch for us. It was going to be a fun adventure -- for once I'd be in charge -- off we went!

Day one -- we would drive to Zagreb -- about 300 miles -- along the fast but boring Autoput. The only structures along the route were three gas stations strategically placed along the route. We didn't expect to stop -- we had a full tank. The trip seemed to present no problems -- we would be in Zagreb in five to six hours. Little could we guess what lay in store!

Breakdown #1 -- We were humming along happily -- probably singing a song, when the car began to chug-chug-chugggg -- stop! I glided to the side of the road. How irritating! I primed the engine a-r-r-o-r -- a-r-r--o-r. Nothing happened. There, we sat in the middle of nowhere. A passing peasant driving a horse-drawn wagon waved to us. He smiled -- horses didn't break down. What to do? Could I be out of gas? I remembered we had already passed the first gas station -- the second should be ten or more miles ahead. I somehow had to get to that station. I had no choice but to leave the children in the car and try my hand at hitchhiking. I told the children to stay in the car with the doors locked. I stood out on the road feeling uncertain what to do. There was little traffic -- I certainly did not want to be picked up by a Bulgarian driver of a double rig loaded with vegetables. This time luck was with me. A car stopped. The kind Belgian driver opened the door and offered help. After a half-hour's drive we came to the second gas station.

After many thanks to my nice Belgian, I found a mehanik (mechanic) under a car. I knew the word for gas, petrol, and automovil, for car -- all else had to be explained in sign language. My Serbian lessons had not included an automotive vocabulary. The mehanik got a large jerry can -- filled it -- crawled back under the car he was fixing, leaving me to find my way back to the Taunus. Lugging the heavy can, I crossed the highway and waited for another ride. A large white van with a Red Cross painted on it -- an ambulance -- came to a screeching halt -- at least the driver was a man of mercy. I climbed onto the front seat with him and indicated I wanted to go down the road. I was glad there was no body in the back of the vehicle -- only a mass of bloody sheets and bandages. I was really happy when the car with the three children came into sight. I said hvalo lepo (thank you) to the driver and stepped down from the ambulance -- it roared away. I poured the gas into the tank and primed the car again. After a few grunts the motor caught and we were off. We stopped at the petrol station to return the can and stepped on the gas. We would surely be in Zagreb for dinner.

Breakdown #2 We were moving merrily along -- the motor started it's chug-chugging again and died. We were dead in the water. For the third time I left the children and stood by the road with my arm waving. A bus picked me up and took me back to station #2. My mechanic was surprised to see me. He finally saw he had to do something. He fetched a car -- we drove to our poor Taunus. He looked at the motor, fiddled with a few things, and got the engine going, but in sign language indicated we must return to the gas station. I turned around and chugged back to the station. There, the guy put up the hood and gave the engine a serious examination. It was late afternoon -- we were over 200 miles from Zagreb -- could not possibly get there in daylight -- I certainly didn't want to chance a breakdown in the dark. The car still had to be fixed. The mechanic finally shook his head. I understood that! The only solution was to spend the night at the gas station! I called Robert at the Embassy and said, "Guess where we are?"

The petrol station was the Yugoslav version of an American truck stop. Atop the garage was a large room for truck drivers to spend the night. That had to be good enough for us -- we had no alternative. We ate the rest of our picnic lunch -- had ice cream at the little attached café. We had been watching the trucks arriving and parking for the night. I eyed the drivers with plenty of trepidation -- but what could I do -- maybe there'd be safety in numbers. We pulled the luggage off the car's top and dragged it up the stairs. In the big room were rows of cots, each with a pillow and blanket. Only two were left -- the girls lay down on one -- David and I on the other. Sleep was impossible -- from below came noise and laughter. Pivo (beer) and slivo encouraged camaraderie among the drivers -- Serbian, Bulgarian or whatever! At last -- one by one they came upstairs to bed -- still talking and laughing -- maybe about us. Then came the only word I understood -- laku noc -- good night. Soon followed a cacophony of Serbian and Bulgarian snores. At the crack of dawn -- 5 a.m. -- our roommates began to stir -- time to get back on the road. At the tiny café we had terrible coffee and hunks of bread. The mechanic seemed to think he had fixed the car -- its motor was running, a lovely purr -- hooray! I waved dovijenja -- good-bye -- to our mechanic and pulled away. I've forgotten how much we paid for our deluxe accommodations -- I'd have paid anything. I hope we gave the truck drivers something to remember.

Day two -- the car purred along. I was ecstatic to see Zagreb on the horizon. Once settled at the hotel, I took the car for a checkup at a garage recommended by the consulate. We then enjoyed the pleasures of the city -- in particular, a nice dinner and comfortable bed. I called Robert and told him all was well.

Day three -- a marvelous trip over the Julian Alps to Trieste. The Hotel Jolly lived up to its name. The children relished the Italian food -- at last we could have some fun!

Day four -- in high spirits we drove around the top of the Adriatic Sea. This time we sadly passed the Venice exits, and continued along the broad Autostrada.

Breakdown # 3 We were humming along at high speed when again the motor coughed and sputtered. Then came that familiar horrible sound chug-chug-g-g-g followed by a

lurching stop. I pulled to the side of the road -- now what to do? At least we were in a civilized country. A police route supervisor came to my rescue. I spoke no Italian -- communication could have been a problem -- but this nice Italian knew some Croatian. By now I had learned the key words needed. He poured gas on the carburetor -- the engine came back to life. We weren't out of the woods -- but at least we could continue. My goal was to reach Zurich -- then Robert could take over. We turned north and headed for the Alps. When it started to rain, we stopped and put the tarpaulin over the luggage on the roof. By then it was getting dark -- when we reached Lugano -- over the border in Switzerland -- we found a super hotel for the night. The best dinner yet made me forget my worries.

Trouble in the Alps

Day five -- St. Gotthard's Pass -- breakdowns # 4,5,6,7,8,9,10, 11, 12,13, & 14. In the morning sun saw the Alps ahead. After we left Lugano, the road twisted and turned as we began to climb. Beyond the last village the valley narrowed -- we could see ahead the corkscrew bends of the road mounting the nearly vertical face of the mountain toward the St. Gotthard's Pass. It was going to be exciting! We started to climb. But -- after zigging several zags -- came that ominous put-put sound and the jerking halt of the motor as it died. I was able to drift into a lay-by on which there was a telescope for viewing the scenery -- very magnificent, but what now? No alternative but somehow to return to the last village and find a garage. With no motor working I couldn't turn around. I had to back down the road on the right lane to avoid hitting any car climbing up around a bend. I relied only on gravity -- hoped the brakes would hold. There were no guardrails -- the drop to the valley below was awesome! It was just as well the children had no idea of the danger. Whoever was driving the car behind me, instead of looking through my back window, was looking at me. He must have thought I was crazy! I was so concerned I couldn't smile at him through the windshield. When we reached the bottom, there was still enough grade for the car to drift downward into a gas station.

Again we hung around for hours as the mechanics worked on the car. The motor eventually came back to life -- the men nodded we should go -- off we went. We passed our first breakdown spot and waved. Prematurely! After another corkscrew bend the motor coughed. The motor didn't completely die -- we would get around one bend at a time -- stop -- prime the engine -- and chug around the next curve. We were creating a traffic problem. With only two lanes, nobody could pass us. A stream of cars behind us kept honking, the very irate drivers probably cursing us in several languages. Near the top of the pass, the motor finally died completely. I put on the emergency brake and just sat. A Swiss motor assistance patrol car came to our rescue. A uniformed man came over to my window and barked at me in German. I had had it -- I burst into tears!!!

He had to get us out of the way -- so, as usual, he looked under the hood -- poured gas on the carburetor -- then pointed to the top of the pass. With many snorts and much bucking the car found its way around the final curves.

Over the Pass

We had made the St. Gotthard Pass! What a view! But there the car died for the last time. I let all the irritated drivers pass us. From now on it would be all down hill -- at least we would be going front first! We made it to the bottom of the mountain without incident, coasting around the curves. I was afraid the brakes would burn. As we were still in a mountainous area, the road continued to wind up and down. We went on for a while, but finally ran out of momentum. A kindly Swiss gentleman came to our rescue. He tied a towrope to our bumper and proceeded to tow us up the hills. This worked for a while -- but going around the bends was tricky. Going downhill was also very iffy -- we often nearly ran into the Swiss car's rear end -- very embarrassing. Finally, the towrope broke -- but we were going downhill at the time -- our kind rescuer felt he could leave us. Shangri-la lay ahead -- in the valley below was a small village with a church spire. Hopefully this meant we could keep going down -- we drifted along in neutral -- other cars passed us, the drivers making nasty faces. A garage came in sight -- we pulled in! We were in the beautiful mountain village of Wassen in the Uri Canton -- it really was a kind of Shangri-la! The children and I dragged our suitcases to the nearby gasthaus -- a beautiful chalet with wooden balconies and window boxes filled with red geraniums. I called Robert -- he was a knight on a white charger -- would ride to our rescue! He would fly to Zurich, rent a car, and drive to Wassen. We really enjoyed a fine dinner -- our rooms were warm and cozy -- we snuggled down for the night under feather beds. As I drifted off to sleep I thought -- supposing we had broken down -- not on St. Gotthard's Pass in friendly Switzerland -- but on the Khyber Pass between Pakistan and Afghanistan?

Wassen was truly a picture-postcard village. We spent the morning walking around the town and up to a charming church on the hill. Robert appeared in the late afternoon -- of course exhibiting a take-charge attitude -- that was all right by me! He was certain I had exaggerated about the car's problems -- as a female, I didn't understand a thing about engines. The mechanic at the garage assured him he had fixed the car. In the morning, we were again on our way. Robert took the wheel of the Taunus. We charged up the first hill and zoomed down the other side. Then came the next hill. The Taunus gave off the familiar choking sound and died! I was actually pleased -- I felt vindicated. The mechanic at Wassen had improved the engine quite a bit -- we limped along with the motor occasionally dying -- we reached Interlaken for the night. In the morning we took a side trip to Grindelwald for that magnificent view of the mountains -- the Eiger, Monch, and Jungfrau. I told the children the story -- is this the first sexual harassment case -- of how the monk had come along and rescued the young maiden by separating her from the ogre. Grindelwald held memories for me of my teenage romance with Charles -- we had hiked through here. We chugged along -- holding our breaths -- finally drifted into Bern, the Swiss Capital.

Bern is a beautiful city. From the balcony of our big old-fashioned hotel we could see the whole range of the snow-capped Alps. Robert took the car to the Ford dealer for diagnosis and repair. The problem turned out to be rust inside the gas tank -- flakes of rust in the gasoline had kept clogging the carburetor. A new tank was needed -- it would

take three days to order and install it. So we had some time on our hands. We planned to see a Walt Disney movie but we were not admitted -- David was underage -- there was apparently violence in the movie -- by Swiss law no child under twelve was permitted to view such pictures! Instead, we had a nice visit to the zoo. Another evening we went to a marvelous one-ring circus with wonderful animal acts.

When we picked up the car with its new tank at noon of the third day -- our troubles were over -- but we were way behind time. To make it up, we drove all the way to Nancy, France -- arriving after midnight. The next day we drove to Boulogne-sur-Mer -- from there we took a plane with the car across the Channel -- landed in the dark at an airfield somewhere in Kent. We headed for London -- the few road signs were hard to read in the dark -- we got lost -- finally we made it by midnight. There, in front of the Basil Street Hotel, in his excitement at finally getting there, Robert backed into another car, causing more embarrassment than damage. It was the first of our many stays at the Basil over the years. Patsy and David spent a few days there on their honeymoon! It is only a half block from Harrod's -- a Mecca for my shopping. Knightsbridge would develop special meaning for us over the coming years.

Branksome Hilders, Haslemere, Surrey

The next day we drove to Haslemere -- a pretty town on the Surrey Downs. Branksome-Hilders School was located in a sprawling English Tudor-style country house on a hill. It was the summer holiday -- no boys were around. The headmaster greeted us graciously, obviously happy to admit David. We had our misgivings about the school -- but we had few options. We had no other school to which to compare it -- only the recommendations of two satisfied Foreign Service parents. David must have been apprehensive. We signed him up for the term starting in September. Branksome was a typical British Preparatory School -- taking boys from the first through the eighth grades. After this, boys would enter a British Public School -- equivalent of a U. S. high school. Branksome no longer exists -- I don't know why. Probably Christopher's and Carter's school -- Hill House -- is academically superior. I don't think David was too happy at Branksome -- perhaps some day he'll write of his adventures there.

In London we went to Gorrings, the British school outfitter, to order the school uniforms required. The Branksome list included: gray shorts, sweater, jacket, cap, overcoat, tie etc. The underwear requirement was only two pair of underpants and vests -- British for undershirts. But twelve hemstitched handkerchiefs were required! The boys were expected to wear a handkerchief in their breast pocket in true gentlemanly style, although they might be wearing dirty underwear.

On the trip back to Belgrade the car purred nicely all the way. In Paris we stayed for the first of several times at a small, family-run hotel -- L'Hotel du Ministère -- recommended by the Embassy. A boxer was sleeping at the front desk -- we were glad to meet him -- he reminded us of Pupski at home. The hotel owners raised boxers. Twenty years later, Patsy and David stayed there on their wedding trip -- a boxer -- son or grandson -- was there. We drove to by 14bis Villa Madrid Neuilly -- bringing back memories of Tarzan

and Mickey, and of Auguste, Elizabeth and René.

We visited the Louvre together -- David was bored -- I bought him a book on all the famous paintings there. He says this began his interest in art -- or perhaps it was a trip to Montmartre, where David was intrigued by a painting a street artist tried to sell to him. Walking along the Quay on the Left Bank I found among the bookstalls quite a few prints of Montgolfier balloons -- just what we needed to cover the bare walls of our house in Belgrade. They would look well going up the marble stairs. They still go up the stairs at our Garfield house. It was then I started my balloon collection.

We drove south to Chartres for lunch. The cathedral is my favorite in France with its magnificent blue stained-glass windows. David and Patsy took Carter and Christopher there in 1998. We continued on to the chateau country. We have a good photo of the three children taken on the roof of the great Chambord Chateau. They had been fussing about something -- no one would smile -- there was a certain amount of conflict on the trip -- the car was pretty cramped! We decided to avoid the Alps this time -- we drove along the Mediterranean coast and crossed northern Italy to Trieste. On the final day -- from Zagreb to Belgrade -- we waved at that famous gas station where we spent the night. The children may have their own memories of this adventurous expedition -- I hope this version will remind them.

September 1963

Now arrived the sad moment in parents' lives -- they must say goodbye to their children. Polly and Francie returned to the States for school and college. David was to leave for the first time -- we would miss "Puff the Magic Dragon" drifting from David's room -- Peter, Paul, and Mary were the pop artists of that day. Even now, when I hear that dragon "living by the sea," I feel sad -- perhaps that's why I love dinosaurs -- I've never liked St. George who slew the dragon! At the time, a new group was becoming popular -- the Beatles. I had to listen to them too -- but oddly, I would miss them. I actually began to like them. David put on his school uniform for the first time -- said goodbye to Pupsi -- we were off for London. We took the train from Victoria Station to Haslemere. David seemed happy to be with all the boys -- I felt rather glum on the return trip. I wondered if we had made the right decision. To cheer myself up, I went to an antique print shop in London and bought an original balloon print -- my collection was growing!

October 1963

In Belgrade, Robert was temporarily Embassy Chargé d'Affaires. We were out almost every night, mostly at rather tiresome diplomatic receptions. Marshal Tito and his wife gave one of them -- it was the first time I had shaken hands with them. We had to give many luncheons and dinners -- there was not much time to miss the children. Evie Emmons came for a visit -- a wonderful break from the routine. Robert allowed us to use the Buick and Charlie. Since this was not an official trip, we paid him. We wanted to visit several Serbian monasteries. These medieval monasteries were built in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries in the remote mountains to escape the invading Ottomans that moved

north through the valleys of Serbia. One monastery is set in the center of a ring of fortified towers. These monasteries are famous for their frescoes depicting Bible scenes and the saints of the day. Only the Romanian Painted Churches are superior.

We certainly got off the beaten track -- even Charlie was lost on some unmarked dirt roads we followed. Orthodox nuns -- or more often a priest -- showed us around. Afterward we were taken to the refectory and offered a spoonful of slatko -- a very sweet jam -- followed by Turkish coffee and slivo -- we really needed the latter -- the churches were damp and cold. We were always the only visitors. Our car seemed to cause amazement. The remoteness and silence of these monasteries added to their awesomeness and mystery. Contributions for their upkeep were gratefully received. The Sun set at four p. m. Charlie had to find his way in the pitch dark down the mountain to a village for the night. At the first dismal hotel, our accommodations were questionable -- the three of us - - including Charlie -- were expected to sleep on cots in the same room. I asked Charlie to find us another place -- he didn't understand our objections. Evie and I laughed over the years at his comment, "A bed is a bed -- what more do you want?" The next village had two rooms -- an improvement. After dinner there the locals came in to dance to some good Serbian music played on records. Evie and I were certainly given the once-over -- we were happy to be chaperoned by Charlie.

Washington, early October

In early October Robert and I returned to the United States for the funeral of his father. Tito was in Washington on an "Official Visit." at the time. As Yugoslavia was a Communist country, the "State Visit" normally offered to Heads of State was not considered acceptable. President Kennedy gave a relatively simple luncheon for Tito at the White House. Robert was there -- we have the official photos showing Robert passing in the receiving line to shake hands with President Kennedy, President Tito, Mrs. Kennedy, and Madam Broz.

Belgrade Friday Evening, November 22, 1963

As we were leaving for dinner in the evening -- the phone rang -- Jerry Livingston said "PRESIDENT KENNEDY HAS BEEN SHOT!!!" Our hosts for dinner were our cultural attaché and his wife. They had a short-wave radio -- their TV was showing a Serbian soap opera -- no news yet. We hovered around the radio waiting for news from America. Finally, through the crackling came excited voices with confusing stories. Then came the catastrophic words, "PRESIDENT KENNEDY IS DEAD". During the following days, with the terrible crisis at home, our isolation from America seemed more profound than usual. Somehow, living overseas, especially in an unfriendly country, we felt more patriotic than ever. In this void, a feeling of helplessness hung over us. We had no TV or radio in our house. We could not read the Belgrade newspapers and had to rely on material coming in to the Embassy from the U. S. Information Administration; it sent continuous bulletins. I worried about the children and wondered how the news had affected them. David was one of only two Americans in his British School -- he must have felt very alone. I did not learn till much later that Francie watched the funeral

procession as it crossed Memorial Bridge for Arlington Cemetery.

The Embassy organized itself to honor the late President. My letter to Mother said, "Saturday morning. In the entrance lobby of the Embassy, a picture of President Kennedy has been placed, surrounded by flowers. Beside it lies a large open book where the Chiefs of Mission and local government officials are to sign. A Marine Guard stands at attention beside a large American flag. When the doors opened, in addition to the dignitaries, a steady stream of mourners waited to sign the book. No one spoke -- many wiped their eyes -- some left flowers -- each was given a photo of Kennedy. Tito is to come this afternoon to pay his respects." Owing to Tito's recent visit to the States and his reception by President Kennedy, the Yugoslavs evidently felt he had been a great friend of their country. Their grief was sincere. During the whole month of mourning, people came to sign the book.

Marshal Tito came to the Embassy and was received by the Chargé and several senior officers. Robert said he stayed for more than two hours, talking about President Kennedy. Obviously the President had made a strong personal impression on him. As a fellow Chief of State, Tito may have also felt vulnerable to assassination. He went on at great length about his visit to America and his admiration for President Kennedy.

Austria -- Charlie's education

In early December 1963 Charlie would receive some further education -- he would learn a bit more about the Free World and Christmas. After the sad event of November, we were glad to take a trip to Germany and Austria. Robert was asked to attend a conference in Oberammergau, Germany, in the Tyrolean Alps. As the trip was official, Charlie drove us in the Buick -- he was very excited -- this was new territory for him. In Zagreb, our first stop, people were still placing lighted candles on the sidewalk outside the Consulate out of respect for Kennedy. We heard this was also done throughout Europe.

From Zagreb we drove north through Slovenia, over a snow-covered high pass to the Austrian border. In Austria we went through tiny Alpine villages whose streets were festooned with colored lights and whose shop windows were decorated with ornaments and glitter. Charlie was puzzled -- we explained it was a Christmas custom in the non-Communist Christian world. At Bad Gastein -- a famous spa and ski resort -- Charlie was astonished at the many people carrying skis. "Where are they going?" he said. We had a grand dinner together, beginning with fresh grapefruit -- a treat for us -- Charlie was confused -- he had never eaten a grapefruit. "Is this dessert? Where is the chorba?" This is a thick Serbian soup. It was very cold and snowing. We were not used to feather beds -- they kept slipping to the floor.

Then we drove through beautiful alpine scenery to Salzburg for lunch. Charlie was amazed at the highly decorated shops full of luxury items. The name Mozart kept coming up in our conversation. Charlie wanted to know, "Who is this Mozart guy?" We took the fast Autobahn north to Munich. Charlie had never driven on such a road -- he worried about driving so fast. In Munich we stayed at a US Military hotel for a dollar a night. The

facilities were barely adequate -- but Charlie said he had never seen such luxury. At the Consulate, we heard that the night after Kennedy's assassination, seven thousand university students had marched silently in a torch light parade past the Consulate. Getting around Munich was very difficult. It was the largest city Charlie had been in. He couldn't get used to the enormous streams of traffic. "Does everybody own a car?" Of course he couldn't read the street signs, but what really confused him were the traffic lights, especially the green or red arrows. "Why can't there be a policeman to direct traffic -- so much easier."

Oberammergau and Vienna

The conference at Oberammergau lasted several days. High in the snow-clad Alps, it was a beautiful spot to stay. There the Passion Play -- the life of Christ -- is enacted every ten years. Mother saw it back in 1910. Oberammergau was then a military Rest and Recreation center and a military in-service training college -- Robert spoke there. A military wife took me around to visit the local baroque churches and medieval Bavarian castles.

Vienna was the high point of our trip. After the shabbiness of Belgrade, the Christmas-decorated stores -- filled with luxury goods -- even impressed both of us. Charlie's eyes were popping -- for once he was speechless. Vienna's main streets were decorated in colored lights -- Charlie said this made the traffic lights hard to read. He was really dazzled and confused by the heavy traffic -- also the streams of well-dressed pedestrians on the streets. We had a reunion with our friends Arno and Connie Halusa -- Arno was at the Foreign Office. We caught up on our cultural life -- impossible to do in Belgrade -- we attended a performance of the white Lipizzaner horses at the Spanish Riding School. The horses are born black -- originally they were bred in Slovenia, but since the war, in Graz, Austria. We attended some chamber music concerts -- at the restored Opera House we heard a performance of Don Giovanni. The restaurants were the best yet. We helped Charlie understand the menus -- he enjoyed ordering every course. It would be hard to return to the drabness of Belgrade.

On the way home -- when we reached the Hungarian border -- we knew we were back in the Communist world. We were held up until the border control telephoned Budapest -- we weren't told what the problem was. Another car followed us all the way to Budapest -- easy to spot -- we were the only cars on the road. Charlie was very nervous. No Christmas decorations in the villages -- the shops looked pathetic and empty. Budapest had nearly all the shabbiness of Belgrade, but its dramatic setting on the Danube gave it some of the grandeur of the past. The little traffic consisted of old-model cars and Russian-built vehicles. We joined friends in the Embassy for dinner with Edward Albee, the American playwright -- his *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* -- in Hungarian -- was being produced. In Hungary, the regime seemed more open to Western culture. We saw the play later in Belgrade -- the Serbs must have found it hard to understand. On our final day, we drove across the plains of the Vojvodina. Snow was on the ground -- the peasants were driving horse-drawn sleighs. At home in dreary Belgrade -- nothing had changed -- but it was home -- we had brought Christmas presents for everybody. Charlie would have

plenty to tell his wife, Marika.

