

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training  
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

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## INTERVIEW

### The Well-Tempered Diplomat

#### Reminiscences of the United States Foreign Service

#### 1938-1967

TEMPERAMENT: In music, a system of tuning in which tones of very nearly the same pitch, like C sharp and D flat, are made to sound alike by slightly 'tempering' them (that is, slightly raising or lowering them). "Well-tempered," in equal temperament, as in Bach's "Well-Tempered