The Christmas 1963 Saga: David's flight from London to Belgrade

Christmas would be sad without the girls -- it was a mistake -- we should have flown them out. David would be coming home from England -- he asked me not to come to England for him -- he and Johnny Crawford wanted travel on their own. The trip would take only four hours -- I agreed. Our friends, the Lampsons, put him and Johnny on the plane. Four English boys from other schools were on the same flight. We called Bucharest -- the first of many calls -- to tell the Crawfords the plan. As there was no flight from London to Bucharest, Johnny would spend the night with us -- he would take a train the following morning.

Day One

The day of the flight was cold but clear -- with snow on the ground. The flight was due to leave London at 7 a.m. -- the good Lampsons got up at 5 a.m. to take the boys to Heathrow Airport. We expected them in time for lunch. Tilda would prepare David's favorite food. Charlie drove us to the airport -- a half-hour trip. There was no sign of a PAN-AM flight on the arrivals board -- no one at the counter knew anything -- we sat and waited. Then the weather closed in -- it began to sleet. The PAN-AM man called us to the desk with the first news. The plane had been late taking off from London -- owing to icy weather conditions here -- it would over-fly Belgrade -- continue on to Istanbul. "What about the boys?" "We'll let you know."

We went home -- called the airport every hour for news -- the plane should have arrived in Istanbul -- still no word. Telecommunications in Eastern Europe were still primitive -- you couldn't just dial the number. Calling Bucharest was time-consuming and frustrating -- we had to tell the Crawfords we had no idea where the boys were! We canceled Johnny's railroad reservation to Bucharest.

At long last in the evening PAN-AM said the six boys had been taken off the flight in Frankfurt -- sent to a hotel for the night -- they would be on a Yugoslav Airlines plane in the morning and be home by lunchtime. We called our Consulate General in Frankfurt to check -- all was well there.

Day Two

We called the airport first thing in the morning. As usual -- no news. Then came word that the children were on a Caravelle -- a turbo-prop plane that could land on icy runways. We rushed out to the airport -- sat and waited. The weather became worse and worse -- fog and more sleet. Then the arrival of a JAT plane from Frankfurt was announced -- We and the British families rushed to the window. A plane dropped from the fog -- LANDED, SKIDDED, AND FLIPPED OVER! An ambulance and fire truck appeared -- officials ran out to the plane. Some British mothers began to cry -- I felt I had to keep a stiff upper lip in their presence. Those ten minutes were horrible! The boys

were not on that plane, but their luggage was on it! The few passengers were badly shaken up, but no one was seriously hurt. Where were the boys? It turned out they had been put on plane for Zagreb. We called our Consul there -- asked him to find the boys and put them on a train for Belgrade. It was then announced that their plane could not land in Zagreb -- it had turned around and headed for Munich! Another plane would fly them that evening. That was enough! We called our Consulate General in Munich and asked him to rescue the boys at the airport and put them on a TRAIN the following morning. Hooray for the Foreign Service! The British mothers agreed with the decision -- their children would be included.

Day Three

It was still snowing -- but we didn't have to worry about planes and icy runways. The train would take all day on the trip via Vienna and Zagreb -- it was due in Belgrade about six p.m. Robert had to be Skopje, Macedonia, on business relating to the earthquake, only Charlie, Rosa and I with Pupsi would be there to meet the boys' train. The day seemed especially long -- I thought that the terrible weather would not be a problem. Tilda would have a really good dinner ready. We got to the railway station ahead of time. Rosa checked on the train's arrival. Of course -- no news. The Belgrade station was unheated -- we stayed in the car -- poor Pupsi was shivering -- then we heard the train would arrive at ten p.m. We went home to a rather lonely dinner. Back to the station -- the British families waited in their cars. Again, no news. Pupsi sat in front with Charlie -- kept falling asleep -- his head dropping -- it was past his bedtime. At length we heard the train was badly delayed -- the switches were frozen -- but it would be in at two a.m. I joined the British mothers at a British home -- we sat around drinking tea -- what else would the English do to calm their nerves?

At two a.m. we returned to the station -- it was dead as a doornail -- Rosa aroused someone. "The train from Munich?" "Well -- it has got as far as Zagreb, but some switches are still frozen -- the engine has broken down -- a new one is being sent from Belgrade. It might be here in the morning. I'm closing the station. Laku Noc."

Day Four

After a few hours sleep -- Pupsi was on the bed with me -- we returned to the station. There were signs of activity -- this was encouraging. Then we heard the train's whistle. THEY WERE HERE! Six dirty, and disheveled boys in British school uniforms of short pants and socks around the ankles -- appeared. They seemed surprised by our enthusiasm. The train trip had lasted more than twenty-four hours -- it was twelve hours late. There was not much heat -- no food -- they were cold and hungry. Our Consul in Zagreb had not given them food or money for the trip. However, an older English couple coming for Christmas came to their rescue and bought them food at the Vienna station. David -- as the oldest boy -- had carried the passports. Their only comment about the trip -- they'd had a grand pillow fight at the hotel. Poor Johnny Crawford had another long train trip to Bucharest. That's life in the Foreign Service. Merry Christmas came three days later -- we missed the girls.

January 1964

Aside from the continual sound of the Beatles from David's room -- Christmas was quiet -- David enjoyed being home -- especially Tilda's good cooking. One Christmas present he had asked for was a penknife to sharpen his pencils -- all the British boys had them -- there were no pencil sharpeners at the school! He told us plenty of stories about the school -- I hope he'll write them down -- Carter and Christopher would enjoy them. One story I do remember. In the school dining room, his seat was near the wall where a pipe went through a hole to the basement below. When no one was looking, other boys passed him undesirable food -- especially fish -- to be stuffed through the hole! Great for any mouse lurking below! He really surprised us -- he actually wanted to take a bath. As he soaked in the hot water, he said, "How nice not to have two feet in my face!" At the school -- once a week -- the school Matron made the boys line up in pairs at bath time. One pair after another would sit in the tub facing each other -- with their feet in each other's faces! It was best to be at the head of the line -- the water was warmer and cleaner. We were both pretty shocked at that arrangement! Many years later, in fact at Robert's 90th birthday party, limericks came into the conversation after a few glasses of champagne. To everyone's surprise -- David joined in. "At my British boarding school when I was eleven, I learned this -- "Captain Cook went up a brook, to see Victoria Falls, he fell on a rock, and broke his (?)" You can ask him to finish it. At the end of his vacation I flew with him to London. Before leaving for Haslemere we went to Boots pharmacy and bought a tube of chill blain ointment -- a necessity in that under-heated school.

February 1964

Balkan winters were always severe -- with blizzards blowing in from the steppes of Russia. At home in the evening -- it was pleasant just to go to bed with Mickey and Pupski asleep with us on the electric blanket. In all that snow -- perhaps a three-horse troika would make for easier transportation -- it would certainly be more fun. The cold was fine -- as long as the electricity worked -- but blackouts were common occurrences. The temperature had been below freezing for days -- high winds rattled our large windows. Robert was Chargé -- this involved extra entertaining. We gave a black tie dinner for twenty -- an electrical blackout happened just as the guests arrived -- no light -- no heat -- no electric stove -- no refrigerator! We fortunately had plenty of candles -- they gave the house a Victorian atmosphere. The temperature dropped to around sixty degrees -- the women put on their fur coats -- we resembled a polar expedition. Tilda had a major problem trying to cook dinner. She loved her electric stove -- when it worked -- but our old-fashioned wood stove -- kept just for these emergencies -- came to the rescue. Dinner was delayed -- the gelatin dessert a little soupy, but the wine flowed -- the evening was a great success.

The Elbricks

Burke and Elvira Elbrick -- our new Ambassador and his wife -- arrived accompanied by

their twenty-year-old daughter, Valerie. There was not much for a young woman to do in Belgrade, but all the single officers of the Embassy were delighted to help out!

London and Paris

In mid-February we flew to England for a few days -- a mixture of work and pleasure. We brought the Lampsons a gift of two bottles of duty-free Scotch. As our luggage arrived in British Customs from the plane -- an interesting aroma filled the air -- it came from my rather wet-looking suitcase. I had wrapped the bottles in my bathrobe -- everything was embarrassingly sopping. We wrung out my clothes in front of the Customs Officer -- he thought it was pretty funny. Mary Lampson's housekeeper -- Ann -- and I washed and washed the clothes to rid them of the whiskey smell. When we opened the lid of the washing machine, Ann commented, "Ouw, my word! It smells just like a Christmas pudding!"

If you have ever lived in a Communist country you can appreciate the pleasure of finding yourself in a civilized world of good restaurants -- overflowing markets with all kinds of food -- theater -- museums -- shopping possibilities. My Mecca was Harrod's -- half a block from the Lampson's flat on Basil Street. We attended several Shakespeare plays with the famous actors of the day. We even went dancing -- at a nightclub where they played old-fashioned music for "slow dancing," as the modern generation called it. I loved London! We caught up with Joy Wadleigh Shane and her then new husband Captain Charles Shane U. S. Navy, who had been posted there. Her first husband -- my cousin George Wadleigh -- had died of polio when we lived in Paris. Joy kindly took care of David on some of his long school weekends.

This time -- under school rules -- David wasn't allowed to leave the school -- until three p.m. Sunday. We drove through rain and sleet to Haslemere for his birthday. The Downs were covered with frosty whiteness. Before meeting David we lunched at a lovely Tudor-style pub. It had small rooms with low ceilings -- dark wooden beams -- leaded glass windows -- its walls were covered with old prints and pewter plates. Waiting for our table, we sat with other guests and sipped sherry by a roaring fire. How English can it get! The inn proprietor joined us by the fire. He was interested to hear we lived in Yugoslavia. He told us that on a trip to Yugoslavia, he and a friend had been detained at the border -- in their luggage the police had found a box of strange tiny wooden blocks with letters on them. Espionage was a possibility -- was he part of a spy ring? The police confiscated the suspicious letters! No way could they understand that the lettered tiles were only a game! Polly and Robert spend hours playing this suspicious game -- Scrabble!

After lunch we drove to the school. David met us at the front door wearing knee pants, short-sleeved shirt, and shrunken socks around his ankles. His face was rosy, but his hands looked purple. To chat with David we sat in the Headmaster's office until tea time -- British for supper time -- at five. I never took off my fur coat -- I kept my hands stuffed in the sleeves of my coat like a Chinese mandarin. For his birthday we brought David the baseball bat -- gloves -- and balls he'd asked for -- we had them sent from the States. I

wondered how that was going to jibe with cricket. When the bell rang for tea, the boys rushed into the dining room to get some of the chocolate birthday cake we had brought.

We flew to Paris for a few days. We stayed at the same hotel -- Le Ministère -- where we had stopped the previous summer. The boxer dog was at the reception desk to help check us in. Fresh hot croissants, apricot jam, and café au lait greeted us every morning. The boxer sat by my knee waiting for a crumb. While Robert spent time at the Embassy, I walked the streets of Paris -- a wonderful pastime. The boulevards were decorated with French and Italian flags in honor of the Italian President on a State visit. I was held up several times by the passing motorcade of President de Gaulle -- very tall -- and his guest -- very short. Our Embassy friends attended the gala reception at the Elysée Palace that night -- certainly far more splendid than any Tito could give. The French are supreme when it comes to taste and style. I was glad I'd spent my money at Harrod's -- French prices were exorbitant. Only at the bouquinistes on the Left Bank could I afford some old prints. I bought two of insects that I sent to Polly for her birthday. I made an extravagant purchase for Pupsi -- passing an elegant pet store, I saw a beautiful red leash and collar -- I had to have it -- I was surprised to find that there was a buckle at the end on the handle loop. The vendeuse explained, "Madam, that is to attach the dog's leash to the table leg when you take your pet to a restaurant." The French are very civilized to allow dogs in a restaurant! Regrettably, I could never enjoy that pleasure with Pupsi!

Spring 1964

Spring eventually came -- David flew in for the Easter vacation. The flight was uneventful this time except for rough weather. The English boy next to him was violently sick -- they moved David up to first class and fed him caviar! On the English long school weekends David stayed in London with Foreign Service friends -- the Lampsons -- Armstrongs -- or Shanes -- for this I am eternally grateful. Branksome-Hilders was more demanding than the school David had attended previously. The boys there all had had many years of Latin and French. We found a Latin student in Belgrade who helped him with extra homework. David has never liked Latin. We gave a farewell party for David before he went back to school. After a home-cooked dinner of hamburgers and potato chips -- better than French fries, David said -- we took David and his guests to the circus. Barnum & Bailey may have spectacular three-ring circuses -- but nothing beats the European one-ring circus. Most of the show was animal acts. We had front row seats -- could almost touch the beasts. Six bears skated -- rode bicycles and motorcycles. The highlight of the evening was a soccer game between two teams -- each of five boxer dogs -- dressed in pants of its team's colors. At each end of the ring was a net -- the goalkeeper boxer was on a leash. A large balloon was thrown into the ring -- the two teams of dogs were released. Absolute pandemonium broke out! Each dog jumped at the balloon and tried to bat it toward the goal. The goalie would leap up and bat the balloon away. The dogs' barks drowned out the children's cheers! The balloon finally exploded -- the dogs started a fight. I doubt Pupsi would have made the team. After David returned to London -- Pupsi looked everywhere for him and continued to sleep on his bed.

May Day

On May Day there was the usual huge Communist celebration with many parades and events. Huge pictures of Tito and many flags decorated the whole city. Our street was on the way to Tito's residence. Whenever Tito went anywhere, blue-coated soldiers at attention lined the Boulevard. We could not leave our driveway till Tito had driven by. Charlie -- a strong anti-Communist -- grumbled at this outrage.

Easter in Greece

For the Orthodox Easter period Robert and I took a trip in our new Opel to Greece. We headed south again through central Serbia and Macedonia along the two-lane Autoput. The peasants were working on spring planting. Now and then we'd slow down to get past a herd of black pigs in the road -- a farmer shouting and prodding them from behind. Few tourists had yet discovered Yugoslavia. The traffic as usual consisted mainly of trucks from Bulgaria, heading for Western Europe. We passed through the outskirts of Skopje, still being rebuilt from the previous year's earthquake. Temporary shacks climbed the hillsides. Farther south we traveled through wild rugged mountains and gorges. Opening ceremonies for a new tunnel held us up for a while. Cheering and flag-waving children -- trucked in from distant villages -- lined the road for miles. Thinking we were part of the official party, they threw flowers into our car windows. We arrived at the Greek border after dark. We gave a ride to a Greek border officer -- he helped us find our way along the narrow dark road to Thessaloniki. At our hotel we enjoyed a typical late Greek dinner at 11 p.m. Artichokes were served -- the first we'd had since arriving in Yugoslavia. We knew we were in a new world.

Thessaloniki, capital of Greek Macedonia, is the second-largest city of Greece. It is an important port on the Aegean Sea and a center of agriculture and industry. From here the Romans had built a road to the Dalmatian Coast passing through Ohrid in Macedonia. Thessaloniki had been at the crossroads of history throughout the centuries. Everywhere were remains of past Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Venetian, and Turkish architecture. Guidebook in hand -- we hunted down various points of interest -- got lost in the labyrinth of tiny cobblestone streets. The Opel was small enough to weave around the many hawking street vendors leading donkeys laden with wares for sale -- vegetables, fruits, furniture, clothes, pots and pans. One donkey carried baskets heaped high with candy around which the children were screaming and grabbing what they could reach. Most of the taxis were horse-drawn carriages -- this helped clog the traffic. In preparation for the Greek Orthodox Easter, most houses had been freshly painted in pastel colors -- pink, blue, and yellow. Wonderful smells came from the bakeries where housewives had brought their special breads and pastries to be baked. Lamb was the featured staple of the celebrations. We passed many men trudging home, each with a whole freshly skinned lamb over his shoulder -- the gaping head dripping blood down his back. They were even lining up at the bus stops. We wondered how one managed a lamb carcass on a bus! Do you put it on the seat next to you? In front of many small restaurants, we saw whole lambs turning on spits on the sidewalk. Of course, we had lamb for dinner -- it was delicious!

We headed south toward Athens along the Macedonian plain. We made a detour to visit the fantastic monasteries of Meteora -- perched on a forest of strange limestone pinnacled mountains. In medieval times their only access was either being hauled up in a net or by a rope ladder that could be pulled up in times of danger. The rest of the day we drove over one mountain range after another -- snow-capped Mount Olympus kept appearing through the clouds. Like the karst mountains of the Dalmatian coast, the mountains had been stripped of trees to build ships -- leaving a barren rocky landscape -- good only for grazing. The narrow valleys were heavily cultivated. We shared the road with flocks of sheep and goats. From far off, we could hear the tinkling bells of the heavily laden donkeys. Had the road been dirt, the scene would have been the same as Biblical times. Passing through a village -- the odors of the roasting lambs made us hungry. We arrived in Athens after dark -- then had to find our way to a resort hotel on the south coast. Again we had lamb for dinner.

We caught up with our old Embassy friends, the Anschuetzes, and our Greek friends, the Pilavachis. We visited the famous sites, including the ruins at Delphi and Cape Sounion. We had a laugh when Frossa Pilavachi took us to the Parthenon. She was busy explaining the historical ruins when a policeman wanted to arrest her because she didn't have a guide's license. After ten minutes of explaining that her husband was an official of the Foreign Office -- he backed off. She was not amused! We made arrangements to charter a caique for August for a two-week sail around the Greek islands. Ellen Anschuetz and Joanna Pilavachi would join us. We couldn't wait to tell the children our summer plans.

Finally, we crossed the Corinth Canal to the Peloponnesus to see the ruins of Mycenae. These date back to the 17th century B.C -- when Mycenae was part of the Minoan (Crete) empire. At its height in the 14th century B.C. it rivaled Egypt and Assyria. During this period Agamemnon destroyed Troy. Much later, Homer put into poetry the many legends celebrating these times. I bought a replica of the gold mask found in one of the graves. Later we visited the amphitheater of Epidauros, built on the hollow of a ravine. We arrived just at sundown. We were alone except for a group of schoolboys who raced up the 55 steps.

The province of Arcadia lived up to its reputation for beauty. For both of us it was the experience of a lifetime! There were wild flowers in bloom everywhere -- fields of red poppies amid purple thistles -- and most spectacular of all -- along the roadsides, huge bushes of yellow broom. Millions of tiny white blossoms brightened the olive groves. These brilliant colors were seen against a backdrop of gray mountains and the piercing blue of the cloudless sky. We came to the temple of Bassae -- dedicated to Apollo Epikourios -- perhaps built to give thanks to the end of a plague in the 5th century B.C. The plague had decimated Greece -- including Pericles -- its ruler at the peak of its greatest period. The temple was off the beaten track -- high on the ledge of a ridge. From the valley below we climbed a twisting dirt road. At the top, in total solitary splendor was the temple -- it was in the same Doric style as the Parthenon -- actually built by the same architect, Ictinus. The temple was in much better shape than the Parthenon -- it was hardly a ruin. Instead of marble it was built of the dark limestone of the local mountains -

- giving it a rather somber aspect. Some of its sculpture is in the British Museum along with the Elgin Marbles. In this isolated spot -- standing on the steps -- we -- alone -- looked out over the wild countryside. An occasional "cuck-koo" came from a cuckoo bird in a distant olive tree. Black thunderclouds with brilliant streaks of lightning rolled in over the mountains -- making the setting even more dramatic. It took little imagination to believe we were back in the 5th century B.C.

Kosovo Montenegro Dubrovnik Bosnia

In May 1964, we made an official trip -- visiting Kosovo, Montenegro, the Dalmatian coast and Bosnia. The Yugoslav Investment Bank arranged it. Charlie drove the Embassy Buick. Tom Niles -- a junior officer -- later an Ambassador to Canada -- was our language officer. From the Bank came our old friend Mr. Popovic and a colleague. In addition to planned visits to enterprises, several famous monasteries were included -- perhaps a bore for our hosts -- the Communist Yugoslavs who didn't acknowledge the old Orthodox religion. On our way, in Serbia, we stopped at the same monasteries Evie Emmons and I had visited earlier. In the then autonomous region of Kosovo, we spent the first night in Pristina, the capital. It was then, as now, an ethnic Albanian Muslim dominated area -- a mosque in every village and the Shiptar dress of baggy pants worn by most people. The local artisans were known for their beautiful gold and silver filigree jewelry.

Pristina was a center of many historical interests -- the mosques -- the Ottoman-style houses and baths -- nearby was the Kosovo Polje mentioned earlier. After visiting a local enterprise, we stopped at the monastery of Gracanica. At each stop we were welcomed by glasses of slivo -- we hardly needed more at lunch. But our hosts had arranged for the local bigwigs to put on a multiple course lunch with many toasts -- another overeating trip! We continued through wild mountain scenery to my favorite monastery -- Decani -- its frescoes reflect the daily life of the Serbs of the 13th century.

Peç, an oriental-looking city tucked into the foothills of mountains, was our next night's stop. The local bazaar in full swing resembled a Turkish souk. Nearby were more 13th century monasteries and mosques. From Peç, the highway followed the ancient Roman Empire route over the high 6000-foot Chacor Pass into Montenegro -- Cerna Gora -- Black Mountain. This mountain range forms the border with Albania -- it then was out of bounds for Americans. All day we went through fields of wild alpine flowers and mountain lakes -- above them loomed the jagged mountain peaks. The road cut through deep narrow rocky gorges and canyons -- fantastic scenery. At a very isolated village, we made a pit stop. The usual Turkish privy was awash in three inches of you know what! But nearby stood a most unusual wooden mosque, including a wooden minaret. The wooden latticework was in a most imaginary design. We never saw again such a mosque. It was worth the stinking privy.

At Titograd, capital of Montenegro, we spent a night. After Tito died the city's original name -- Podgorica was restored. Montenegro is a mountainous country -- Montenegrins -- great warriors, are proud, stubborn, and fiercely independent. Prior to World War One it

was an independent kingdom. Owing to its geography and toughness, it was not conquered -- neither by the Ottomans nor Hapsburgs.

The next day we continued along the Albanian border -- left the beautiful pine-covered mountains -- reached the stony karst mountains without vegetation and descended to the Adriatic coast. We turned south along the rocky shore to the southernmost point of Yugoslavia -- the tiny town of Ulcinj -- a beach resort with black sand. This isolated town -- shut in by rugged mountains -- had been a port for Ottoman pirates -- they preyed on boats sailing past. We were surprised to see -- at our simple hotel -- several buses with German plates. The hotel was filled with East German tourists -- they seemed to feel right at home in this remote corner of Communist Europe -- no Western influences could touch them here, except a band that evening where a man gyrated while strumming on an electric guitar -- an early version of rock music. It was the first time I had ever heard it. I didn't like the noise then and still don't! But the Germans were delighted.

We left the happy Germans and drove north along the winding rocky coast road to one of the loveliest resorts on the Adriatic -- Sveti Stefan -- Saint Stephen. It had been a tiny fishing village on a small island just off shore and heavily fortified against the Ulcinj pirates. The Montenegrin government had restored the village -- made the whole island into a hotel -- each little red-roofed stone house was made into a hotel suite. The narrow cobblestone streets were for pedestrians only -- no cars. To reach the hotel we walked over a short causeway and passed through the gate in the fortifications. Our suite was one of the fishermen's houses. Before dinner we sat on the terrace drinking real cocktails -- the first we'd had on our travels in Yugoslavia -- we'd arrived in a resort area! With great pleasure we watched the reflection of the sunset along the rocky Adriatic coast. No East Germans in Sveti Stefan -- certainly too expensive and too exposed to the bad influence of the free world. There were a few Italian tourists.

We continued north through the Adriatic scenery -- rocky beaches -- little stone villages among olive groves and vineyards -- past ruins of former castles and fortresses on the hillsides. All reflected history from the days of the Phoenicians -- then Greeks, Romans, Venetians, Turks, and Austrians. We left the coast and climbed the twisting road to Cetinje -- the old Royal capital of Montenegro -- on the high stony plateau in the middle of the mountains. There were still a few imposing buildings from its past days. Set in this God-forsaken rocky moon-like topography, it is no surprise the Turks never conquered the Montenegrins. In the afternoon we descended the precipitous mountainside -- one switchback after another with no guardrails. We met no traffic -- but Charlie did have to move aside two reluctant cows in the road -- we passed them on the outer rim and caused gravel to cascade down the mountain. At bottom was the heavily fortified medieval town of Kotor -- its thick ancient walls climbed the hillside surrounding the town. Kotor was historically an important port on the Kotor fjord -- the magnificent inland arm of the Adriatic Sea. Pre World War One it was the main Hapsburg naval base.

After a ferry ride across the fjord -- a few miles farther on we entered Croatia, heading on our way to Dubrovnik. If Sveti Stefan is the Gem of the Adriatic, Dubrovnik is the Hope Diamond. Then we could not have believed that thirty years later the Serbs would bomb

it. This medieval town was surrounded by fortifications. The buildings within the walls were all still intact. The hotels were outside the walls on the mountainsides overlooking the town. No motor vehicles were allowed in the town. Summer crowds had not yet arrived -- we walked through the plazas and cobbled stone streets as if we were locals. Most of the important buildings reflected Venetian architecture, built at the height of the Venetian Empire. It was a thrill to climb the steps of one of the bastion towers to the ramparts and walk around the city. The outer walls are washed by the Adriatic. Parts of the wall are above the red roofs of the houses crammed together -- at other spots the ramparts form the outer walls of the houses. Here you could almost touch the laundry strung from windows across the streets. On one window ledge a tabby cat lay curled up between pots of red geraniums. Sadly, we never saw a Dalmatian dog!

Our return route went through Bosnia-Herzegovina. In 1964 it was almost unknown to most Americans -- not any more! It's still a poor and mountainous state -- fought over through the centuries by invaders. The Turks occupied it for 400 years -- introducing Islam. In the sixties, Christian Serbs and Croats lived there in peace with the Moslems -- there were Christian churches and mosques in the villages. It is tragic that thirty years later the Bosnian war had to cause such havoc. We spent the night in Sarajevo -- the city where the Austrian Archduke Prince Ferdinand was assassinated -- leading to the First World War. It was an interesting city -- its chief attraction for us, was the nostalgia of seeing the old discarded green Washington DC Capital Transit streetcars on Sarajevo's.

June 1964

Polly and Francie came for the summer -- David was still in school. We took the girls on various excursions. We saw some of the monasteries and then went back to Dubrovnik. We continued up the coast and crossed over to the Island of Korcula -- another medieval town built during the Venetian Empire. There we stayed at a brand-new hotel -- no hot water -- but were told that in summer hot water isn't necessary. We returned home via Bosnia, up and over the Karstal area. We wanted the girls to see the picturesque town of Mostar. In Serbo-Croatian, "most" means bridge -- "star", old. Over the river was a beautiful ancient hump-backed Ottoman bridge, built in 1556. In the Bosnian War, this bridge was bombed to smithereens by the Croats.

The Cyclades

The Cyclades (circling islands in Greek) is a group of about thirty islands of an archipelago that circles the central island, Delos, a Greek religious center over the millennia. Owing to their location in the Southern Aegean, the islands were at the crossroads of the cultures of Asia Minor and Europe -- they came under the control of whatever Mediterranean civilization was the most powerful at the time. It is a volcanic area -- the islands are composed largely of marble -- many ancient Greek statues were made of the marble from Paros -- many buildings of the islands are also constructed of marble. Delos is an archaeologist's dream -- it goes back to the Bronze Age -- the time of the building of the Egyptian pyramids. Marvelous small unique marble statues of that period have been found.

As soon as David arrived from school, we five, headed for Athens. We had chartered a caique for a two-week sail in the Aegean Sea to visit the Cyclades. In addition to our family -- on board were Joanna Pilavachi, her younger brother, Kostacki, and Ellen Anschuetz and her cousin, Bob, who was at Harvard. We boarded our caique at the port of Piraeus. It was no sleek sloop -- but a large, sturdy, single-masted, broad-beamed boat -- a type used over the centuries to ply between the islands. A crew of four sailed her -- the captain was a large burly Greek -- he spoke no English -- we would use Joanna as interpreter. Our photographs show that everybody had a great time. The weather was beautiful and not too hot. We ate all meals on deck. While sailing, some lay out on the deck, snoozing -- others read or played backgammon. At night we tied up at some island -- we visited eight in all. At each island we would walk into town -- look around -- climb the hill to the upper village -- or perhaps take a donkey ride to some special spot of interest. Over the centuries the forests had been cut down -- leaving rather barren rocky landscapes. Each island was different -- with its own special flavor -- the area is a sailor's paradise. The buildings on the islands were all whitewashed -- they stood out brilliantly against the blue -- blue sky and water -- a photographer's dream. There didn't seem to be many tourists -- we had several islands to ourselves.

We stopped briefly at Andros -- then on to Mykonos. Owing to its picturesque windmills, it is the center for tourism. On the dockside were several tame pelicans waiting to be fed. We discovered souvlaki, a kind of flat bread stuffed with amazingly wonderful kinds of food. We lived on this and every variety of moussaka and Greek salad for the next two weeks. On Paros we had our first donkey ride to a distant monastery. Robert's long legs dangled far below the animal, making him look like a comic character -- perhaps Don Quixote.

Delos -- though small -- is one of the great archaeological marvels of the ancient world. Its history goes back to the thirteenth century B. C. We needed an expert to explain its marble ruins. We had the island to ourselves -- could only gaze at the walkway of huge Naxos marble lions on pedestals. There were evidently originally nine -- but over the years they were despoiled by the Venetians and others. Even after a century of study, the archaeologists are not clear who carved these lions -- where the design originated -- or when lions became an expression of power. Perhaps they were influenced by ancient Assyrian art that was influenced by Egyptian art -- a mystery still to be solved. Delos was a superlative experience!

Naxos was our next island. We spent the day there swimming. Colorful fishing nets were strewn across the beach to dry. Polly found a small octopus -- it is a delicacy of the islands -- we did not eat it! Then on to Ios -- for me, the most picturesque island. Its many geometric architectural whitewashed buildings were so beautiful along with cubic houses and the many little chapels and churches with domes. Another donkey ride took us high above the harbor past a line of old windmills to the topmost village -- what a view!

We sailed on to the volcanic island of Santorini. The island rises abruptly from the sea in a semicircle -- it is part of the rim of the crater of an immense volcano that erupted

around 1500 B.C. As we sailed into the deep waters of the crater, we could see the white buildings of Thera perched high above on the rim. To reach the town one had to ride a donkey up switchback paths cut into the almost vertical side of the crater rim. We saw the donkeys waiting for us as we docked -- we had to choose our steeds -- Robert selected the biggest for himself. The beasts shuffled up the rocky path -- sending pebbles cascading to the water below. In the town we had lunch at a little café perched near the rim. We were the only tourists.

Serifos was our last island. As we sailed into the harbor, we saw the white buildings of a distant village perched high on the mountain. We had lunch at a little café on the beach. There were donkeys to ride but we decided to climb the mountain to the village -- if the donkeys could do it, so could we. No tourists -- only the locals going about their own business. Again we had the island to ourselves. We climbed the steep stony path to the top. From there we saw our tiny caique bobbing at anchor far below. This was a high point of our trip -- a most fitting final adventure. Late in the afternoon -- with the sun setting -- we walked down the mountain passing the line of donkeys returning home for the night -- at least they'd not had the burden of carrying us to the upper village. On one of the islands -- I forget which -- we were taken to a spot where thousands of butterflies congregated to breed -- quite a sight -- similar to the monarchs in Mexico.

The Pilavachis had a vacation house on the island of Spetses off the Peloponnesian coast. We stopped there for a farewell dinner at the end of our trip. The house was in Mediterranean style -- built around an interior courtyard where we dined. Our last day -- before heading for Piraeus -- we sailed to Hydra -- there we dropped off Joanna and Kostaki -- they would return to Spetses. Our trip was the last happy foreign adventure we would all have together.

Since then I have thought of Joanna Pilavachi. She was so bright and full of fun. She had such potential. Twenty-five years later -- in Athens -- the Pilavachis joined us for dinner. Joanna would not come. She had had a very serious nervous breakdown. She now lived at home. She hardly spoke to anyone and rarely left her room. We could never understand this tragedy. While in school, she and Francie had been inseparable friends and had passed many happy times together.

Belgrade, Fall 1964

Summer was over -- the children had returned to their schools -- once more we were alone. The routine of Embassy life was in full swing. My Serbian lessons took up much time. Another activity was English conversation lessons an Embassy wife and I organized -- not for Yugoslavs -- they were reluctant to come to the house unofficially -- but for other diplomatic wives: included were several Eastern Europeans, a few Asians and Africans. A Congolese lady knew no English at all -- I took her aside to teach her Basic English. She was handsomely dressed in bolts of beautifully designed material with a matching turban twisted high on her head. All was going well until Pupski dashed into the room -- he pranced up to me -- then stared at the Congolese lady. She let out a blood-curdling scream -- pulled her legs up into her chair -- tried to hide in her voluminous

skirts. Her screaming terrified Pupsi -- he scooted. The poor Congolese woman never came back.

There were frequent official luncheons, receptions, and dinners given by our Embassy, other Embassies, and the Yugoslav Government. These brought us into contact with some interesting people -- visiting artists like Arthur Rubinstein, the famous pianist -- he was very difficult to please -- a huge ego -- several great British actors performing Shakespeare for the first time in Belgrade -- sadly not Lawrence Olivier -- movie stars like Kirk Douglas -- he saw I had dimple in the chin like his -- he had a photo taken of the two of us. Foreign correspondents and members of Congress often showed up -- some were nice -- others demanded much attention. The Mayor of Los Angeles took himself very seriously but was pleased by the exceptionally nice dinner given by the Mayor of Belgrade. The biggest hit that fall was Senator William Fulbright; he came to sign an agreement with the Yugoslav Government for the exchange of foreign students, the first with a Communist country. Tito rolled out the red carpet for him.

An Anonymous Concert

Looking for Eastern Orthodox Church icons presented some adventures. Icons were becoming difficult to find. At the Commission Store I had found a lovely Russian samovar but no icons. Word got out. A woman contacted me to say she knew of someone who wished to sell an icon -- she would take me to him. On the appointed evening, Charlie and I picked her up on a street corner. She would say nothing in front of Charlie except to give him directions. We drove to a house in a remote part of Belgrade. There were no streetlights. It was freezing cold. In the dark we walked around the house to a shack in the back yard. An elderly man opened the door for us. There was no heat. He was dressed in an ancient frayed topcoat; a beret was pulled down over his ears. On his feet were furry snow boots and on his hands knitted gloves without fingers. I was introduced -- no names exchanged -- to another man also in shabby outdoors clothes. I was told he was the former conductor of the Belgrade Symphony. The room was dark and gloomy, with one light in the ceiling, and sparsely furnished except for a concert piano in the corner. I sat down on one of the two beds. Turkish coffee was offered. The first gentleman said he would play some music while we waited. He sat down at the piano still wearing his snow boots and gloves. He then proceeded to perform one of the most remarkable concerts I have ever heard. He began with Bach sonatas -- continued with Handel, Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven. The old conductor sitting next to me closed his eyes and hummed every piece that was played. I had not heard such music since we had heard Hephzibah Menuhin play in Australia. The icon seller never showed up. Nothing was explained. No names given. All remained a mystery. For two hours I just drank in the music of this tragic fantasy world. How many others lived in these conditions? I would never forget the Maestro and Anonymous Pianist.

Keeping the faith

Sundays we generally attended church services. Tito allowed the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches to function, but there was no Protestant church in Belgrade.

One of Robert's duties was to organize Protestant services in the TWIB hall. The Ambassador was Catholic, so he never attended. A magical suitcase contained all the accoutrements for an altar -- a lace altar cloth -- a Bible -- candlesticks -- and a chalice for communion. All of these were spread out on a small table. Every few weeks a military chaplain came down from Germany or from Aviano, Italy. It could be any denomination, Baptist, Methodist, or whatever -- we sampled all sorts. He would give a sermon, offer prayers, and close with a hymn played on the tinny out-of-tune piano. On other Sundays, someone from the Embassy would handle the service -- everyone took turns. It was amusing to hear what our colleagues chose to talk about in this setting. It rarely was religious -- that was left to the chaplains -- generally something thoughtful and provocative on a subject of interest to the speaker. Neither of us remembers what Robert spoke about in his turn. The British community rarely attended -- they couldn't abide some of the fundamentalist chaplains' sermons.

One day Robert came up with an idea. In Paris we had attended the Episcopal American Pro-Cathedral. Sturgis Riddle, the Dean, was a large compelling character with a booming voice -- a great extrovert. He had baptized David in Paris in 1952. Robert wrote him in Paris to ask if he would care to conduct a service in Belgrade. He was most enthusiastic. He had never been in the Communist world. What a challenge! On the appointed weekend he and his wife, Betty, arrived in Belgrade to stay with us. Robert took him to visit the Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church; they discussed the religious problems of the world. That night we held a dinner in his honor, which included the British and Canadians. Robert almost forgot to ask him to say grace!

Sunday morning we were awakened by this booming voice -- Sturgis was practicing his sermon! Although he was in our guest room with the door closed, he sounded like a famous Shakespearean actor except for the inclusion of many "Gods" and "Lords." He had brought his full church regalia -- Rosa felt honored to iron it. At ten-thirty Charlie drove us to the TWIB. Usually the hall was only partly filled -- today was an exception. Word was out! The British, who rarely came to our Sunday services, came en masse -- the Episcopal service is nearly identical to that of the Church of England. About the only difference is the prayer for the President rather than the Queen! The British ladies had dug out dilapidated hats from the back of their closets and the men wore their old school ties. We were a distinguished group! Sturgis was no disappointment! At eleven sharp, as a hymn was being played on the out-of-tune piano, Sturgis made a triumphant entrance and strode down the aisle in all his splendor, robes swirling behind. Perhaps inspired by the moment of the occasion, he delivered a magnificent sermon, in a resounding voice so loud that had there been rafters, they would have rung. The low-ceilinged hall with its plastic chairs was hardly a Cathedral. But the British were awed. Sturgis had suggested Holy Communion. The chalice had been filled with wine -- but where were the wafers? Panic? No -- I found the jar of wafers under the table and placed it on the altar. To add to the sanctity of the event, the jar bore the label -- Kraft Magic Whip!

In Washington, an annual event honors Betty and Sturgis and raises funds for the American Cathedral in Paris. Until recently Sturgis and Betty came down from their home in New York; Sturgis addressed the group of his former Parisians in his same

resounding voice he used in the Cathedral and Belgrade! He always would tell us that his trip to Belgrade was a highlight of his life!

The religious instruction of Pupski

Charlie and Pupski were quite an item. Charlie always took Pupski with him when he picked up Robert at the Embassy. He parked in front of the building. Pupski didn't seem to mind the wait -- perhaps he enjoyed sitting in the front seat, watching people walk by. A Roman Catholic church was located several doors from the Embassy. Nuns in long flowing robes and starched headgear often passed the car. Charlie was a good Serb -- though not religious, he detested the Croatian Roman Catholics. Whenever a nun passed, he would tell Pupski to "Sic 'em." Pupski would bark and growl. This routine began when he was still a puppy, and he became thoroughly programmed. Charlie thought it was a funny trick. Charlie's attitude, although light-hearted, was our initial exposure to the hatred later shown in the Bosnian and Kosovar wars. A few years later -- when we lived in New York City -- I would walk Pupski to Central Park. As we passed apartment houses whose doormen wore long winter overcoats. Pupski would try to charge at them, barking and growling. To avoid such incidents, I often took routes that would not pass classy buildings. I couldn't explain to doormen that Pupski was really a nice friendly animal who only thought doormen were Croatian nuns.

A Peasant Wedding

Great news in the household! Radovan, our gardener, was to be married -- we were invited to the wedding. He and his bride had evidently been in love for several years; but as he was a poor man from a poor village, he was expected to build a house for his bride before they could marry. This construction he did on the weekends. The bride-to-be came from a better family from a larger village -- the family objected to the marriage -- Radovan abducted her to his village -- her brother came to take her back -- saw she was happy -- approved of the new house -- gave his consent -- the wedding was on!

I consulted with Rosa about wedding presents. We would certainly give Radovan some cash -- but we would also be expected to bring presents to the wedding. Rosa, Tilda, and Charlie pooled their funds to buy a two-burner stove. Rosa and I went to the Robna Kucha department store and selected a set of green enamelware -- maybe not Limoges but quite pretty -- plus pots and pans -- from Pupski, a set of stainless steel flatware -- and from Mickey, a soup ladle for the chorba. We were ready!

On the day of the wedding, Charlie's wife, Marika, and Rosa's husband joined us -- we set off in two cars loaded with presents. Tilda and Rosa wore new dresses -- I'd never seen them without an apron. We drove twenty miles into the country to a large Serbian Orthodox Church. We were surprised to find twelve open carriages waiting outside, each with a pair of horses decorated with ribbons and strings of bells and flowers in a hoop over their heads. We joined the guests standing in the church -- there are no seats in the

Orthodox Church (What do the lame elderly like us do?) The most imposing feature of any Orthodox church is the reredos behind the altar. This is a high, gilded, paneled wall completely covered with rows of icons of saints. Radovan and his bride were already officially married -- the regime only recognized civil marriages -- they had signed the registry at the village hall. Now they stood in front of the church altar. He wore a greenish suit with a green/brown satin tie with sprays of rosemary pinned to both lapels. His bride wore a short white dress and veil. Her hair had been done with old-fashioned corkscrew curls hanging down to her shoulders. She did not carry flowers. Their only attendants were their Kums, their godfathers, standing behind them, holding white candles decorated in pink. It was a typical Orthodox service. The Popa entered by a door in the reredos, all the while chanting. He wore long blue-and-gold brocaded robes and the typical high hat. With his white beard, he looked just like Ernest Hemingway. He took the candles from the Kums, lighted them, and handed them to the bride and groom. He then bound their hands together with a ceremonial handkerchief and placed gold crowns on their heads. While chanting and swinging an incense pot, the Popa led the bridal couple around the altar three times. The bride had a problem: with one hand tied and the other holding a candle she couldn't push up her crown that kept slipping over her brow. After the exchange of rings and communion, the Popa blessed them and removed the crowns. They were husband and wife.

Next came the wedding procession. As they left the church, the guests piled into the waiting carriages. The bride and groom sat in the lead carriage. It was drawn by a beautiful pair of white Lipizzaner horses. We brought up the rear in our two cars. We were off to Radovan's village -- the horses stepping high. The partying had begun. In each carriage bottles of slivovitz were passed around -- several men with accordions began to play and sing -- this excited the horses. After several miles we turned onto a hilly dirt road in deep mud -- it had rained the day before. The horses slipped and sloshed -- a carriage could have overturned. We spun wheels -- Charlie was afraid we would be stuck. The countryside was beautiful -- from the crest of a hill we could see the winding Sava River shimmering in the sun. We passed little farms. All the commotion of the wedding guests brought out the children -- they ran beside the carriages screaming and laughing. All the noise upset the animals -- a farmer was dragging a big black pig by a rope tied to its leg. As the struggling horses passed him, the pig bolted, pulling the farmer down into the mud. The wedding guests cheered. I hope the poor man wasn't a friend of Radovan's.

At the farm

We finally reached Radovan's farm and turned into the gates of the picket fence. There -- standing on a little hill -- was the new house in all its splendor -- looking down on an orchard of plum trees. Tables on trestles were set out under the trees, awaiting the now partly inebriated guests. There would be food -- food and plenty of slivovitz for the whole afternoon. As honored guests, we were the first to be shown around the house. Over the front door was a garland of flowers. There were two rooms and a small kitchen. Everything smelled of fresh paint. According to local custom, the bride had to buy the furniture for the new house. It was covered in bright green material -- I felt our green

enamelware was in keeping. Radovan's toothless mother and father welcomed us. The presents we had brought were opened. They kept thanking us and thanking us. It was rather overwhelming -- we wished we could have given them anonymously.

Robert and I sat on the front stoop of the house with Rosa, Tilda, Charlie and their families at one of the new tables bought by the bride. Radovan pinned on each of us the traditional sprays of fresh rosemary. As the festivities began, the seventy-odd guests at the trestle tables were served chorba, roast pig, cabbage salad, and cake, and of course as much slivo as possible -- drunk straight from the bottle. Musicians with their accordions strolled about playing traditional Serbian folk music. We were treated royally -- we even had glasses for our slivo -- followed by sumadinskicaj (hot tea and slivo). As is the tradition, the bride and groom and members of Radovan's family served the food to their guests. Embarrassingly, we were offered a special menu. We had the same greasy chorba, followed by the great luxury, chicken -- stringy pieces cooked in some kind of fat. It was awful! Robert and I needed the slivo to be polite and get some of it down. We ate from our green plates with Pupsi's flat silver. I glanced at Tilda -- she made a face. She -- the best cook in Belgrade -- was used to the plump chickens from the American commissary. Then came suckling pig served stone cold in its grease. Ben, our Chinese cook in Bangkok, would have been shocked!

After the guests had eaten and drunk their heads off -- came the present-giving time. According to custom the bride must give each guest something -- usually clothing. Radovan's friends in turn must give the bridal couple a present. The exchange was a melee -- worse than a shoppers' bargain sale as everyone grabbed his and her gift. Usually, the women received underwear, blouses, or dress material, the men, shirts -- a trousseau for everyone. Radovan later told Charlie that he had received forty-five shirts.

Then the kolo dancing began. It was time for us to leave -- first we had to see Radovan's farm -- a pen filled with black pigs and a small barn with one sheep and a cow with her calf. We shook hands with the toothless women who had cooked the food. They wanted to feel the material of my pink suit. The slivo had helped my Serbian, so I was able to thank them properly -- we hugged and kissed goodbye and promised to return. Then -- to our horror -- we received our wedding gift from Radovan -- a large skinned pig with dead staring eyes -- very white, looking like a nude body. Then smaller pigs for Rosa, Tilda and Charlie! Fortunately, no blood! The corpses, with difficulty, were shoved into the car's trunk. It seemed like a gang murder, carrying the victims away before burying them! We did hate to take away all that valuable food.

Another Serbian wedding custom -- as we left, the trestle tables were being reset with soup plates. The present wedding guests were also leaving. They were Radovan's family and friends. At these events, it appears that the two families do not meet. The festivities are repeated -- the bride's family and friends would now arrive! Perhaps the custom is the best way to handle in-laws who don't approve of each other. Thirty-seven years later it's odd to think that Radovan and his bride are by now probably grandparents. I hope they've had a happy life. But the miserable events of war and the rule of Milosevic in the nineties must have taken their toll.

Shakespeare's 400th Birthday

The year 1965 marked the 400th birthday of Shakespeare. The British government issued a handsome set of commemorative stamps. In Belgrade, beginning in the fall of 1964, the British Embassy produced many gala events. Even Tito rose to the occasion -- he welcomed a series of productions of Shakespeare's most famous plays, with some of the leading Shakespearian actors of the day. They were entertained at dinner at the Embassy after the show.

In England, at Branksome-Hilders School, they celebrated by staging Hamlet, to be presented before Christmas. David was chosen to play Prince Hamlet! I planned to attend -- would fly to London and take the train down to Haslemere. On a cold December Friday, I left early on the JAT airline. The weather was not too bad -- but when we landed at Zagreb we were told there was a delay -- an ice storm had closed down Heathrow Airport. I was not too upset -- after all, Heathrow was a modern airport -- there was plenty of time. The day dragged on -- we waited and waited. Our only excitement was the arrival of Gagarin, the first Russian astronaut -- surrounded by photographers. By late afternoon the time ran out -- there would be no way to get to England in time for the play. Completely exasperated, I returned to Belgrade. Hamlet was to be played only once! The next day I decided to fly to London anyhow -- at least I could savor the scene of David's triumph. The weather was horrible but I finally made it to Haslemere. I saw the makeshift stage and David's Hamlet costume of black tights, black velvet tunic, and sword. The headmaster said many photos had been taken -- they would be sent to me later. Some consolation! He said that Hamlet was the most ambitious play the school had ever put on. The title role was the longest part -- 260 lines -- ever assigned to anyone so young. David never had to be prompted. He had done a marvelous job. David was very modest about his performance -- but my cousins, Charles and Joy Wadleigh Shane -- had attended and gave glowing reports. The four-hour flight back to Belgrade took two days. The ice storm had hit the continent -- I had to spend a night in Munich. We have the photographs, including my favorite -- Hamlet holding a skull at the gravedigger's scene. "Alas, poor Yorick. I knew him well. . ."

Christmas 1964

Polly and Francie flew in for the holidays -- David arrived -- this time uneventfully -- from England. The Yugoslav Communist world seemed to become more westernized every year. I even found Christmas tree ornaments at the Robna Kucha. We had our most beautiful Christmas tree ever. Magnificent trees -- just cut -- came in from the country. We had a twelve-foot-high tree in our living room -- it never lost a needle. We laughed when we compared it to our tree in Bangkok -- that one had had about two dozen needles on it. There were many Christmas parties, but the Western European diplomatic families went home for the holidays, leaving an assorted mixture. There were not many young people for our children -- the Ambassador's daughter had taken over the single men of our Embassy. Our only entertainment was movies at the TWIB -- not too exciting a Christmas. However, the family was together for our last Christmas overseas. We didn't

know it would be Mickey's last Christmas.

Winter 1965

Winston Churchill died that January. David wrote that his school watched the funeral on TV. The British Embassy invited a Church of England priest to conduct a memorial service on Sunday at the TWIB. Most of the Diplomatic Corps -- including some Soviets -- attended the service. The British Ambassador read some of Churchill's most famous wartime speeches. Behind the scenes, Robert had a problem. He had failed to call off a Methodist chaplain, who showed up to give the service -- most unacceptable to the British. It took all his diplomatic acumen to not ruffle his feathers.

A Serbian Slava

The Slava is a unique Balkan custom. At birth, a son is given the name of his father's patron saint. The son in turn will carry on the same saint's name -- it passes from son to son. A daughter will retain her family's patron saint unless she marries -- then she takes on the patron saint of her husband. Every year on the family's saint's day, there is a celebration to which family and close friends are invited. All kinds of Serbian food are prepared. The Popa from the church comes and blesses the food amidst much chanting. Then the feast begins, along with plenty of slivovitz. Charlie asked us to come to his slava -- Saint George. On the appointed evening he drove us to his apartment, a crummy building in a poor part of Belgrade. We climbed four flights of stairs. He and Marika had one small room and shared a bathroom and a hot plate in the hall with two other tenants. As honored guests, we sat on the bed. A Popa appeared and blessed the food. We then were given plates piled high with wonderful kinds of Serbian food -- of course there was slivo. Marika was an excellent cook compared to Radovan's family. I don't know how she could produce this meal under such difficult circumstances. I've forgotten what present we brought.

Since then we have been to several of Charlie's slavas in Washington. We sponsored their immigration to the United States a few years after we left Belgrade. As he had worked for the Embassy for fifteen years, he was eligible for an immigration visa. He later became a US citizen. He became a driver at the State Department and always tells us about the Secretaries of State he has driven. Now retired, he and Marika live in a nice apartment on Wisconsin Avenue across from the Cathedral. On his arrival in America, he stayed with us. Looking at the Washington phone book, he asked, "Is this for the whole USA?"

Travel to the USA and Germany, Winter 1965

During a school break, we flew with David to the United States to visit various boarding schools. The Headmaster at Branksome said that David's work was so good that he would be accepted anywhere. We visited St. Mark's, St. Paul's, Milton, and Groton. While David was accepted at all these schools, he decided on Groton. We also had a few days in Washington. At the time Robert was beginning to experience some strange

symptoms. He had a sore mouth, was losing the feeling in his fingertips -- had trouble tying his shoes and buttoning his shirt. His doctor, a top Washington internist, said not to worry -- he didn't think it was anything. David flew back to England, and we returned to Yugoslavia.

Back in Belgrade, the medical symptoms didn't improve -- on the contrary. There was an Embassy doctor; I had wondered what kind of doctor would want to live behind the Iron Curtain -- where most of his practice would be to give booster shots and supply antibiotics. We had no choice but to ask his advice. Right away he made a preliminary diagnosis that Robert's problem was pernicious anemia -- he arranged for him to enter the US Military Hospital in Frankfurt, Germany, for tests and treatment. We found out later he was no ordinary doctor. He traveled a great deal to neighboring Communist countries. He always took his wife along; she collected antiques -- particularly Hungarian Herend porcelain. Perhaps she was a good cover, or maybe they were both running informants. The doctor, no less, was employed by the CIA!

Robert spent a week at the Frankfurt hospital. His Foreign Service rank equated with that of a major general -- he was treated as such. He had a suite of rooms and far more attention than he'd have had at a civilian hospital. The tests confirmed the Embassy doctor's diagnosis of pernicious anemia -- for the rest of his life he would have to take a shot of vitamin B12 once a month. The nasty symptoms were reversible. We celebrated by a trip to Berlin!

The Berlin Airlift and the Wall

Before describing our visit, a few historical notes for anyone who may have forgotten this bit of history. Soon after the end of World War II in 1945, the Cold War began. We and our allies found ourselves pitted against our former ally, the Soviet Union -- we had brought our troops home -- Stalin was trying to expand Soviet influence -- he was calling the shots. Berlin was a unique place -- in many ways it was the focal point of the Cold War. Under the Potsdam Agreement of 1945, it was divided into four zones: British, French, US, and Soviet. Essentially the Western zones became West Berlin, and the Soviet zone became East Berlin. Germany itself was similarly divided, leaving Berlin surrounded by Soviet-controlled East Germany. In 1948-1949, the Soviet Union attempted to force the three Allied Powers to abandon their post-War jurisdiction in West Berlin. To affect this, they blockaded all rail, road, and water communications, cutting off Berlin from the West. In response, we began the famous Berlin airlift -- flying planes around the clock carrying food and other supplies to the beleaguered city. These small planes landed, unloaded, and took off again at the small Tempelhof Airport in the center of the city. This went on for eleven months. Recently, over fifty years later, there were programs on TV where old people who remembered as children the continual noise of the planes flying in and out -- it was their salvation. Another story told of the time the planes dropped thousands of pieces of candy over the city -- it was a great morale builder.

Between 1949 and 1961, some two and a half million East Germans fled the Communist tyranny. They were mostly skilled workers, professionals, and intellectuals -- their loss

threatened the economic viability of East Germany. The East German border was closely guarded, but at first it was easy to get from East into West Berlin. In August 1961, the Berlin Wall was erected to close this access. It was first constructed of cinder blocks and barbed wire -- later was replaced by a concrete wall fifteen feet high, topped with barbed wire; there were watchtowers, gun emplacements and mines. It ran twenty-eight miles through the heart of Berlin, dividing it in two, and another seventy-five miles around West Berlin. The Wall symbolized the Cold War division of the East and the West. After it was built, more than five thousand people managed to escape by various means; an equal number were captured; 191 people were actually killed trying to escape over the Wall.

"Ich bin ein Berliner"! These famous words will always be associated with the story of the Berlin Wall. President Kennedy spoke them on his visit to Berlin in June 1963. Standing at the Wall, he gave a speech praising the Berliners for their steadfastness during the previous years of hardship -- they stood for freedom against Communism. President Kennedy ended with the words, *"I am a Berliner!"* In 1989 the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe brought down the Berlin Wall. Berlin now is united and has been reestablished as the capital of Germany.

West Berlin -- February 1965

With the relatively good news from the doctors, Robert and I flew to West Berlin to see our old friends, Jeanne and Gerry Livingston. We saw the famous Berlin Wall and visited East Berlin. Our small plane landed at Tempelhof Airport -- famous for the Berlin Airlift. We spent three days sightseeing -- Gerry took us everywhere. In West Berlin the military were strongly in evidence, paroling the streets, in the French, British, and US sections. The damage from the World War II bombing had been cleaned up, but little reconstruction had taken place -- there were blocks of bare ground here and there. However, the shops certainly looked more prosperous than those in Belgrade. The residential area of the city was lovely -- many parks and lakes. Near the Livingstons' house was a large park where dogs were walked. We were amused to note that each breed had its own designated area -- typical of the disciplined Germans. At one corner several dozen boxers were gamboling -- we wished Pupsi was there to join in the fray.

An exciting experience was a trip to East Berlin. Gerry had obtained permission to take us. Over the years we had heard of "Checkpoint Charlie," the route through The Wall to the East. Checkpoint Charlie was the cornerstone of many spy stories and movies about characters trying to escape by that route -- they were usually shot by the border guards. Checkpoint Charlie was in the US zone. At the Western end the US military checked passports and credentials before letting us pass. Then we proceeded across a strip of no man's land to the East, where the East Germans checked our papers. This was a surreal atmosphere -- exactly as depicted in spy movies. We expected to see a spy slink around the corner. Many Russian soldiers stood around eyeing our car. The streets were quiet -- practically no traffic, only a few cars of old beat-up Russian and East German make. The few stores we saw looked grimmer than those in Belgrade. The people were shabbily dressed. We drove along only the main avenues. We passed the famous Berlin Museum,

which contained sculptures from the ancient Greek ruins of Pergamon in Turkey. Here also was the magnificent head of the Egyptian Nefertiti. Of course we could not go in. We headed back for Checkpoint Charlie. Crossing back to West Berlin was somewhat more complicated. The guards searched the car trunk and scrutinized our passes with even more care. We could see the watchtower guards with their guns trained on us. It was spooky. After our fling in another world, we flew back to Belgrade.

Back to Belgrade

The Embassy wanted to help raise money for an orphanage and day care center in Skopje. We decided on a Casino Night as the best fundraiser -- a real gambling event. The entire Diplomatic Corps was invited. No Yugoslav would dare come. I headed the committee. We decided to have two roulette tables, four blackjack games, horse races, raffles, grab bags, and dancing to a live combo. All jobs were divided among the Embassy personnel. Larry Eagleburger was in charge of the gambling tables. The croupiers were in black tie. For the horseracing, we bought children's wooden toy horses and painted them different colors. For the raffles and grab bags we decimated the shelves of the commissary for all sorts of goodies, none of which could be found in the Belgrade stores. At that time, American cigarettes were still very much in demand. As Robert's secretary, Marlene (later Mrs. Eagleburger), had the best legs, she became a cigarette girl. She wore black net stockings and a short, short red skirt -- very risqué -- miniskirts were not in vogue till many years later. The TWIB was decorated to resemble a Western saloon with swinging half doors. The wife of the Congolese Ambassador seemed to have the greatest time. Like a child, she was intrigued most by the grab bag items. She had never seen cake mixes, canned mushrooms, smoked oysters, and so on. But the greatest prize for her was a bottle of colored beads she would use to decorate a birthday cake for her child.

The evening was a great success, especially for the young. As there were so few places of entertainment in Belgrade, they had the time of their lives, particularly the off-duty Marine guards. Robert was playing roulette when a man next to him gave a little cough. Horrors -- it was a Methodist Army chaplain just arrived from Germany. He looked around at the scene of gambling and drinking with his mouth tightened into a thin line of disapproval. He certainly was gathering fodder for his sermon the next morning. Sure enough, the next day he gave a rip-snorting sermon on sin. However, the young Embassy people were not there. They were sleeping in late. We grossed over \$1000 for Skopje.

Captain Nemo arrives

Many movies were filmed in Yugoslavia owing to the cheap labor costs. It was also an excellent location for films requiring huge casts of men on horseback charging across the countryside. It came as no surprise to hear of the latest film to be shot on the plains outside Belgrade. It was to be about Genghis Khan, the Mongol conqueror in the late 12th and early 13th centuries. It required hordes of horsemen in the assault scenes attacking Beijing. The greatest news for us was that James Mason, the British actor, would play the leading role! Polly had a great crush on him back in Australian days when he played Captain Nemo in Jules Verne's 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea. I liked him for his

romantic roles back in the 1940s -- I loved his voice. I'd read he had Siamese cats. Another great British comic actor, Robert Morley, was in the cast, as well as a hitherto unknown actor. We were invited out to the set on the plains. I wished Polly had been with us. The old Arab city from a previous movie set had been made over into Beijing. The Moorish arches and minarets had been transformed into red-and-gold Chinese-style gates, and the buildings now had the up-swept tiled roofs. The walls around the city resembled the Great Wall. Morley played Genghis Khan. He was wearing magnificent robes of blue, red, and gold, with hair in a queue down his back, a huge curled mustache, and lots of mascara to make his eyes look oriental. While waiting to go on, he regaled us with jokes. He was as funny as Bob Hope. James Mason joined in the fast repartee. They made fun of an American actor who sat around the hotel lobby in his T-shirt drinking beer -- he obviously was not one of them. They said the movie was a B-movie, but they all needed the money. Mason had just divorced his wife and had alimony to pay -- I wondered who got the Siamese cats. We watched several scenes being made. The Emperor, sitting on his throne in all his splendor, held a Siamese cat on his lap. We were not allowed near the large scenes with the great hordes of charging horsemen -- too dangerous. Actually some riders were hurt and several horses had to be shot. We had to leave before they blew up Beijing -- done with many exploding fireworks at night. I was delighted to talk with James Mason. He was much taller than I had expected -- his voice was wonderful, but he was showing a little age -- he was past his prime. However, the third actor in the group I definitely took note of. He had charisma! He was born in Egypt, spoke five languages, played tournament bridge, and certainly was a challenge to Mason. He was not yet well known. He had just finished his first major movie with Julie Christie, *Dr. Zhivago*. We would see it with David the next winter in New York. He was, of course, Omar Sharif!

Mishkat -- 1965-1986

Animals do grieve for another pet that has died. With Mickey we never knew how much he missed Tarzan. He always had to deal with bouncy Pupsi, who, after a scratch on his nose, left him alone. We suddenly were aware that Rosa was going around with a smirk on her face as if she knew a secret. One evening she and Tilda came into the living room. She was holding a furry white ball. Indeed, it was a Siamese kitten to replace Tarzan. It had taken Charlie six months to find it. It's mother's sister had been the Siamese cat sitting on Robert Morley's lap in *Genghis Khan*. Of course we wanted to give it a "mouse" name. Miš (pronounced Mish) is the Serbian word for mouse -- most appropriate. Eventually it became Mishkat. (Then, in later years, RGC's e-mail address became MISHKAT.) We thought we had been so original but discovered that Stalin had named his cat Miš! -- the same word, mouse, in Russian.

Spring 1965 -- Farewell to Yugoslavia

We were due for home leave and a possible transfer after two and a half years at the post; for family reasons, Robert had expressed a preference for duty in Washington. Robert's replacement had been designated. It is always an unsettling time in Foreign Service life when this occurs. I was happy when word finally came that Robert was to return to Washington that summer. For one thing, we wanted to attend Francie's graduation from

Holton in June. But I always felt sadness at leaving a post, especially this time, when it was probably our last foreign post. Our future was mostly behind us!

After the usual farewell parties and packing up, we were ready for the PAN-AM flight. It was difficult to say goodbye to Rosa and Tilda. In a few years Rosa would open a dry cleaning establishment. Slatko would marry and have children. Tilda, the best cook in Belgrade, would go to the Ambassador's residence. As mentioned earlier, Charlie would come to America. For many years we heard from Rosa but recently learned of her death. After 35 years, we often wonder how everyone fared during these difficult war times in Yugoslavia in the nineties. How right Tito had been when he told a friend of ours that after his death, the country would not stay together. Was our house damaged in the Kosovo War when Milosevic's palace -- Tito's old residence -- was hit? We think Slatko went to Slovenia and Tilda to Croatia when these republics broke away from Yugoslavia.

L'envoi, June 1965

The PAN-AM flight to New York was uneventful. Poor Pupsi and Mickey were stashed away in the bowels of the plane. Because Miş was a kitten she was allowed to be with us. I held her in my lap for most of the trip. During the long hours on the plane I had time to think about our past life -- we probably would not be assigned to an overseas post again. I've often wondered if the children would have felt more secure if they had grown up totally in America, where they could have developed roots. It is very hard on children to change schools and to make new friends every few years. Some adjust more quickly than others, but Foreign Service life can be difficult beyond its rewards. However, the children, I think, have no regrets and feel they learned a lot and experienced many unique adventures, despite some drawbacks. Of course, growing up in the United States can have its problems too. I hope the children remember the best of times.

Indeed, this did turn out to be our final foreign post, though Robert would have several more years in the State Department before retiring. As we flew over the Atlantic, I had plenty of time to think about the various foreign posts we had enjoyed. We often are asked which of the five we preferred. There is no simple answer. Each had its own attractions. All had their learning experiences and surprises.

Bucharest, Romania, our first post in the late forties, was certainly the most dramatic. The culture of Eastern Europe brought many surprises. After the war, Romania had become part of the Soviet Communist bloc in Eastern Europe. Living behind the Iron Curtain in a hostile police state was a unique experience few Americans have had. Because of our isolation, the members of the diplomatic community became one big family. This made for a camaraderie we would never experience at another post. As a result, we made closer friends, both American and foreign, than at any other Foreign Service post. For Robert, it was professionally frustrating, but all in all a unique and fascinating experience.

Paris in the late forties and early fifties was of course the most civilized and culturally attractive of all our posts. Although still recovering from the War, its previous glory was returning. The city had not been bombed. The beautiful buildings and avenues were still

intact. In spring, the marroniers (horse chestnut trees) were in full bloom along the Champs Elysées. After living in the Communist world, we could better appreciate the freedom of the West. We were free to travel throughout the rest of Western Europe. In our day, life in Paris was still quite cheap. We were young and enjoyed the luxury of great restaurants and good living. Just walking along the streets of the Left Bank to browse among the antique stores or dropping into a famous museum, gave me great pleasure. However, the French were difficult to know well. We made very few permanent friends. Actually, our closest French friends were those we met at other posts. David was born here at the American Hospital. I received congratulations from the Mayor of Neuilly. Professionally, it involved Robert in many interesting aspects of the French economy and political system. It was a very happy period in our lives. The future held much promise.

Washington in 1953 was a year of great confusion and disappointment. The excellent assignment Robert had expected fell through owing to a change in administration and -- indirectly -- to the McCarthy red-baiting of the era. We were hardly settled when we were transferred to Australia. It was a difficult and upsetting period.

Sydney, Australia, in the early fifties, was, after Paris, a quiet post professionally and socially. Robert's job was not too demanding, but he gave it much energy and creativity - - he was rewarded with a promotion. Before the days of jet aircraft, Australia seemed indeed at the end of the world -- we felt rather isolated from events in the United States and Europe. Asia was still a basket case after the war. However, we saw the beginnings of Australia's development into the leading state it is today. Contrasted with the situation in other posts, we felt the Aussies really liked Americans. We had been allies in the war - - the Australians had always felt we had saved them from a Japanese invasion. We made lifelong friends with some Australians. We lived much as we would have in America. The similarities of Australia and America life were great. Schools were excellent and the doctors top-notch. The children had complete freedom to do as they liked. We had the fun of owning a boat -- the Kangaroo, moored beyond our garden wall. The children certainly were the happiest here -- so were the cats. The children and I wished we could have stayed longer, but Robert wanted to be where the action was. I told a friend that I hoped one of the children would marry an Australian, so we could come back.

Bangkok, Thailand, in the late fifties, was of course exotic. It was our introduction to the Orient, a new and fascinating world, historically and culturally. I had always had an interest in Oriental art, beginning with courses I'd taken at Harvard. It was a great chance to learn much more about that art. It would be the last post to be together as a family. We were able to take fascinating trips to Singapore, Malaysia, and India. Also stationed with us were our oldest friends from our Bucharest days, Coy and John Hill, and the Austrians, Connie and Arno Halusa. We shared many adventures. Robert had a very responsible and interesting job, and looked forward to an important assignment on his return to Washington.

Washington 1958-1963 had its ups and downs. At the start, Robert worked very long hours on Southeast Asian affairs -- the stress caused a serious illness that hampered his

work in his first year at the Department. He eventually did extremely well at the job and received an important promotion. The children were happy enough to be in American schools, although they found problems adjusting to American culture. The arrival of TV was a new wonderful experience for us all. However, I was glad when the time came for an overseas assignment.

Belgrade, Yugoslavia, in the early sixties was our last foreign post. It was a contrast to the democratic countries we had enjoyed since 1949. For us, it was a kind of closing of the loop -- we had started our career in Communist Romania. Because Yugoslavia had broken with the Soviets, it was not as isolated as Bucharest, or as blatantly Communist, but we always knew we were in a totalitarian state. While Tito did much to unify Yugoslavia, he did not create a system that survived him. This caused the eventual breakup of the country and finally war in the nineties. We made few friends among the Yugoslavs, seeing them only on an official basis. Some Western culture, such as the theater, was beginning to penetrate. On our travels to every corner of the country, we learned of the many cultural differences of each Republic. Thus we can understand many of the reasons for the present problems of Yugoslavia. It was the first time we were separated from our children for long periods -- but we did have some happy times together on our trips to England and Greece. We were in Belgrade when that shocking news of President Kennedy's assassination hit the airwaves. As we left, we felt sad that we would never live abroad again. But life goes on. Robert did not retire from the Foreign Service until 1970. Then he took on the Presidency of Meridian House International.

Around the World in 50 Days -- 1969

We had one final overseas adventure before Robert retired. Robert went to Southeast Asia on a mission to inspect a special AID operation; its purpose was to help eight area countries expand cooperation in the region. I came along at our expense. Manila, the Philippines, was the first stop. We stayed with Foreign Service friends. The chief focus there was the International Rice Institute -- it had developed a new breed of rice that would increase world production -- we made several trips to other parts of the island. Manila was and still is a sprawling, crime-ridden city. Our friends all had to live in guarded compounds. I found the Philippines the least interesting country of the Orient.

Taipei

Taipei, Taiwan, was our next stop. Again we stayed with friends -- one bonus of Foreign Service life. The National Museum of Chinese Art in Taipei was for me one of the highlights of our trip. The Kuomintang had built it to contain the artifacts smuggled out of China after their defeat by the communists. Our friend Dr. Han, the Chinese Ambassador to Thailand, had been the Kuomintang Minister of Culture and was responsible for smuggling the art down the Imperial Canal and across to Taiwan. Unfortunately, it did not include the famous "Flying Horse," which is still in Peking.

Bangkok

Bangkok was the center of the operation Robert was inspecting. We spent three weeks there. A big surprise was the radical changes in only eleven years: first -- the new airport and its four-lane highway to the city; they filled in the klongs. Traffic was awful -- smog blotted out the sun. We stayed at the Erawan Hotel, two blocks from our old house. We had seen it built, the newest hotel in town -- it had already become a little shabby -- newer and grander hotels had been built. The old Oriental Hotel on the river had lost its personality -- it had been turned into a four-star high-rise international monstrosity with three dining rooms and thousand-dollar suites. Interior decorators had a field day there, but I preferred the old rattan furniture, dining on the open terrace, and watching life on the river.

The first day there, I walked down Rajadamri to see our old house. The klong had been filled in and shops had been built. I held my breath as I approached the house. There was something strange about it. Our porch with my temple bells was gone -- it had been glassed in. Later we were invited for drinks. It was our house but -- like a dream -- it wasn't. When we entered the driveway I expected Bernadine to jump up to greet us and to just walk in the front door, but no -- we had to ring the bell. Someone strange, not Locka, opened the door. Gone were the ceiling fans -- the windows were glassed in. The first floor was air-conditioned. The living room now opened onto a glassed-in porch. There was strange furniture. It certainly was no longer our home! Years later, when Francie visited Bangkok on business, she saw that huge apartments were built where our house once stood. Oh dear!

I found many changes in the city, none for the better. The temples behind their walls were the same, but now there were high-rises; the many little shops I had known were gone. I did find my old German jeweler and had him copy my favorite gold and emerald earrings with a matching ring. The International School behind our house -- where Cutie Pie had sat under Polly's desk -- had been moved out to the Bankapi suburb. I heard that drugs were a problem among the students. Much of the charm of the city was lost when the klongs were filled in. The traffic was horrific -- I did not like Bangkok in its present form! At dinner one night with a young Embassy couple, the wife enthusiastically spouted, "Isn't Bangkok the most exciting and beautiful city you've ever seen?" I smiled, kept my mouth shut, and thought to myself that she should have known it in our day. I had the identical conversation in 1956. My host had replied that Bangkok was no longer the beautiful city of the thirties.

It was sad to visit Jim Thompson's house, now a museum. I knew it only from his book; he'd given a copy, endorsed to me, to Robert in 1965; it was a year before he was murdered. The dining room was a copy of the one in his original house -- the same King Chulalongkorn's gaming table and six chairs -- we had dined on them so often. I could smell the Thai curry. As I walked through the house, recognizing the furniture and paintings, I could hear Jim say, "Isn't this sensational!"

Chiengmai

While Robert visited Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam, I took a few trips with my friend Rachael. We traveled on the Air Attaché's plane, delivering the diplomatic pouch to the consulate in Chiangmai; it's in the far north on the Burmese and Chinese borders. We visited all the *wats* in the surrounding area. They were older and different from those in Bangkok. At a lacquer factory, I bought a lovely red bowl. We had no time to visit the teak forests to see the elephants moving teak logs. In this century that industry is finished -- the poor elephants are on their own -- a few even roam the streets of Bangkok looking for food. Chiangmai was a quiet remote town -- still an outpost of civilization. In the streets we saw a few of the mountain tribes dressed in native costume. Life there was not much affected by modernization. Of course it was, and still is, a center of the opium trade. Another trip with Rachael and her children was a drive south to one of the beaches on the Gulf of Siam -- then not yet a tourist hangout. I'm glad I saw Thailand once more, but have no desire to return. I want to remember it as it was in the mid-fifties.

Malay Peninsula

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and Singapore were Robert's next destinations. There were surprising changes in both cities. Huge skyscrapers pierced the skylines; in Singapore, only a few of the old Chinese buildings were left. Like Hong Kong, it had become an international city -- much of its old charm had gone. Glittering new hotels now swamped the famous old Raffles Hotel. I'll have to admit we did enjoy the open-air restaurants on the roofs of skyscrapers in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore -- the view was sensational.

Indonesia

Jakarta, Indonesia, was our last stop. We stayed with the Lydmans, friends from Bangkok days. When we entered the living room we were surprised that its floor was covered by Chinese pots, dishes, plates, bowls, teapots, etc. Jack explained that a *toukan* had just been there; he came often to sell pottery. Jack was a collector of old Chinese blue and white and celadon export pottery. After breakfast the next morning the ragged *toukan* arrived with a sack of pottery on his back; he unwrapped the pieces, adding to the display on the floor. He squatted on his haunches and bargained with Jack in broken English. Jack was and is a connoisseur -- he chose only the best museum quality. He kept his collection in his house in Georgetown for many years -- then gave it to the Los Angeles Museum of Art. I couldn't afford to purchase an important piece, much less carry it with us on the long journey home; but I did acquire a few little pieces displayed on the glass shelves and one nice blue and white dish that's on the coffee table.

We flew to New Delhi, India, for a few days' sightseeing; then went on to Kanpur, a large city on the Ganges, to visit Gil and Daisy Oakley. Under the auspices of M.I.T., Gil was supervising the development of one of three Indian Technological Institutes. The Oakleys had become close to the local Indian community. They gave a party for us, with plenty of curry. Indian curry is excellent -- but quite different from Thai curry. We met some interesting Indian intellectuals -- a pleasant change from officials or diplomats. The

Oakleys drove us to the Ganges to see its river life, with the dhows sailing by.

Iran

We traveled home via Europe; on the way we stopped off in Teheran, Iran; we stayed with the Chargé and his wife. They showed us the sights of the city, including the great collection of the Shah's jewels at the Central Bank. These equaled -- perhaps surpassed -- the Crown Jewels of Britain in the Tower of London. To see Persepolis, the great site of ancient Persia, we flew to Shiraz, 500 miles south of Teheran. Persepolis contains the tombs of the Achaemenid Kings. I had to think back some thirty years to my ancient history class at Holton! These kings ruled for 150 years at the height of the Persian Empire in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. The greatest of the kings were Cyrus the Great, Darius I and Xerxes. At its height, the Empire covered most of the Near East and Egypt. Persepolis was the capital. In the fourth century B.C., Alexander the Great of Macedonia overthrew the Persian Empire and ransacked Persepolis.

Persepolis

From the airport we drove thirty miles through the desert (in its day it was a fertile valley) to the ruins. There were few other visitors. In their present desert setting the ruins of Persepolis are remarkable. The extensive remains of Darius's Apadana Palace and other buildings are built on a large terrace, approached by a flight of steps. A few of the very tall columns are still standing. There was one hall, now in ruins, of 100 columns. Everywhere we walked, we were amazed by examples of magnificent bas-reliefs depicting the ancient kings with their curly hair and beards. They were shown accepting homage from their subjects and fighting their enemies. Large double-headed real and mythical animal heads stood on the ground -- I don't know their archaeological function, maybe as capitals on the columns. One huge gate showed a colossal lion-type animal sculptured on each side. On the side of a ceremonial stairway was the famous bas-relief of a lion attacking a unicorn. I remember it from my history of art class. There were no guides to explain these marvels. Beyond Persepolis were the tombs of other kings buried in the high perpendicular cliffs. They were marked by oversize bas-reliefs of the king receiving homage or charging a foe. We were lucky to have seen these great ruins.

Isfahan

We then flew north to Isfahan and spent a few days. We stayed at the Shah Abbas Hotel; it was named for Shah Abbas, who made Isfahan his capital in the seventeenth century. Under him Isfahan became one of the world's largest and most beautiful cities. It contained over 160 mosques and 50 colleges. Our hotel was once part of the neighboring mosque. In our walks around the city, we saw great examples of Moslem architecture. Many of the old mosques had been renovated. The dome, minaret, and facade of the Masjid I Shah mosque, built in 1616, are tiled in turquoise and other blues in intricate geometric Persian designs. Water was very important in Persian culture -- pools, large and small, were part of any building complex. Bushes of pink roses grew everywhere. I photographed an Iranian family standing before the large pool reflecting the Chehel

Sotoun Palace, built in 1647. The women wore long black abayas and headscarves -- their faces were uncovered. The children looked like all children. In the center of the city was the original polo field -- a sport favored by the Persians. On its western side the beautiful original grandstand still stood, its roof supported by tall thin columns. We bought a few typical Persian miniature paintings; they now hang on our bedroom wall.

Then we had the longest taxi ride of our lives!! We expected to fly back to Teheran and catch our onward flight the following day. A terrible sandstorm made flying impossible; our only option was to take a taxi for the 250-mile trip. We shared the taxi with an Australian couple. What a ride!! We could not communicate with the driver -- we were totally in his hands. Our two-lane road followed the edge of the desert -- the villages were few and far between. We were the only car on the road. The sand blew so hard at times that we had to pull off the road and wait for better visibility. It made a strange hissing noise when it bombarded the car. Even with the windows shut, we were munching sand. Terrible downpours turned the sand into slippery mud; winds almost blew us off the road; flash floods almost drowned the car. (I hadn't known it rained in the desert!) Camels would have hated this weather! As darkness fell, we could see a distant light high in the sky. As we approached, we saw it came from the minaret of a mosque in the distant city of Qum. In the olden days the lights of the minarets, like lighthouses, directed the camel caravans crossing the desert. We arrived at Teheran around three o'clock in the morning. Our plane left Teheran early the next morning; at the airport, we bought a kilo of the best fresh caviar, and added a bit to the scrambled eggs we were served on board.

We were lucky to have had this visit to Iran. A few years later, an Iranian mob invaded the Embassy, and took its members hostage. The Shah was exiled and the Ayatollahs took over. We cut off diplomatic relations, and still have none with Iran.

Our priceless caviar was kept in the plane's fridge for the long trip to Paris. There we spent a few days, staying at our favorite hotel, Le Ministère. Our old boxer friends greeted us, wagging their tails. It was a joy to see Paris again; we visited our old haunts; the Villa Madrid house was still the same -- it was hard not to ring the bell, hoping Auguste would answer. We were next to fly to London; on the way to the airport, we suddenly remembered the caviar was still in the hotel fridge! We turned around, went back, rescued the caviar, and caught the next flight. In London we stayed at the friendly Basil Street Hotel. We shared the famous caviar with Stan Cleveland and his new wife.

China 1975

The opening to China

In 1971 Robert and I had dinner one evening with our old friends, Marlene and Larry Eagleburger. Larry was then Special Assistant to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. The phone rang during dinner. On returning to the table Larry commented only that, "Henry is in Pakistan." What he didn't say was that Kissinger, accompanied by two of our State Department friends, was on his way to Peking. His famous secret visit was to pave the way for the Nixon February 1972 trip to China. At that time Nixon opened the way for

diplomatic relations with China -- he signed the Shanghai Communiqué covering the new relationship. At first, there would not be embassies -- only liaison offices. George Bush became the first head of the U. S. Liaison Office in Beijing. China also opened its Liaison Office in Washington.

To symbolize the new relationship a team of acrobats from Shenyang, a city in northern China, visited Washington in the fall of 1973, and performed at the Kennedy Center. The State Department asked Meridian House to provide hospitality for the acrobats. Meridian organized a welcoming group at Dulles Airport. There was much excitement at the arrival of the Chinese. First came the troupe's leaders, followed by the fifteen or so acrobats -- young girls and men -- walking in single file. All were dressed in the typical gray Mao suit -- each carried a small teapot. They must have had Chinese tea in their luggage. They stayed at a downtown hotel, and the Yenching Palace Restaurant on Connecticut Avenue catered their food. Ironically, the Yenching's owners were pro-Taiwan -- but there was no alternative if our Chinese guests wanted to eat.

Meridian House provided its hospitality volunteers to escort the guests for sightseeing around Washington. Few volunteers spoke Chinese -- the State Department supplied interpreters. At a Meridian reception, the Chinese arrived -- spruced up in their gray Mao suits. There were a few interpreters -- but general communication was nonexistent. Smiles and bows was the order of the day. Several acrobats had startled expressions on their faces -- probably wondering where in the world they were! But when each met an American, he or she smiled broadly, and dug a piece of paper out of his pocket. On the paper was written in English a saying of Chairman Mao. Each carried Mao's little red book. The acrobats were young and charming. I collected many sayings that evening -- Mao was well represented.

The high point of the visit was their Kennedy Center performance. When I had thought of acrobats, I remembered the high trapeze acts at the circus. The Chinese acts were different. They showed their great skills by magnificent and amazing calisthenics, tumbling, and balancing acts. For one act an acrobat rode a bicycle around and around the stage. One by one an acrobat jumped up on the shoulders of another to form a pyramid of more than ten people on the bike. In another, they made a tower of ten chairs -- each balancing on the one below. When the last chair was added -- high above the stage -- one of the acrobats held himself on one arm -- his legs and head stretched horizontally. There were many other acts of great beauty and color with the flowing of colored streamers. The acts were accompanied by the first typical twangy Chinese music we had ever heard. In the final act the whole troupe twirled plates on the top of tall bamboo sticks. The evening closed with a marvelously amusing performance of three large comic lions. Two men operated each beast while hidden under the lion's red and yellow shaggy costume. The one in back were the hind legs and the other in front controlled the front legs and the grinning head. They pranced around the stage, stood on huge balls, rolling them across the stage, held a mock battle, rolled over and over, all to the clanging of symbols -- they brought the house down!

An exciting invitation

One afternoon the following January, the phone rang. Robert asked me -- "How would you like to go to China?" I gasped in surprise! Robert said that Han Xu, then the DCM of the Chinese Liaison Office had phoned him with an official invitation for Meridian to send a delegation of about twenty to visit China in April. The limit was twenty -- the tourists plus guides would fill a Chinese bus. *Luxinshe*, the Chinese government travel bureau, would be our escorts. There was great excitement at this news. We would be the first American tourists to China since 1950. Robert proceeded to organize the group; Meridian Trustees would have first choice; other friends of Meridian would make up the balance. We were a very congenial group. The Chinese visa in our passports looked most enticing! I'm writing about these adventures after over twenty-five years -- using my notes and photographs to jog my memory.

A long trip

On our departure date we assembled -- very excited -- at Dulles airport in the early morning. We were to fly to Chicago -- then straight through to Tokyo -- stop a few days - - then on to Hong Kong. After three days there we would enter China. At 8 a. m. -- instead of a departure announcement -- came the words over the loud speaker, "An out of season ice storm has hit Chicago's O'Hare airport -- no planes can fly out or in. Wait for further announcements". This was exasperating -- our bubble of great expectancy had burst! In mid afternoon came encouraging news. Another plane would fly us to Milwaukee, Wisconsin; from there we would be bused to O'Hare airport. There we would wait for a runway to be freed of ice and sixteen inches of snow. Happily we got many free drinks on the whole trip. We finally took off from Chicago for Japan at 10:30 PM. Our flight all the way to Tokyo was in total darkness. We followed the moon across the Pacific -- the longest night we had ever experienced!

It was twenty years since we'd been in Tokyo on our way to Bangkok -- but the first time in April. We had hit cherry blossom season. Anyplace a tree could grow, a cherry tree was blossoming -- a sight far more magical than the cherry trees around the Tidal Basin in Washington. Friends took us to lunch at the *Happo-en* restaurant. Our table looked out on a large landscaped garden of pine and cherry trees and small ponds. Here many bridal parties came for their wedding photos. We watched each bride being photographed in traditional dress, wearing beautiful kimonos and exotic headdresses. We knew we were in the Orient for sure -- especially by the food. I'm not crazy about Japanese fare, too fishy and certainly not raw fish!

Hong Kong

Next -- Hong Kong. Since our first visit in 1956, Hong Kong had become a modern city of skyscrapers and high-rise apartment houses. It was no longer the exciting exotic Oriental city below the "Peak" that we first knew. By 1975 it had become just another great international city. We stayed on the fifteenth floor of the Kowloon Sheraton, looking down on the grand old Peninsula Hotel. The streets were still filled with

swarming masses of people, but gone were the coolie-pulled rickshaws. Many more houses covered the hillsides. Fewer sampans and junks sailed in the bay. But the old green ferries still operated. A new tunnel under the bay crossed to Hong Kong. But flying into Hong Kong was still scary. The plane had to dip its wings sideways to slide between two hills to land on the short runway. Since then a huge modern airport has been built on reclaimed land. This time I did not do much shopping, but I did buy a pair of jade and gold earrings. We had been advised to dress modestly -- so I buried my new earrings deep in my handbag. I wore no jewelry in China. Our last night in Hong Kong we dined with the U. S. Consul General, Chuck Cross and his wife at the handsome residence part way up the winding road to the Peak. At night, the view of the shimmering lights of Hong Kong and Kowloon was still magical. In the distance to the west -- beyond the mountains -- mysterious China awaited us.

Brief history

After 3000 years of dynasties, internal weaknesses, and foreign intervention -- in 1912, led by the Kuomintang party, China became a Republic. In 1928 the party split -- the Communists under Mao Zedong seceded. In 1937 the Japanese invaded -- the ensuing Sino-Japanese war ended in 1945 with the Allied victory in World War II. In 1949, after the Communists won their struggle against the Kuomintang -- Chairman Mao proclaimed the Peoples Republic of China -- the Kuomintang under Chiang Kai-shek moved to Taiwan where they created the independent Republic of China. We broke diplomatic relations with Communist China and recognized Taiwan. To this day the question of “the two Chinas” continues to be an issue between the US and China.

A walk across the bridge to China

”Welcome Friends From Around the World” -- Mao

The great day arrived -- At 7 a.m. we climbed aboard the train in Kowloon for the one-hour trip to Lo Wu, on the border between the New Territories and China. Lo Wu is on the bank of the small Shun Chun River that marks the border. The train track through rice fields followed the pipelines that bring water to Hong Kong from China. The Chinese could cut off the water supply at will. At Lo Wu we left the train -- after exit formalities, walked with our hand luggage over the bridge to Shun Chun, the Chinese port of entry. Chinese border guards checked our passports -- We were really in China, the first American tourists in twenty-five years!

“Long Live the Great Unity of the Peoples of the World” -- Mao

We entered a brand-new and imposing railway station. On a huge red billboard we saw the first of many such boards that show Mao’s sayings. We would see these immense propaganda signs all over China, as well as billboards depicting happy smiling peasants, workers, and soldiers. We walked through a gateway decorated with more Mao sayings, and were met by three smiling Chinese escorts -- Zhu Bao Chen, a senior official of *Luxinshe* -- Mrs. Wu, on her first job as an interpreter-escort -- and Ling Li (Happy

Swallow) a young girl wearing a pigtail. The pigtail showed she was not married. The three would be our hosts and would be with us all through China. Local guides would join us in each city we visited. With our escorts we would fill the bus. Bao Chen was quite relaxed -- he greeted us -- "Dear friends from the United States -- welcome!" Mrs. Wu was very nervous. At the end of any briefing she would add, "Any criticism, please?"--Self-criticism was part of the Communist mantra. She rarely smiled and said little of her personal life. She was a pretty woman, and would take off her glasses when photographed -- this amused us -- Mao was very outspoken against personal vanity. Ling Li was "learning on the job". Bao Chen had a sense of humor and an infectious giggle. He taught us Revolutionary songs to sing on our long bus or train trips. His English was perfect -- he kept a little black book in which he wrote down slang expressions he heard. It became a game for us to teach him as much slang as we could. His favorite expression was "move it." He said little about his personal life, except that he was married with two children. He always gave the Communist Party line, although we felt that it was mainly lip service. He was to become our lifelong friend.

Our first briefing

We were ushered into a sort of salon -- we were seated in large overstuffed chairs with antimacassars. In front of us were small tables holding covered mugs of hot jasmine tea. This was our first briefing -- Bao Chen described the general plan of our trip. He wound up by giving us a few "facts" about China -- there were no beggars -- everyone was employed -- tipping was forbidden -- punctuality was insisted upon -- i.e., we must never keep the bus waiting -- strict honesty was a maxim. We would see examples of this later on the trip. We then had our first lunch, seated at two large round tables. There were no forks or knives -- we had to master chopsticks. Many plates of food were placed on a lazy Susan in the center of the table. With our new chopsticks we tried to help ourselves -- doing our best not to spill. To our surprise, we soon found out that the food in Mainland China was very different from -- and better than Chinese restaurant food in America. Chop Suey did not exist. Sometimes we did wonder what animal produced the meat we ate -- was it dog? At this lunch and future meals we were served with fruit drinks and excellent beer. We called it "no name beer" -- we could not read the Chinese label.

Kwangchow

After lunch we boarded a train for a two and a half hour trip to Kwangchow, formerly Canton. Along the way we passed flooded rice paddies -- the new green stalks showing above the water. Some peasants jogged along with baskets dangling from shoulder yokes. Water buffaloes wallowed in the muddy canals. Darker green mountains were in sight. We were traveling along the valley of the Pearl River. Over the years many Chinese tried to escape to Hong Kong by swimming down the river at night. Most didn't make it. Our coach was obviously outfitted for VIPs -- comfortable blue double seats faced each other -- each had its lace antimacassar. The windows were curtained by blue draperies and white lace under-curtains. Covered mugs of hot tea were served. A young girl with a pigtail, carrying a steaming brass kettle, passed up and down the aisle to refill the mugs. From the Kwangchow station a bus took us to the Tung Fang Hotel -- not a Hilton --

rather shabby but perfectly satisfactory. In its lobby was a huge photo of Chairman Mao standing in a rice paddy. After dinner, Bao Chen -- the slang lover -- suggested we should "hit the hay!" In the bedroom -- as at all hotels -- were two lidded mugs, a large thermos for hot water, and a box of tea. On the desk was a bottle of ink and a pen with a steel nib - - like those I'd used as a child -- but no paper! Our great adventure was about to begin. We had little idea of what was in store for us. We went to bed with great expectations.

Our group didn't know much about China -- we were unable to ask penetrating questions. Besides, we didn't want to appear hostile or critical. For the next twenty days we would be totally immersed in Chinese life. We became totally unaware of the outside world -- with no news from a newspaper, radio, or TV -- the West did not exist. We were kept so busy we had no time to even think of our own world. We traveled to the countryside and to the cities of Kwangchow, Shanghai, Soochow, Nanking, and Peking. Wherever we went we were surrounded by hordes of smiling curious people. The Chinese officials wore Mao suits and caps and carried Mao's little red book of his sayings, small enough to fit into the jacket's breast pocket.

"Two Mountains--Imperialism and Feudalism--are no Longer" -- Mao

The Chinese Government's purpose in providing our trip was to educate us about the new China. They seemed to want to show that China had become a great nation as a result of the Cultural Revolution under Mao's rule. They would often compare the present to the "Bitter Past" -- the bad old days under the warlords. By reeducating the people, the whole country was now (they said) in tune with Mao's thought. The elite intellectual classes had been eradicated, or at least changed for the better, by made to work in the fields and factories along with the peasants and workers. Everyone was equal. Schools and Universities had been revamped to educate the people in Communist doctrine -- "*Education is to serve the Peasants, Workers, and Soldiers.*" At one point, the universities had been shut down. We would see examples of what had happened to them.

Chairman Mao's sayings were omnipresent wherever we went -- either by the huge billboards posted everywhere -- or in the Communist mantra in the briefings. Most often quoted was, "*Emulate Tachai*", a remote village in the mountains -- there, a great engineering irrigation project had been completed -- almost entirely by hand labor -- it reversed the flow of a river through a mountain tunnel to irrigate the arid land on the other side. Another slogan was "*Production by Self Reliance -- the Pride of the Chinese People*". The Chinese built the long railway bridge over the Yangtze River at Nanking by "Self Reliance" -- without help from the outside world. Photos of the bridge appeared on match-boxes, tea mugs, tapestries, rugs, wall posters, and postage stamps. Also seen everywhere were references to Taiwan -- "*All Taiwanese are Brothers*" or "*Taiwan and China are United*". This sensitive subject is still with us.

We were on a learning mission -- we were to be "reeducated" too! I have used the sayings of Mao to illustrate how they applied to each type of activity or enterprise we visited. We kept our anti-communism thoughts to ourselves.

A farming commune

“Women Hold Up Half the Sky” -- Mao

Briefings become the ritual of every visit to any enterprise -- factory, hospital, school, museum, etc. The “Revolutionary Committee” would escort us around the premises -- then we were briefed by the “Responsible Member” -- the Communist expression for the boss of the enterprise. We would sip green tea as our interpreters did the translation. Our visit to the Tali Farming Commune in Kengtung Province was to show how the life of the peasants had improved under Communism. Tali was a self-contained community of about sixty-five thousand people. The community included schools, hospitals, and factories for farm equipment, repair shops and some light industry. Rice was the chief crop. We first visited a kindergarten -- each child wore a red pinafore with his number on it. They sang for us, calling us, “Aunties and Uncles”. We saw gardens where medicinal herbs for Chinese traditional medicine were grown. We were told about the “barefoot doctors”. The peasants are given a three-month course in medicine and then return to the countryside to work as paramedics. We visited a community center intended for social events -- but actually used mainly by groups receiving indoctrination on political ideology. Mrs. Wu was stunned to hear we had no such groups in America. Finally we visited a home -- a small whitewashed one-room house proudly exhibited by the smiling lady of the house. The entire family slept here -- their beds in alcoves around the room. On each bed was a neatly folded red stuffed counterpane. The housewife would cook the family’s meals on a primitive stove over coal briquettes using large iron pots and woks. The family owned a radio, a sewing machine, and a clock. Two bare light bulbs hung from the ceiling. Bathing facilities were communal. On the white washed walls were posters of scenes from revolutionary operas and ballets. In the place of honor was a large photo of Chairman Mao. He replaced the past traditional ancestor worship that was no longer permitted in China. The family now owned their house. Our hostess described the “*life of the bitter past*” under the subjugation of evil landlords. Women were considered inferior to men -- now women were liberated -- “*A Housewife is Minister of Household Affairs*” -- thanks to Mao. Women are equal to men and entitled to education and medical care -- they hold up “half the sky”.

A working neighborhood

“Work is Glorious” -- Mao

In Shanghai we visited the *Feng cheng* neighborhood -- a worker’s housing community. We walked along narrow cobblestone streets -- lines of smiling, clapping people and children nearly swamped us. Here the story was the same as at the farming commune. We were taken to another whitewashed house where another smiling woman gave us the same litany that the farmer’s wife had given. The Cultural Revolution was a success!

Factory visits

“To Increase Productivity, You Raise Political Consciousness” -- Mao

In each city we visited a factory. In *Shanghai* it was a truck factory. The “Revolutionary Committee” of the enterprise met us -- they proudly showed us some monstrous tanks and huge equipment. We then entered the briefing room, and were served the usual jasmine tea in lidded cups, as “the Responsible Member” briefed us. It was always the same communist litany -- changed to fit the situation. In *Nanking* we visited a needlepoint factory -- there, they made huge tapestries of revolutionary themes -- for example, happy workers at a blast furnace pouring molten iron. All canvases depicted smiling peasants, workers, and minorities -- “*Emulate Minorities who Protect our Borders*,” and of course, “*The Helmsman*”, Chairman Mao. “*Sailing the Seas Depends on the Helmsman*” -- “*Only the Helmsman Can Guide You*”. I took a photo of Robert standing next to the huge needlepoint tapestry of Chairman Mao. Robert thinks he’s my helmsman!

The Municipal Children’s Palace

“All Art Must Serve the Masses” -- Mao

In Shanghai we visited the Municipal Children’s Palace, a large turn-of-the-century mansion, once home of a “Foreign Devil”, an Englishman! In the “bad old days” he even had a tennis court where he forced young boys to pick up his balls! Now children were liberated from such wickedness. The Palace is now a center where talented children were taught the arts. We saw children practicing on Chinese instruments. At a piano a girl was playing a song, “The Sparkling Red Star”. Three young boys were playing a Mozart trio on violins -- justified by Mao -- “*Take what’s good from the West and adapt it to China*”. There were also classes in ping-pong, martial arts, and painting. We watched a boy painting a line of marching soldiers -- we wondered if he could paint anything that didn’t depict a revolutionary theme. Here, were classes to teach Chinese opera, very different from Western opera. We watched ballet students practicing at the bar -- none of the traditional ballets -- the stories always followed revolutionary themes. We also visited various classes in “productive work” such as testing fertilizer -- work being equal to education. At our briefing some children served us tea and then joined us to answer questions. We were careful about our questions -- we didn’t want to challenge them..

The children

“Mao Loves Children” -- Mao

All children are cute -- but nothing can equal the little Chinese with their bobbed black hair and smiling faces -- all wearing brightly colored clothes. We found them enticing. In every city we saw lines of children marching down the street -- often singing -- the leader carrying a red flag. Some young people wore red scarves around their necks denoting they had joined the Communist Party.

“Education Must Serve Proletarian Politics and be Combined with Proletarian Labor” -- Mao

The Feng Cheng Kindergarten

“Learn to Dispense Love and Kindness” -- Mao

Schools interested all of us the most. As we arrived, the children would line up to welcome “Aunties and Uncles”, smiling broadly and clapping their hands -- Chairman Mao says, “*Welcome Friends from around the World*”. At the Feng cheng kindergarten we watched song and dance performances by children. In the first one, the children were dressed in minority costumes and sang, “*Minorities Love Chairman Mao*.” In another room a child, dressed as a nurse, sat singing and rocking a swaddled baby doll -- “*Serve the People Wholeheartedly*”. At another class we watched children dance, dressed as ducks, wearing yellow tutus and a duck headdress. There was always one little duck who tried to escape but was brought back to the fold by the duck attendant. Chairman Mao says, “*There must be Discipline*”. When we left the school one little girl took my hand, calling me Auntie, and walked me to our bus.

A Shanghai middle school

“Children United Learn to be New Masters of New China” -- Mao

At a middle school we visited several classes. Most young people wore red scarves around their necks. They used abacuses in math classes. Russian and English were being taught as foreign languages. In an English class the kids were learning by rote the Soviet *Internationale*, written on the blackboard, “*Arise you prisoners of starvation, Arise you wretched of the earth, For justice thunders condemnation, A better world in birth.....*”. As at all schools manual labor classes were held, “*Manual Labor is Productive Work*”. At one class, the children were boxing light bulbs for a flashlight factory.

The Nanjing University

“Education must be Revolutionalized” -- Mao

Our greatest surprise came at Nanking University. The poker-faced Chancellor addressed us through an interpreter, defending the teaching of Communism to University students. At the end, Robert asked where had he been educated. The interpreter responded, “The University of Illinois”. Well, well! Robert said, “I went there too”. This broke the ice. The Chancellor smiled for the first time and started talking in excellent English. It was not the place to ask him his opinions on the Cultural Revolution.

Ancient art

“Take the Best from the Past” -- Mao

“Archaeology is an Acceptable Science” -- Mao

Museums were included at every city. Though poorly displayed -- and with only Chinese labels, we saw some great examples of ancient art. I particularly appreciated this -- thanks to a Chinese art course at Radcliffe given by a Chinese art expert, Dr. Warner. In the early thirties, he had brought from China some magnificent art pieces -- ceramics and paintings -- now on display at the Fogg Museum at Harvard. In Peking we saw the famous "*Flying Horse*." It appeared to be the same as the horse then in the exhibit of Chinese art at the National Gallery in Washington. I wondered, "Which was the copy and which was the original?" Either way, I had seen the original!

Entertainment

"Simple Revolutionary Themes to be Understood by the People" -- Mao

Chinese Opera bears little resemblance to Western opera. It is a spectacle that has come down throughout the Dynasties as part of the Chinese heritage. Many forms of traditional Chinese art tell stories, using music, singing, dancing, mime, and acrobatics. The performers are dressed in magnificent ancient style costumes. Traditional art is acceptable. We had front row seats at a performance -- they cost thirty cents. As they sang, the performers cavorted and pranced around often making fun of the Emperor. This slapstick routine made the audience behind us scream with laughter. The action was performed to the screechy, twangy music of Chinese instruments and bonging cymbals -- we were so close it hurt our ears. At the ballet we saw "*The Red Detachment of Women*", a simply told story of the women heroes during the Communist uprising. The talented dancers had sturdy compact bodies -- not like the typical anorexic dancers of the West. We spent several evenings watching revue groups of dance and songs in praise of Mao. But we enjoyed most of all was another performance by Chinese acrobats and their cavorting lions. Here there was little reference to revolutionary themes save the waving of huge red flags. The performance was sheer joy.

The Seven Star Crag

"The Mountains of Kweilin and the Waters of West Lake of Hangzhou"

This was our introduction to the countryside. Leaving Kwan Chou, our bus drove westward all day through the countryside. When we reached the Pearl River, our bus had to take a rickety raft to cross it. At first we had to wait to pass a line of six loaded boats with tattered, white sails towed by a tug-boat. Near the ferry landing was a large sign, "*In Agriculture, Emulate Tachai*". After driving through miles of flat rice fields, we suddenly saw in the distance the strange pointed mountains of the Seven Star Crag. It was an ancient Tang Dynasty resort, an area of pinnacled limestone mountains similar to those at Kweilin that was not yet open to tourists. This place was a miniature Kweilin. The simple hotel had the traditional upturned tiled roof -- not the ugly Soviet-style hotels of the cities. Robert and I had the bridal suite -- it had a balcony overlooking the steep-sided mountains. Mosquito netting enclosed our bed. We saw the only dog of the trip. I hope he was a pet -- not to be eaten. In the morning we climbed to the top of *Soft Pillow Crag* by way of stone steps cut into the mountainside. At the top was a small pagoda -- from there

we could see the other pinnacles and the lake similar to the West Lake of Hangzhou. That city was then out of bounds because of riots -- when we asked what they were about -- of course, no explanation was given.

Soochow or Su Zhou

“Heaven Above, Soochow Below” -- Tang Dynasty

Of all Chinese cities, *Soochow*, meaning “plentiful water”, is uniquely the most beautiful -- a world of its own in any dynasty. Its long history dates back 514 B.C. Marco Polo, in the thirteenth century, described *Soochow* as a “noble city” -- with its walls and gates, canals and humped back bridges, and its hundreds of gardens. It is situated close to the Imperial Canal, an ancient waterway connecting Northern and Southern China -- excellent for commercial use throughout the centuries and still used today.

The horrors of the Japanese occupation

Soochow is the center of the textile industry -- famous for its silks and embroidery over the dynasties. Marco Polo described the beautiful silk robes worn by the people. We visited a factory to see the processing of silk thread. Silkworms live off of the leaves of the mulberry tree. They wrap themselves in a silk cocoon, like any caterpillar. The cocoons are collected and taken to the factory and placed in boiling water to dissolve the sticky glue. Then the end of a white silk thread is attached to a small spool that spins and unravels it from the cocoon; later the filament is put on large spools. The raw silk then can be dyed and woven.

At following briefing, the “Responsible Member”, a Mrs. Cha, told us of the “bitter past”. The silk factories used child labor in the thirties. She had been six years old when she had begun to work there for twelve hours a day for a pittance. Her family lived on a small boat on a canal -- they never had enough to eat -- and had existed mainly on wild berries. Her sisters were sold into prostitution. But worse, when the Japanese invaded China in the late 1930’s, *Soochow* was occupied, the silk factories were taken over, and many of the leading citizens were thrown into prison. She graphically described the terrors and horrors of occupation, showing us scars where the Japanese had whipped her, and where her hands had been put into boiling water. We were urged to visit the prisons -- they were kept on exhibition to remind people “*of the bitter past*.” At the Embroidery Institute we saw the most beautiful crewel work. Aside from a few wonderful pieces that showed ducks and flowers, most of the tapestries used Revolutionary themes -- the most important being the scene of Mao’s birth place in the mountains.

On one rainy day we visited a lovely abandoned Buddhist temple with sculptures of a thousand Buddhas and many dragons. We thoroughly enjoyed it -- our guides knew nothing about Buddhism -- we were spared the usual communist litany, this time against Buddhism. We had lunch at a two hundred year-old restaurant. There, a wedding party in progress applauded as we entered in our dripping raincoats. The proud couple wore new Mao suits. They were most interested in us, and wanted to talk with us. This was frowned

upon by our guides. We were not supposed to talk with unauthorized Chinese!

Venice of the East

Soochow has been called the Venice of the East, owing to its thousands of canals with picturesque stone humped bridges. We drove over the Imperial Canal -- the water traffic was heavy. Many pagodas dotted the city. We wound our way past the canals and along narrow streets lined with clipped plane trees touching overhead. Often there was laundry drying on bamboo poles strung from a window to a tree branch. The sidewalk ran close to the one or two-story whitewashed houses. We stopped at a small door in a wall, inconspicuous, except for a stone lion sitting on each side. What was behind it? Like Alice in Wonderland, we entered and found ourselves in a magical garden. No grass lawns or flower beds -- as in a British garden -- but a compact miniature Chinese landscape.

The art of Chinese landscaping began here 2,500 years ago. The creation of these gardens goes back throughout the Dynasties. Rich local people, court officials, and the literati retired to *Soochow* to build these gardens as a refuge from worldly distractions. Here, in the quietness and peace of these hidden oases, they could enjoy the pursuit of the intellectual life -- to discuss philosophy, write poems and music, to paint, and to contemplate. Each garden was in competition with the others. However, certain guidelines had to be followed:

1. A house built in classical style with upswept clay tiled roofs and a summer pavilion with galleries. Windows were usually latticed and along with doors could be any geometric design, round, quatrefoil, octagonal or hexagonal--
2. A hillock built with carefully chosen rocks, sometimes covered with vegetation -- or a pile of large boulders representing mountains -- --
3. Water was essential -- irregular shaped ponds filled with lotus flowers and carp -- sometimes a waterfall. (never an artificial fountain) -- --
4. Vegetation arranged in clumps -- bamboo groves, large bonsai trees in clay pots, masses of flowering bushes such as peonies, hydrangeas, and all varieties of fruit trees.

Each garden had its own name -- such as "*Garden of the Lions*", "*Lingering Gardens*", "*Garden of the Fisherman of the Nets*." "*The Humble Administrator Garden*" was created in 1513 by an administrator who felt he had failed at his work. During the Japanese occupation and the Cultural Revolution the gardens fell into disrepair. In 1960 the government confiscated the gardens. At the time of our visit, nine of the original hundreds had been restored to their original magnificence and considered a national treasure. The regime justified the gardens as places for people to relax -- and as a reminder that -- in the past -- the poor labored to make these gardens for the rich -- but

could not enjoy them..

We visited several gardens. The paths of pebbles set in a geometric design, circled around the ponds and hillocks. The old houses were furnished with appropriate antiques. As it was April, the fruit trees, wisteria, and different plants were in bloom. What struck us the most was the quietness and a feeling of security -- a retreat from the outer world -- a return to nature. It was a small corner of China where Mao did not exist -- no propaganda signs -- no briefings. We could have been in the Ming Dynasty. The young people in the gardens were following the patterns of those elderly philosophers of the past. One girl was painting the peonies -- a young man was sitting in the corner of a pavilion veranda reading a book. I hoped it was poetry. That night in bed we could hear the boat noises on the Grand Canal -- the same sounds heard by those erudite men over the Dynasties.

Peking

In 1975 the name Peking had not yet been changed to Beijing. We stayed at the Peking Hotel -- a block from T'ien An Men Square. From our balcony we had a good view of The Great Hall of the People -- in the distance the conical roof of the Temple of Heaven rose above the skyline. Looking below on East Ch'iang An -- one of the main boulevards -- we could see at every intersection the large red billboards of Mao's sayings. Many were familiar, but a new one close to T'ien An Men Square, read, "*People of the Peoples Republic of China Support the Third World vs. Colonialism, Imperialism, Capitalism, and Hegemony.*" Nearby were huge portraits of Marx, Lenin, Engels and Stalin.

The great historical and cultural monuments of the past

We did the usual sightseeing. We spent a day at the Great Wall and the Ming tombs where we walked along the Sacred Way lined by pairs of large carved stone animals, sitting or standing on each side of the road. In Nanking we had also seen an avenue of these Ming animals -- although more crudely carved. Another day we visited the Summer Palace and had lunch at a restaurant with the lovely name, "*Listening to Orioles*".

In the city we visited the Temple of Heaven -- there former Emperors held certain ceremonial events throughout the year -- and the Forbidden City -- also known as the Imperial Palace. Here the Imperial family and its entourage had lived. The common people had been forbidden to enter. When China became a Republic in 1912, and the first Chinese National Day was proclaimed on October 10th -- the Temple of Heaven and the Forbidden City were opened to the general public.

The Forbidden City, as the name implies, is a city in itself, covering a huge area surrounded by high walls and a moat. Within the walls are many ceremonial buildings, the living quarters of the old Imperial family, lakes and parks, and the exclusive residence of Chairman *Mao*. We crossed the marble bridge over the moat to the main gate facing T'ien An Men Square. Above the entrance hung a photo of Mao. Once inside, we walked leisurely through many courtyards connecting the pavilions, ceremonial halls, terraces and other buildings. In one building -- the museum -- we saw the "Flying Horse". We had

the huge area almost to ourselves. We were the only tourists -- only a few Chinese were sharing the wonders of these fabulous sights.

One does wonder -- after visiting the Temple of Heaven and the Forbidden City -- how the present-day Chinese could have built such a pedestrian, ugly hunk of a cement block as the Great Hall of the People. It doesn't even look Chinese -- much more Soviet. Its immense size may impress the general public.

Early morning in Peking

One of my favorite times of day was my six A.M. walk before breakfast through the streets near the Forbidden City. The light was great for photography. Looking south across T'ien An Men Square the view was unbroken as far as the distant ancient gate in the old city wall. The Chinese start the day early. In parks or open spaces men were performing T'ai Chi -- the slow motion exercises -- and reciting poetry, or singing. Children were pushed in bamboo baby carriages. As school began at seven, on a side street young people were rushing to enter the small door in the wall. No one stared at me -- they were used to foreigners. Traffic policemen stood in round boxes in the center of intersections directing traffic -- not the few cars -- but the streams of bicycles. One puts his life at risk crossing streets. An onslaught of hundreds of bicycles would charge by clanging their bells. It was the rush hour. At times marching young people carrying red flags -- going somewhere -- held up traffic. As the morning progressed the sidewalks became jammed with hundreds of people. Flags had been strung across the main avenues in honor of the state visit of the President of North Korea.

“Strict Honesty Must Be Obeyed” -- Mao

Getting up early every morning made me short of sleep. So when we were proudly taken for a ride on the newly constructed subway, the faint rumbling of the wheels put me to sleep. I was abruptly awakened by a loud “move it” by Bao Chen. I rushed to the door and out onto the platform. Suddenly a man ran up to me, holding out my pocketbook. One of the few Chinese words I knew was “*she she*”, thank you! I knew that I shouldn't tip him. Can you imagine this happening in the New York City subway? Another time back in Nanking, Robert threw away a pair of shorts that were torn. The next morning they were returned, washed and the tear neatly sewn up!

Pandas

As in Nanking there were pandas at the Peking Zoo. Their accommodations were rather sad. They sat on concrete slabs -- no water was in their moat. Just as well they didn't know about the very agreeable luxurious quarters of our pandas at Washington's National Zoo. I've read that China is much more panda-conscious nowadays, thank Heaven!

Shopping

“Idle Spending is Bad” -- Mao

In the department stores there were no luxury items -- only the bare essentials -- little selection and poor quality. At the Arts and Craft Institute there were many items for the overseas market -- furniture, Coromandel screens, cloisonné vases, lacquer ware, scroll paintings, even tapestries of non-revolutionary themes, jade and ivory carvings, etc. These objects could be found in the Friendship Stores intended for foreigners. We wondered if their craftsmen minded that these lovely pieces were not for the likes of them. Mao had perhaps taught that only the foreigners -- the evil bourgeoisie -- were consumers of these unnecessary objects -- besides, China needed hard currency. At the Friendship Store we ran into an Albanian group. At that time, China was Albania's only friend in the Communist world; that country actually exported cigarettes to China. We made a shopping trip to the Peking Old Quarter for antiques. Antiques from the last dynasty were on sale at great expense. I settled on the reproduction of a Tang horse now sitting on our living room shelf. We all had *chops* personalized with our names written in Chinese characters on the bottom. My pot of red paste for stamping my signature dried up -- the chops are now just ornaments.

Medicine

“In Medicine Serve the Peasants, Workers, and Soldiers” -- Mao

“Combine Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine” -- Mao

Our agenda included a visit to the Ji-thui-tan Hospital. We were all required to put on long white coats on entering. The Hospital Staff "Revolutionary Committee" was our host. We first went to the nursery to see the newborn babies. A nurse held up a swaddled pair of twins. The Chinese policy only permitted one child per family -- but twins were acceptable! At a demonstration of acupuncture, we saw a young woman with many needles stuck into her -- the treatment for depression. In the trauma ward we stood at the bed of a patient. A tall doctor -- he not spoken till then -- explained through the interpreter that he had performed the operation, the first of its kind. In an industrial accident, this man had completely severed his leg below the knee; the doctor had attached it back on. The doctor, who never spoke to us in English, was a graduate of Harvard Medical School! That made him suspect of being an enemy of the Revolution. However, his skills were needed -- but the Party faithful kept him in the background.

The Peking University

“Theory with Practice” -- Mao

“Education Must throw open the Doors to Peasants, Workers, and Soldiers” -- Mao

“Three in One Combines Political Teaching, Scientific Research, and Production” -- Mao

Early in the century the Rockefeller Foundation made a large contribution to establish the Yenching University for education in English. In 1949, when the Americans left China, it

became the Peking University. It took over the large grounds of a rich landlord -- now in disgrace. Many new buildings were added but a few of the old beautiful buildings with mullioned windows and sweeping upturned tiled roofs were still there. They were set in the grounds of an extensive park with many pine trees and stands of bamboo. In front of an ugly new library "*built by worker students*" and "*self reliance*" was a three stories high statue of Chairman Mao .

After a stroll through the gardens we went to one of the older buildings for the usual briefing. Chancellor Chou Pei Yuan -- a distinguished white haired gentleman -- was there, as well as the Revolutionary Committee of the University. He spoke through an interpreter, but left most of the discussion up to the Committee. After the usual greetings, the members launched a description of the current Chinese views on education. Little was said about scholarship -- although science was stressed -- they stuck to political dogma. Productive labor and politics should be part of education -- students should "*serve the people wholeheartedly*." Students selected to attend university were chosen by the peasants, workers, and soldiers -- not as before, by examinations on book knowledge learned by rote -- guidelines are based on social consciousness. Before -- students and teachers were confined to campuses -- now they must spend two or three years in the fields and factories -- studying the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism.

At the university computer center a student, Yuan Ya Fei, attached herself to me -- told me her life history in careful stilted English. After school, she had worked three years in a tractor factory -- there she was chosen by her fellow workers to attend university. She found the work hard but her friends had helped her. After university she would go wherever the Party needed her. I later sent her a photo I had taken. She wrote a note of thanks -- very pleased -- but she repeated the Communist litany -- I wonder if she ever changed her views -- what do her children think now?

We wondered about Chancellor Chou Pei Yuan. He had been a Science Professor and had studied at Yale. So of course he spoke English. What had been his thoughts during this briefing? Many years later, Bao Chen escorted him on a tour of the States. Unfortunately he did not come to Washington.

An Embassy briefing

At the US Liaison Office, John Holdridge, the Deputy Chief of Mission gave us a briefing. John had accompanied Secretary of State Kissinger in his secret visit to Peking preparing for the Nixon visit. John helped us to better understand the current situation in China -- quite a different view from what we had been hearing. John invited the group for drinks to his apartment -- it was a pleasant change to be in an American home.

Peking Duck

A member of our group, Jane Blair, had a letter of introduction to Mr. Bush, Head of the Liaison Office. (not an Embassy yet). He and Barbara invited Jane and us for dinner at the best Peking duck restaurant. With the Bush's house guests we were a group of seven.

We were seated at a round table -- a large lazy Susan carried the many platters containing every part of the duck -- the best being the crackling skin. Mr. Bush, in the Chinese custom as host, used chopsticks to serve each guest. The Bushes regaled us with stories of their life in Peking. They both rode bicycles through the streets of the city. I wondered if a poor security man -- American and/or Chinese -- was required to follow them at his peril among the horde of bicyclists zooming along.

Chinese Banquet

Food -- The four Senses -- Sight, Smell, Taste, and Sound (from crackling rice)

We were given a banquet at each city we visited. In Peking, the senior "Responsible Members" of Luxinginshe were the hosts of the final banquet of our visit. As at each of our banquets, the first course was a masterpiece of Chinese cuisine -- a beautiful butterfly made up of colored pieces of food set out on the lazy Susan. The first course in Shanghai had been a phoenix. All during the following ten courses we had tiny glasses of Mai Tai -- a fermented sorghum wine -- strong as vodka. The host would lift his glass -- say, "Gambei -- good health," and drink it down. As courteous guests, we did the same -- according to custom turned our glasses upside down, showing we had drunk it all! Each glass was immediately filled -- the Gambei routine continued throughout the meal. Rice wine was also served warm in little cups. Needless to say this encouraged a few too many of our party to make rambling speeches at the time we gave presents to our hosts. The "Sight" was the first colorful butterfly dish. "Smell and taste" is obvious, and "Sound" happened when liquid was poured over fried rice. We were rather surprised that soup usually came at the end of the meal. The day we left, Peking was preparing for May Day. Everywhere large red lanterns were being strung up. Every Chinese National Day, similar lanterns hang outside the Chinese Embassy in Washington.

We flew back to Kwangchow and spent our last night in China again at the Tung Fang Hotel -- only Bao Chen accompanied us. As my Tang horse was in a bulky package and did not fit in my suitcase, Bao Chen offered to carry it. As we boarded the plane for Kwangchow, we were each handed two souvenirs -- a packet of Chinese cigarettes and a sharp-pointed pair of scissors! When we arrived in Kwangchow, Bao Chen came to me saying he was so sorry that he had dropped my clay horse. Knowing that it is Chinese good manners not to make one lose face I said, "It's all right, Bao Chen. Don't worry. I don't mind!" He giggled and handed me the horse. He was a great tease! Recently, 28 years later, he recognized the horse sitting on our display shelf in our living room.

The long trip home

Our day of departure was long. Our return was by the same route we had entered China. From Kwangchow we took the train to Shunchun -- there we said goodbye to Bao Chen -- not knowing we would see him again many times in the years to come. We walked back across the bridge -- climbed aboard the train for Hong Kong -- went directly to the airport and took the plane for the long trip to Hawaii.

As we crossed the Pacific we had many hours to look back on our adventure. We had not been prepared for the enormous masses of people everywhere. I wondered if the display of enthusiasm by the smiling, clapping crowds was spontaneous or required -- certainly their curiosity was genuine. I remember thinking that perhaps the peasants were better off thanks to the Cultural Revolution -- but for the intellectuals -- it was a tragedy of great magnitude. For the Nanking and Peking University Chancellors and the Harvard-trained surgeon -- all of whom had studied in the US -- what a terrible experience they must have had. What thoughts were they keeping to themselves? Of course, the Chinese wanted us to think the Cultural Revolution had produced utopia. Nothing was said about human rights or freedom to express dissent. My greatest impression on the trip was realizing how far back the cultural history of China extends -- farther than any other world culture. We learned a lot but certainly not to appreciate Communism as was the Chinese purpose for the trip.

Hawaii

We arrived in Honolulu in the early morning without sleep since Kwan Chou. Until he retired from the Foreign Service Robert and I had carried Diplomatic passports -- were permitted to pass through customs with a smile. Not this time -- we were now among the hoi polloi. I was one of the first to go through customs. The customs official asked me where I had come from. I replied, "Kwangchow" -- "Where's that?" -- "China". He looked quite puzzled. "Do you want to see my passport?" -- "Never mind. What do you have to declare?" -- "Only a Tang horse and a chop". He looked even more mystified. "Do you have a sales chit?" -- "Of course not. Anyhow it would be in Chinese." Exasperated, he said, "Give me your handbag." He turned it upside down -- shook its contents onto the counter. Out fell the jade earrings I had bought in Hong Kong before entering China. "Well, well. How do you explain these?" I was horrified -- how could I explain that I was still mentally in China -- not the outside world. I lamely answered, "I really forgot about them. You see -- when in China you never think about the outside world." He looked at me oddly -- I was obviously a nut or a crook. He sighed, "Look, Madam, just pay \$50 and you can go." As an afterthought of conciliation he added, "These are very fine jade." We spent several days catching up on our sleep and sitting on Waikiki Beach. Little by little, China faded like a dream and we were back in reality.

The National Committee on US-Chinese Relations

After our return, we joined the National Committee on US-Chinese Relations -- a group set up to improve better understanding between the two countries. We agreed to offer home hospitality to visiting Chinese scholars. They usually spent three days with us. They always brought us a present -- a scroll or a Chinese watercolor. Some spoke little English -- some were fluent. Other volunteers took them sightseeing and to meetings, according to their interests. Our guests must have been shocked by our cat and dogs -- particularly by Noel -- our Dalmatian who would put his head in a guest's lap at breakfast to beg. The wonders of the kitchen had to be explained, especially the garbage disposal, the microwave, and the icemaker. We had one most attractive visitor, Professor Zuoliang Wang, who taught English literature at the Institute of Foreign Languages, Peking. He

had studied at Cambridge University, England. We would see him again on our next trip to China.

China Again, 1980

In 1980 we were invited to join a National Committee group on a trip to China in September. The itinerary would include Xi'an (now open to tourists) and a trip down the Yangtze River. We eagerly accepted -- we were anxious to observe the changes after five years -- since *Mao's* death in 1976.

We met our group in San Francisco for the flight to Tokyo. A China scholar from Stanford University gave us a preliminary briefing. After Mao's death his wife took over with three other people, to become the Gang of Four. They caused much trouble and soon were put in jail. Hua Guofeng became Chairman of the Communist Party. Our lecturer spoke of the two distinct groups of Chinese -- the urban sophisticated educated remainder of the former elite *bourgeoisie* -- and the general masses -- mostly rural -- still spouting simplistic dogma. He gave us some advice as to conduct in China: The Chinese will spout the official orthodoxy at any briefing. He said there would be no point in challenging it. The Chinese are quick to take offense at attacks on the system -- courtesy is essential. There is fast change going on -- China will be open to influences from the West -- a demand for consumer goods. The Chinese people have been saving money over the years -- there was nothing to buy -- now they can afford a TV set. China is very anti-Soviet -- you will hear much talk about the "bad Polar Bear."

Narita Japan

From San Francisco we flew to Narita airport in Japan. We did not go to Tokyo, forty miles away, but stayed overnight in Narita, at the Narita Prince Hotel. It was a surprise to find the city of Narita absolutely fascinating. We spent the day sightseeing -- walking along the busy narrow streets -- the stores gaily decorated -- signs and bunches of flowers hanging over doorways. At an intersection we were amused to hear chimes merrily playing, "Coming thro' the Rye" as the traffic lights turned to green. Outside the grounds of the Naritasan Shinshoji Temple there was a bazaar selling everything from food and trinkets to religious objects. When we passed through the gate building into the Temple compound, we found ourselves in a forest of wonderfully smelling pine trees. We saw an old wooden pagoda -- ponds with turtles and huge carp -- young Japanese playing drums as they walked about -- gilded lions and other statues. The interior of the main temple was cavernous -- with huge golden pillars. Streamers of gold paper foil hung from the ceiling. Unlike a Thai temple, there were no statues or flowers.

Shanghai-- "Above the Sea"

The next afternoon we took the CAAC Chinese airline flight via Osaka to Shanghai and Peking. The sun set as we flew over the China Sea. We left the plane at Shanghai, the airfield was in darkness except for a line of lights along the landing strip. The shabby terminal was dimly lit. We were the only passengers to be seen. Quite a stunning contrast

to the bustling modern Japanese airport! We knew we were in China again!

A Mr. Chang from *Luxingshe* met us -- perfectly nice, but no Bao *Chen*. The bus ride into the city was along dark empty roads. Shanghai was in partial darkness. Looking into apartment windows the only illumination was from a dim light bulb hanging from the ceiling. We stayed in the old section of the Jing Jang Hotel. I'd forgotten how run down Chinese hotels were, certainly in sharp contrast to the modern Narita Hotel. Our room had the same huge overstuffed furniture with antimacassars. A hole in the bathroom wall was stuffed with pink toilet paper. No plug in the bathtub -- but we had brought our own. To our surprise our room did have air conditioning. The next morning I ran into Mr. Pi from *Luxingshe*. He had been at our farewell banquet in Peking five years earlier. His English was still poor. It seems that Zhu Bao Chen had left *Luxingshe* -- now was Chief Interpreter for the China Association for Science & Technology.

Changes in Shanghai

Shanghai, with the largest population in the world, was the same sprawling city, with masses of people on the streets. But this time there was a major difference -- commerce had arrived. On the streets were the large billboards -- no longer carrying Mao's sayings -- rather, advertising all sorts of consumer goods -- clothes -- cotton Mary Jane shoes the Chinese loved -- cigarettes -- soap -- "Flying Horse" tissues -- kitchen articles -- revolutionary movies -- along with Charlie Chaplin old timers -- many new technological gadgets -- cameras -- computers -- TVs. At night, neon lights lit up ads as in Times Square.

We walked on the Bund, an esplanade running along the Whangpoo River. Beside it was the line of low skyscrapers built by the Europeans in the previous century. Then, after the "opium Wars," the area became the International Concession. The people reacted to us differently than they had five years before. Many smiled and wanted to be photographed. I took a picture of a young mother and child. In sign language I told her how much I liked her permanent wave! A young man wanted to try out his English. I took a photo of him -- said I would send it to him. Wang Yong Quiang and I became pen pals for many years. I always wrote him in careful longhand script to make it easier to read. He wrote back that he thought my writing so nice, he would try to copy it. His penmanship was better than mine. He wrote enthusiastically about photos I had sent of the family -- he wanted to have "grandchildren like mine." In his last letter written in 1986, he wrote he had worked "as a very common worker in the factory in three shifts" but now after studying English very hard and passing some exams, "I now am an interpreter in the Science and Technology office at my factory." He never answered my last letter. I wondered why?

A visit to the large Exhibition Hall produced many surprises. The main hall had only a photo of Mao -- Marx, Lenin, and Stalin were gone. The room was filled with rows of TVs and computers. Also exhibited and for sale were all sorts of manufactured goods -- from clothes, new coromandel screens -- reproductions of antiques, rugs, tapestries, etc. But hanging on the wall was a surprise -- a framed tapestry of a young Caucasian girl wearing a yellow dress and reading a book. It seemed familiar -- of course -- it was a

reproduction of the Fragonard painting, "The Girl in Yellow", at the National Gallery in Washington!

At a silk factory we saw changes from five years before. There was no Revolutionary Committee. A well-dressed man gave a lecture on silk weaving, but not a word about "the bitter past" nor any Communist ideology.

Our first view of the Yangtze

A new experience in Shanghai was an hour-and-a-half boat trip down the Whangpoo River to its confluence with the Yangtze River. We shared the boat with German and Italian tourists. "Carmen" and "The Skaters Waltz" were among the music selections. Snacks were green uneatable apples and nut cakes. Tourism -- commercialized -- had arrived. Along the river we passed the docks and shipyards of Shanghai. By the time we reached the Yangtze, the water had become a very muddy soup. We saw of all kinds of boats -- anchored freighters and tankers waiting to dock -- strings of barges coming down the river -- the green ferry river boats from the interior, from Chungking, Wuhan, and Nanking -- later, we would travel three days on one. The prettiest boats were the traditional junks with their broad sails -- and the smaller boats with their vertical rectangular sails. Returning, it was fun to watch the pagodas and tall buildings of Shanghai come into view.

One new item had been added at the museum we had visited in 1975. In a place of prominence stood a standing clay warrior and horse from the archaeological sites of Xi'an. We would see them in a few days. We spent one morning at the Yu Garden, built in the Ming Dynasty in 1537. It was similar to a garden at Soochow, a Chinese miniature landscape -- the traditional buildings with upswept, tiled roofs, ponds, rock-built hillocks and mountains. As this was September, not April, as in 1975, flowers and trees were not in bloom. This garden was crowded with people. Most families had a new toy -- a camera -- were busy taking pictures of each other. There was not the feeling of quiet and peace we had noted in Soochow -- still a place of wonderment.

We gave a luncheon for our *Luxingshe* hosts, and the first American Consul General, Don Anderson. We were seated Chinese style, husband and wife together. It was good to see again -- for the first course -- the butterfly design on the lazy Susan. Robert gave a speech of appreciation. That evening the group was given a reception at the new American Consulate General, housed in one of the grand European built mansions, set in a huge garden -- not unlike the Embassy Residence in Paris. It was a thrill to see the American flag flying and the Consular seal over the front door. Don Anderson's wife spoke of the difficulties of setting up a new American community -- housing for other members of the consulate -- a school for the children -- a commissary for American food, etc. She said the Chinese comment she heard most frequently was "no can do!" Also present at the reception were the Polish and Japanese Consuls and a few Chinese officials. The opening of China to the West was producing many new experiences for the Chinese.

Qin Shi Huang Di, First Emperor, Qin Dynasty, 221-210 BC

The Prince of Qin promoted the idea of a united empire with an emperor whose authority would extend over all the Chinese territories. After bringing under his control the various warring groups, in 221 he became China's first emperor, Qin Shi Huang Di, "Qin, the first Emperor". From 221 on he organized his conquests into one state. He standardized weights and measures, coinage and script. He demolished the fortifications separating the former states. But he built the Great Wall along the northern frontier to protect the new empire from nomad invasions. Xi'an on the Wei River was his capital.

Xi'an

Xi'an, and the whole area around the Wei River Valley, dates back in time to China's earliest history. Excavations at a village, Ban-Po, near the city, are from Neolithic times, around 6000 BC. This is an archaeologist's paradise. Fortunately Mao did not discourage archaeology and had been willing to continue excavation. Only recently had Xi'an been opened to tourism.

We flew to Xi'an in a Soviet-built plane -- a Tupolev. Again the same souvenirs -- a pair of folding scissors. This amused me. At the Narita airport my own scissors had been taken away for the trip. Before landing, we could see the muddy Wei River and all four sides of the ancient city walls. We had hit our first poor weather, heavy clouds and occasional showers. Our bus took us to the charm-less Soviet built tourist hotel. There were other tourist groups -- we were the only Americans. Our room was pretty dingy -- our bed sheet was the usual striped bath towel that never tucked in, so it was a struggle to keep covered at night. The restaurant food was second-rate. But we discovered in a city restaurant the best food we had ever eaten.

We found Xi'an to be the most charming and interesting city we had yet visited. This was western China. The Chinese were still curious about foreigners. The VIP in our group was ex-governor Pat Brown, twice elected governor of California. Pat's political instincts had never left him -- he was still running. He loved the crowds. He knew how to work them. As we walked along the streets, he tried to shake hands with as many Chinese as possible. He kept his pockets filled with hard candies that he handed out to any child. They would often follow him like the Pied Piper. He was in his element, always the pol!

We felt this was the real China, as yet, un-touched and spoilt by Western influences, except for the present day tourists. But commercialism was creeping in. There were billboards advertising in English, Camel Brand pots and pans and cotton (Mary Jane) shoes. I wish I had bought some. Surprisingly, on a large billboard, a sexy girl was depicted in a bathing suit floating on a raft. Mao must have been turning over in his grave!

We visited many places of interest -- the Drum Tower, built in 1370 in the Ming Dynasty -- the Big Goose Pagoda where we climbed 240 steps for the view from the top. From there we could see the square layout of the ancient city with the four city walls -- all the

streets were at right angles. Our guides wanted to show us that religion was accepted in China now. We were taken to an old mosque that had been abandoned during the Cultural Revolution. It was been being repaired. Many craftsmen were reconstructing various parts.

The greatest treat was the archaeological Museum. It consisted of several buildings and ceremonial gates in Chinese style using details from the architecture of the Forbidden City. They were set in beautiful gardens of clipped vegetation. On exhibit were the many finds from the various archaeological sites in the area, presented in the sequence of the Chinese dynasties, but the lighting was poor and all signs were in Chinese. In one room were large stone animals rather crudely carved -- I never found out their provenance.

The highlight of our trip was our visit to the just opened site of the life size terra-cotter infantrymen, 5 feet, 10 inches, and horses of the army of the Emperor of the Qin Dynasty, 221-210 B.C. The excavations were an hour's drive north of Xi'an. The road ran between rows of willow trees. In the fields, vegetables, cotton, and corn were growing. In the distance we could see ranges of high mountains. No cars, but many trucks belching black smoke. The local farmers drove wagons drawn by two horses and a third horse in training trotting along side. One horse pulled the smaller carts or in some cases the peasant was the beast of burden, dragging his heavily laden cart. This whole area is made of loess, a wind blown deposit of silt that is a kind of clay. When wet it is dangerously slippery. The brick walkways around the archaeological museum were slightly arched to keep this slimy mud from collecting. We passed picturesque villages where the houses were made of loess. It was pomegranate time. At one point the road was lined with baskets piled high with this fruit. We stopped. One, of our group, spoke Chinese. He carried on a long conversation with a toothless vendor, making him laugh. Obviously, we had to buy some of his pomegranates.

We first came to the tumulus of the Qin Emperor -- a hill covered with vegetation, sitting in a cornfield. Since our time it has been excavated -- I don't know what was found. A little farther on we came to the site of the buried army. These remarkable life size figures were in lines of dirt trenches, covering more than an acre of ground. A roof had been built over the area to protect it from the elements. The site was still in process of being dug out. Many trenches remained covered. Several archaeologists were in the dugout trenches carefully brushing off figures and photographing them. We were not allowed to take photos, so I bought postcards. I also bought a replica of one of the horses, now on the shelf with my Tang horse. Since 1980 many archaeological sites have been uncovered in this region.

On the way back we stopped for lunch at a beautiful spot. It was a hot springs spa. It must have been enjoyed over the dynasties. Lovely pavilions were set around a lake. Rooms were for rent. Some of our group took a bath -- the cost was 43 cents. We returned to our dismal hotel to pack. We wanted to stay several more days.

Chungking -- Chongqing, SW China

We flew south to Chungking. To our surprise, the pretty airline hostess wore a curled ponytail -- the young are always the first to adopt new styles. Because of cloud coverage we missed seeing the beauty of the wild mountain ranges. The drive in from the airport was over a narrow winding mountain road -- the steep hillsides terraced. Around a bend we had our first glimpse of Chungking, a very large city, perched on the hillsides of a promontory at the convergence of two muddy rivers, the Jialing and the Yangtze. Here and there were tall chimneys of factories poring forth black smoke to add to the smog. We were unprepared for the quite remarkable appearance of our hotel. The roof of the central building was a copy of the circular tiered roof of the Temple of Heaven in Beijing. Other details had been copied from the buildings of the Forbidden City. The side wings had red columns rising four stories, plus red balconies and terraces, painted to look like marble -- the architect must have had fun. We had a suite -- such luxury, but the hotel had no hot water and no elevator. We were awakened every morning at 5:30 by the rumbling of the Russian plumbing and people clacking down the cement stairs. However, at the end of our stay, the hotel prepared one of the finest banquets for us, eleven courses. The napkins were folded into shapes of birds. A huge beautifully decorated cake had been made with "Welcome American Friends" on it. We were one of the first American groups to stay here. The hotel staff all wanted to meet us and shake our hands.

During WW11, because of the Japanese occupation, the seat of government had been moved here. Foreign Embassies had been established till Beijing was opened again after the war. Chiang Kai-shek was here until he went to Taiwan later to form the National Chinese Party. Remember my story from Bucharest days, about Pasha Tougay, the Turkish Ambassador, and the Dutch Charge, stationed here during the war.

Mao had been dead just for four years. We were totally surprised by so many changes in all fields of activity. The Art Institute of SW China including Yunnan Province and Tibet had been closed during the Cultural Revolution and had just been reopened three years earlier. The artwork had been de-revolutionized. In every field of art, imagination and free expression was encouraged. In classical painting, students were using models, even nudes, to copy as they wished. No more Revolutionary themes. One artist was painting a still life of a pile of cubes arranged in an abstract way. In a bookcase I saw books on the French Impressionists. One teacher briefing us knew very little about American art but said he liked Norman Rockwell. Interestingly, over three hundred students were boarding here. But, strangely, the buildings were very dirty and shabby and there was a distinct smell of urine. I guess this was not unusual -- better to paint as an artist than paint walls!

Even at a kindergarten, the children were singing and playing the usual games played in the west without any communist themes. At a middle school, the President welcomed us. Twenty-one hundred students were accepted by examination only -- many were borders. The teacher briefing us told us about the terrible problems in education during the Cultural Revolution. The emphasis was on the revolution only, a form of brain washing. He felt a whole generation of children had grown up with no useful learning. Now the sciences were stressed including computer sciences. Literature included books of the

western world. We met an exchange teacher, an American, Marsha Chan, from Berkeley, a Stanford graduate teacher of English. She had a one-year's contract. She loved the challenge. She took us to her apartment in a new building for the faculty -- four rooms! What luxury. She had a two-burner gas stove and a small fridge. She did her own cooking. Her only problem was no hot water but she said she had grown accustomed to that. Outside the building was a huge statue of Mao. It was to come down.

We also visited a typical working people's neighborhood. At a visit to a one-room house, we were offered a fruit drink, nuts, and green apples. Not much had changed in five years. All had the same radio, sewing machine, and clock. However, there was a TV, but it had neither aerial nor a dish. Was it just for show? TV was aired for three hours at night. On the walls no longer revolutionary posters, but Mao's photo still held the spot of honor. But different from 1975, the smiling wife proudly showed us her hand embroidered pillows and bed cover. No longer did we hear about the "bitter past" or any Mao's mantra. Since Mao's death, major changes for the better were happening in China.

We had a trip to the other side of the Yangtze to a farming community. We took a ferry across the river. The current was so strong that we needed a tugboat to help us stay on course. Evidently the river was the highest in a 100 years and made difficulties for the smaller boats. On the other side our bus took us up a zigzagging road to valleys where farming could be done. Since the rice had been harvested, the fields were mud and the peasants walked behind a water buffalo plowing the ground. Farmers carried on a shoulder yoke two "honey pots", human waste, to be used as manure. By each house was a pile of dried rice stalks, the same as our haystacks. Some houses were thatched with rice straw. We had lunch by an upland lake. It was a resort area. Some Chinese were sailing small boats -- other were walking along the paths of a canyon. The scenery was magnificent. The purpose of our trip became obvious on the way home. We traveled to where a bridge crossed the Yangtze. It had been opened just two months. Our guides were so proud of it, that I felt obliged to take a photo of it, when I really wanted to photo a near-by water buffalo. Actually, it was the only bridge throughout this mountainous area.

Chungking as a city was very ugly although its location on the two rivers was spectacular. Being built on hills the streets either went up or down -- very difficult for bicycles. Transportation was largely by bus, always in second gear grinding up the hills while belching awful black smoke. Most portage had to be done by baskets on shoulder yokes. The narrow sidewalks were so crowded that most people walked in the street. Street vendors, selling a bit of everything, also clogged the way. The Chinese were still curious about foreigners and smiled when they heard English. One young person started up a conversation with me. The shops were filled with the usual poor quality clothes. On one walk I bought a chocolate bar with the lovely name, "White jade". In 1980 there was a great building boom. Like Hong Kong in the 50ties, buildings were going up throughout the city producing the constant noise of pile drivers. As you walked along, besides the bus fumes, there was a distinct smell of fresh cement. Needless to say, every building needed paint and repair. We were taken by bus to the high point of the city. There, was a statue of General Joe Stilwell. He was the local hero who, during WW II,

had helped Chiang Kai-shek in the fighting against the Japanese.

Chungking to Wuhan by Riverboat

We were up before dawn. A thick fog hung over the city -- bad weather was to follow us all the way to Wuhan. Our bus left us at the top of a long flight of steps leading down to the water where our riverboat was docked. Walking down, we made way for many porters with yokes on their shoulders, carrying cargo from the barges below. At the gangplank of our boat we showed our boarding card. It read in odd English, "Magnificent under Heaven are the Three Gorges, Welcome you to drink in the scenery by boat".

Riverboat, "The Red Star" # 45

It was one of a fleet of green riverboats on the Yangtze River plying between Chungking and Shanghai. Our three-day trip was half way. It took both cargo and up to 1000 passengers. En route we would stop at the larger towns to let off and take on passengers and cargo. There were three decks with cabins opening out onto a deck. We were in first class. Our accommodations were excellent, even to a lovely gold and blue teapot with proper teacups for our morning tea along with a thermos. On our bath towel sheet were two blankets folded in a standing fan shape. Also, were rubber sandals to use in the shower. We had to pass by the other cabins to reach our private lounge and dining room. Those cabins had a bed with a straw mat.

Some of passengers were Chinese from Hong Kong. According to our steward they were greatly disliked by Mainland Chinese because Hong Kong Chinese dressed better and considered themselves superior to the Mainland Chinese. In one cabin was a cute little boy sitting on his mother's lap. He wore a sailor's cap. When I passed, I always waved to him. He waved back and saluted me.

Bush, when he was head of the Liaison office, was the first American to take this trip. We were the first American group. The crew gave us special attention. The chef wanted to know if the food was OK. We didn't want to cause him to lose face, so we didn't admit it was too greasy -- the eggs at breakfast swam in oil. The meals were buffet. We took our bowl of rice and added what we saw that looked good. For dessert there was always a hard green apple. One time the boat took a bad roll and all the crockery slammed to the floor. From then on we had tablecloths that helped. We were an oddity to the other passengers. Outside our dinning room windows, there were faces peering in at us, but always smiling. Maybe they were hungry. Because of the poor weather, we spent much time in the comfortable lounge in large red chairs and sofas, each with a spittoon. We were not sure what the Chinese spat out! At times, one of us would give the alert and those of us with cameras would rush outside on deck.

We were allowed on the bridge at any time. The gray-headed captain had been sailing the Yangtze for 40 years and, as captain, 15 years. Being a large boat we had little trouble navigating the currents and, at times, the turbulent waters and rapids. But for smaller boats it was a struggle. Eight or ten people rowed some boats. There were rafts with a hut

for shelter, small ferries for local traffic, barges and junks with rectangular dirty white sail. Many needed the help of a tug when going up stream.

River life was fascinating. The hills came right down to the waters edge -- the high mountains behind. Steps led up to the center of towns. This meant all cargo -- bulging sacks, crates, pieces of furniture -- had to be carried up or down hill on the backs of porters or by shoulder yokes. At each stop there was much confusion, yelling in Chinese, and general turmoil of many passengers getting off or on.

The Yangtze was muddy brown but small rivers flowing into the river were turquoise blue. Our course down the river was between lines of channel markers of tiny boats holding a light. At dusk the lines of lights came on, green on the right and red on the left. They gave off a fairy like glow through the descending mist. Finally, at night when all was black, the lights seemed most eerie.

After dark, we saw lights ahead on the left hillside. For the first night we docked at a fair size city, Wanxian. There was much river traffic here tied up for the night -- our sister ship going up stream to Chungking, local ferryboats, barges and a junk with a large vertical rectangular dirty-white sail unloading its cargo. Porters carried huge white sacks of grain on their backs up more than a 100 steps to the city above.

After dinner we also climbed the steps to the city. We became the evening's entertainment. We were somewhat of an oddity and many curious people gathered to stare at their first Americans. We smiled and they smiled back. Down a dimly lit street I found a small shop where I bought several watercolors of the gorges we were to see. We were taken to a silk processing factory. This was the night shift of rows and rows of women working at spinning the silk thread. First the white silkworm cocoons are steamed to loosen the gluey substance on the thread. Next, the thread is attached to a spindle that unravels it, leaving a brown shriveled worm. The final process is winding several strands together on huge wheels. This thread is dyed and woven into cloth. As a souvenir, we were given a silk cocoon -- I still have it! As we passed down a back hall, I saw on the floor, leaning against the wall, several dirty portraits -- no less than Engels, Karl Marks, Lenin, and Stalin! Imagine, them coming to this ignominious end! What would Mao say!

The Three Gorges

We pulled away from the dock at daybreak and headed down stream for the Three Gorges. Suddenly, the river grew narrower and the mountains higher and steeper. The lines of green and red channel markers grew closer together. Ahead we could see the churning of the muddy water as the river was forced into the narrow opening between the mountains. We had reached the first gorge. The boat slowed down as we came to the first sharp bend in the river. A small white sail junk stood aside at the entrance. Ahead, the sight was spectacular even without the sun. Red and white markers identified the right and left shore. Higher up the mountainside at the bends in the river were more indicators. Because the river had narrowed as well as the channel, only one boat could pass between the channel markers going around a bend -- thus a one-way river passage. To control the

right-of-way, stood a tiny house besides a tall red and white striped pole with a red arrow that could be seen from both sides of the bend. At the start of the bend, the control man dropped the red arrow and after we had passed, returned it to the top. We were given the right of way over smaller boats -- they had to wait for us. There was not too much traffic in the gorges but our captain was always sounding its horn at any other boat in the way. The rocky mountainsides were very steep and at places, almost vertical. Only an occasional white mountain goat could manage the terrain. A few waterfalls fell. In some places a long horizontal cut showed on the face of the mountain. This was the remains of the towpath where, before steam engines, a team of coolies helped pull a boat up the gorge.

As we exited from the gorge, the river widened. Several tiny villages nestled at the shoreline. Above were stone terraces. A white pagoda stood half way up the mountainside. We stopped at one town, Badong, to take on many passengers carrying a straw mat on which they would sleep. After an hour we come to the second gorge. It was similar to the first gorge but with more waterfalls. At one point we passed a similar riverboat to ours. There was much blowing of whistles between the two captains.

Again, the river widened before we reached the last gorge. At a small town there was a dirt path zigzagging up the mountainside. A barge was unloading huge gunny sacks which were being carried up the path on the backs of porters. They resembled a line of ants carrying home their loot. Another village nestled in an orange grove. More rapids announced the last gorge. We had left the true wildness of the first gorges. Definite signs of civilization began to show. We suddenly heard a horn honking. Looking up, we saw a bus and cars on a bridge high up crossing a ravine. The road then entered a tunnel. The mountains had changed a bit. There were many limestone peaks. As we proceeded, we came to quarries where huge hunks of limestone were being loaded onto barges to be taken down stream to Yichang for the building of a dam across the Yangtze. It is a tremendous undertaking and will surpass the Aswan dam in Egypt. It was most controversial then and still is 20 years later. It will back up the water as far as Chungking -- the lake will destroy the beauty of the gorges.

By nightfall we had passed the three gorges. We did not dock for the night. By the next morning we had left the mountains behind. The countryside was flat and marshy. There was much planting of new trees. Maybe this was a part control of the flooding in the spring. The Yangtze has devastating floods every year which is one reason for the dam. We passed Yichang where there was much activity with the construction of the canal that would by-pass the dam while being built. We soon were passing larger towns and roads, back to civilization. We discussed what the last three days had meant to us. We felt we had been privileged to share a great river experience along with the Chinese. Nowadays cruise boats from Shanghai with luxury accommodations and excellent food go part way up the Yangtze to Wuhan. But how can the isolation on that huge ship compare to our total immersion in river life on the "Red Star" #45? Even our sour green apple was healthier than their dessert of French pastries!

Wuhan

It is the capital of Hubei Province at the confluence of the Han and Yangtze rivers. In 1980 it had a population of over 2,000,000. Mao was born here. Wuhan has played a part in much of China's history. During the Japanese invasion, they got as far as here and Yichang but never penetrated beyond the high mountains in the west.

Wuhan at last. The dockside was humming with the activity of a large city. People were better dressed than any we had seen since we left Shanghai. We were surprised to see sailors again. Our hotel was old, but very comfortable. From our balcony we could hear western music being played. We had the best dinner since being in China.

The first morning we were taken to a large hospital. A Dr. Jin briefed us. It was a teaching hospital of 800 beds. Robert asked about medical education. Entrance exams had been reintroduced. Now schooling took 5 years as opposed to 3 during the Cultural Revolution, including traditional Chinese medicine along with western medicine. This is followed by 3 to 5 more years of "on the job training" -- before it had been 2 years. Before, medical information had been stopped. Now, they are receiving medical literature from all western countries.

Residency training was now three to five years; before, it was two years. No medical information from abroad had been permitted. Now, they receive medical literature from all western countries. The doctors now do organ transplants. Lung cancer had become a serious problem -- no longer were free cigarettes given out. In 1975 cigarettes had been given us on every plane trip.

We toured the hospital, ending at an operating room theater. Two operations were in progress. On one table was a young woman under acupuncture with needles stuck in various parts of her body. Her neck was slit from ear to ear -- a goiter was being removed. She was wide-awake. After being sutured, she sat up, got off the table and walked off. It was not clear how long the anesthetic effects of acupuncture would last. A man under general anesthesia was on the other table. His operation was for stomach ulcers. He had an enormous gaping incision. The surgeon was moving his organs around -- very gory. Suddenly, the patient began to twitch and moan and groan. The doctor in excited Chinese gave some orders and hurriedly, a mask was jammed over his nose and more anesthetic was administered. I wondered if he would remember this incident.

In the evening we attended a performance of another song and dance group. We were still amazed at the changes from five years ago. The ten-person orchestra wore coats and ties, and used western instruments. No longer the twangy Chinese music or revolutionary themes. One man in a baggy white suit sang pop songs, including, "Never on Sunday." There were songs and dances from foreign countries -- the Mexican hat dance, kite dance from Malaysia, Italian and German folk songs, and American songs. When the orchestra played "The Beer Barrel Polka", two of our group were asked to join the dancing on the stage -- the audience sang along. I was hoping for the usual dancing lion act. But instead, in the final skit, the performers, in brown leotards and blackened faces and hands, danced

in a circle carrying spears and giving off war whoops -- their concept of Africans. We felt it was in rather poor taste -- what would Mao have thought?

Wuhan University

Our visit to the Wuhan University produced a real surprise. Most of the university buildings were in sad need of repair and paint. Our tour began at the library, one of the original beautiful Chinese buildings -- recent ones were in the ugly Russian style. Most of the students seemed to be studying hard, but a girl English major latched on to us and asked if we would like to see her room. She led us outside, up stone steps to some old Chinese type buildings with pretty blue tiled upturned eaves. One housed the boys and the other the girls. At the top of the steps we had a great view of Wuhan -- its lakes, rivers, and hills. We entered a gloomy hallway leading to her room. Owing to the rain, the unpainted cement walls and floor smelt of damp cement. The tiny room held two double bunks with mosquito netting on each side and a long bare table with four stools in the middle. A single light bulb hung from the ceiling. The four girls ate here, but preferred to study in the library because it had more light. I took photographs of my new friend. Later, in Washington, I gathered literature and photos of the city, and sent them to her and her roommates. As by then it was December, I described our Christmas time rituals. Back came a wonderful five-page letter written in English script with very few errors. She included photos of the university and of herself. Her roommates also wrote me. I've kept the letters -- they should be read. They are in the large album with my photos of the 1980 trip.

Our tour ended at the shabby administration building for our briefing by Chancellor Gau Shang Yin. At least his office had a carpet on the floor and a few scrolls on the walls; there were the usual overstuffed chairs with lace antimacassars. Several professors and the Chancellor greeted us. He was a stocky gray-headed man dressed in a Mao jacket. He spoke through an interpreter. Wuhan was a university for the liberal arts and sciences. It had a student body of eight thousand, including the graduate school. Tuition was free -- the students paid only for books and food. Chancellor Gau talked about education during the Cultural Revolution. The university had suffered badly due to theories of the ultra-left. In that period, students were chosen by their co-workers -- there were no examinations. College was cut to three years. Starting in 1977, these bad practices were discontinued, and a stiff entrance examination was introduced. Now the university was more like those in the States. There is a large student exchange program and many contacts with universities around the world.

After the briefing, he introduced his colleagues and asked for questions. The economics professor had gone to Harvard. President Gau himself had majored in chemistry at Yale. Then came the bombshell! He looked sort of familiar to Robert, who asked him if he'd ever played football. He said, "Yes, but not at Yale. I played at Rollins." Robert asked, "Were you called Harry?" "Yes," he said, "My Chinese name was too difficult to remember!!" Robert and Harry had been classmates at Rollins in the early thirties! Many photos were taken. Harry walked with us out to our bus. On our return to the States, Robert told the Rollins President about Harry. He was then invited to Rollins to receive

an honorary degree at the next commencement. His expenses in the US were paid. The Chinese Ministry of Education covered his international flight. Harry had a great time visiting Rollins and Yale. We kept in contact for a while. A few years later he retired due to poor health. Robert himself was quite surprised he had recognized Harry after forty-five years.

Beijing

We flew to Beijing's new airport. We reached the city by a new four-lane highway with overpasses. We were glad to be back at the Peking Hotel. Now breakfast had become westernized -- coffee instead of tea, two good fried eggs, instead of the three we had in 1975; also the first toast we'd had in China.

Looking toward Tien An Men Square, there were some obvious changes. Gone were the images of Engels, Marx, Lenin and Stalin. Commercialism had also come to Beijing. Along the avenue, ads for consumer goods replaced Mao's sayings on the billboards. The ads were in English and Chinese; for "Beijing Beer", Coca Cola, "Tien-Tan high class men's shirts", and "dragon fly" tennis balls. Street vendors' stalls were set up in front of the Forbidden City. Somehow all this commercialism diminished some of the city's old charm.

Chairman Mao

Looking across the expanse of Tien An Men Square to the South Gate, a large ugly marble building blocked the view. Mao's mausoleum, no less! We joined the crowd waiting to enter. We were told "no photos and complete silence". The entrance hall contained an enormous statue of Mao; behind it, a colossal needlepoint of mountains and clouds covered the entire wall. In the next, chilled, room lay Mao, in a glass-topped coffin, surrounded by tubs of flowers and bonsai pines. No sound could be heard. I couldn't help wondering what thoughts were going through the visitors' heads. If there is no heaven in the communist world, where did Mao go?

Early Morning Walks

Each morning, as I had done before, I took a walk before breakfast. Except for the billboards, nothing had changed much. Added to the heavy bicycle traffic, autos were honking trying to get through them. The early risers were still performing their exercises. I remember one spectacular morning. The orange sun rose in the East while a pale full moon set in the West. As the weather had turned colder, many were wearing the traditional padded clothing. One day I saw two older women with bound feet -- a sign of beauty practiced by the elite in the bad old days. They were toddling along on their very tiny feet -- a rather grotesque sight. In early childhood, girls' feet were tightly bound to prevent them from growing normally. How painful! One of the few good things Mao did was to ban this horrible practice.

Famous Sites

For the next few days we revisited the great sites of Beijing. At the Temple of Heaven, as we walked into the inner courtyard, I was horrified to see a shop called the “Marco Polo”, selling carpets. Another shop offered Chinese artifacts and souvenirs. The ancient Emperors would certainly have been offended.

Our trip to the Great Wall was on a cold, windy day. Outside the houses along the mountainous road to the Wall, white corn and red peppers hung to dry in preparation for winter. It was quite different from the blooming fruit trees in the spring of 1975. This time we climbed up the southern section of the Wall -- not usually done by tourists. It was very steep in places and the steps had crumbled. Only three of us made it to the top tower. From there the view was spectacular; it encompassed the other section that was usually climbed. The leaves had turned red and yellow. I’d forgotten how rugged the mountains were. We could see many sections of the wall winding over distant mountain crests.

At the Sacred Way to the Ming Tombs, I could see that the trees behind the animal sculptures, had grown higher over the five years. I photographed the animals I had missed the first time. I remembered how Bao Chen, on our first trip, had climbed onto the camel’s back like a little boy.

It was good to see that the Forbidden City had not changed. We spent half a day strolling through its courtyards and buildings. We saw things we had missed before. The day was good for photography. Now that I’ve seen these great places twice, I don’t need to return to Beijing. I hope my grandchildren will be able to visit China.

As we’d seen the Summer Palace in 1975, we chose instead to visit the enormous ugly Soviet-type buildings on Tien An Men Square. At the Museum of History were three floors crowded with cases of artifacts; they were poorly lighted, and the labels were only in Chinese. The Great Hall of the People was more interesting. There were twenty-nine reception rooms -- one for each Province -- reflecting products and art of that province. We had seen newspaper pictures of the meetings of ten thousand people in the main hall; the hall itself was empty, but still impressive to see; behind its stage hundreds of red flags were draped.

When we returned to the hotel for lunch, we were astonished that there were sandwiches on the menu. Our chicken sandwich was a great treat -- although we had missed a ten-course lunch at the “Pavilion For Listening to Orioles,” where the Summer Palace restaurant was located.

Foreign Affairs

At the Institute of International Affairs, a high-ranking official briefed us as we sat in comfortable overstuffed chairs, sipping Jasmine tea. His line was that China was in a state of transition, and that many reforms were taking place. Economic development

policy had been copied from the USSR for thirty years. China had learned more from its negative experiences than from any positive ones. Now China is trying to learn from other countries what is suitable for China. Essential to the reform was to delegate power to the provinces and production units. He added that the past erroneous practice that removed scientists and intellectuals from participating would not happen again. They would be allowed to be creative and contribute to Chinese institutions. Non-party members, now, can criticize the State. Mao must have been turning over in his glass coffin! Commenting on US-China relations, he remarked, "We are very pleased with the growth of relations between the two countries. There should be further development in economic trade and exchange of ideas conducted with mutual respect." That was a change from what we heard in 1975! He made one interesting comment: Afghanistan he considered a "hot point" in the world to be! The Soviet invasion did not come until ten years later.

The New American Embassy

The next day Stapleton Roy, the Chargé of the newly established American Embassy gave us a talk. He said that the Chinese government was still unsure of what road to follow. The younger generation had taken over, but they have had limited experience of the outside world. In economics they seem to regard the Yugoslavian and Hungarian as possible models. But they have second thoughts when they see Japan and Germany's strong recovery after the WW II. While they have raised living standards and public health. On civil rights, China is still a totalitarian state. When criticism becomes too free they crack down. Recently, when Tien An Men Square became a kind of Hyde Park with debates and speeches, they stopped it. (*Of course this was nine years before the demonstrations and massacre in that place.*) The government has a constant fear of public disorder. Individuals have no constitutional rights for protection. There are many conflicting theories at work -- the pendulum swings back and forth as to which way to act. The Chinese are pleased that the Soviets is an adversary of Europe and US -- it takes some pressure off of them. They have fewer troops on their mutual borders. Taiwan is still is a serious problem.

At an Embassy reception, I talked with Fox Butterworth, then the New York Times correspondent, and a Chinese expert. He told me that critical views reported in his columns were often repeated in the Chinese papers. This was permitted as long as the criticism was attributed to Butterworth. He had to be careful not to be too outspoken himself or else he would be asked to leave China.

Old Friends

A highlight for Robert and me in Beijing was seeing our old friend, Bao Chen. We had some difficulty getting in touch with him. He would not meet us publicly for lunch, but came to our hotel room. We were glad to see him. As chief interpreter for the China Association for Science and Technology, he had traveled to Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. We laughed over some of our adventures in 1975 -- but he seemed rather subdued. Years later he said he'd had difficulty in obtaining permission to see us; later

was questioned at great length. We should have been suspicious of the openness of the new China expressed by the man at the Institute of International Affairs. However, the climate was changeable -- when Tom Haines, our son-in-law, visited Beijing in the late eighties, Bao Chen invited him to his apartment for a lunch cooked by his wife.

We did have lunch with another old friend, Professor Wang Juoliang and his wife, Xu Xu. He taught English literature at the Institute for Foreign Languages. In his youth he had studied at Cambridge University. He had stayed with us for several days in Washington when he was there on an exchange program. We took them to a good restaurant in an old part of the city; it seemed to be a special treat for them. They lived in three rooms with a retarded son. I was embarrassed when Xu Xu gave me a present of some beautiful blue brocade dress material. We exchanged Christmas cards for several years. He has since died.

We went to a play with the enticing name, "On the Silk Road." By then, most of the group had terrible Chinese head colds and everyone was quite tired after our strenuous three weeks. When the theater the lights went out, many of us fell asleep -- I never knew what happened. We were able to stay awake for our final celebration. As we'd already had a twelve-course meal at the Peking Duck Restaurant, the head of Luxinshe was host at our final celebration -- a Mongolian Hot Pot banquet. We had met him on our first trip -- his English had not improved. For the main course, a great big brass Mongolian pot, somewhat like an angel cake mold, with a tall funnel rising in its center, was placed on the lazy Susan. In the funnel were hot coals to keep the broth sizzling hot. Each of us had a plate of meat strips. With chopsticks we put a piece in the broth to cook. It was delicious. Any hunks of meat, chicken, or fish including vegetables could be dropped into the broth. This was the way of cooking used by Mongolians in the desert. All through the meal, we swigged warm rice wine -- our glasses were kept filled. There was many "gambey" toasts. Governor Brown was in his element as Master of Ceremonies. He gave farewell speeches of appreciation and presents to our Luxinshe hosts.

As we left the hotel early the next morning, it was being decorated by huge red lanterns for the *tet* celebration of October 1. They looked like the ones for May Day we saw at the end of our first trip. We see red lanterns above the entrance of the Chinese Embassy in Washington on their days of celebration. We were flying out on Pakistan Airlines. Some of the other passengers were quite colorful. We sat next to a large Uzbek family in native costume. Obviously there was no conversation but many smiles especially with the children. We didn't know then that next year we would visit Uzbekistan, both Samarkand and Bukhara.

I've written at length about these two China trips -- the first, to show life during the Cultural Revolution under Mao and the second, to show the emerging changes after Mao's death. We were lucky -- in both cases, our groups received special attention -- many events were a "first" for American tourists. Much has changed for the better over the last twenty-five years since our first visit, but China still has many problems with human rights and it's role in world affairs.

I would like to say a bit more about our friend Bao Chen Zhu, our leader on our first trip to China in 1975. We have kept in contact over the years. We sponsored both his son and daughter to come to the US as students. They have become American citizens and are married with a family. Bao Chen still lives in Beijing but visits his children in the US. Recently in January 2004, he and his family came to Washington to visit us and help celebrate our 60th wedding anniversary. Bao Chen, a lover of American slang, has returned to China where he still has "many irons in the fire"

We have ushered in the new millennium, 2000, and celebrated our 60th wedding anniversary, January 2004. We received a letter from the White House. "Dear Mary and Bob -- --Laura and I send congratulations to you both on your 60th wedding anniversary. Your years of marriage reflect your steadfast commitment and serve as an inspiration to others. May you cherish the memories you share and continue to take joy in your enduring love for each other. Best wishes." George W. Bush I shall not comment but will only say we have just had one of the thousands of arguments we have had over the past 60 years. Does that make a lasting marriage?

I shall conclude by saying that over the years our closest friends have been those who served in the Foreign Service with whom we can share our many past adventures -- sadly, there are not too many of us left.

Washington, January 2004

End of interview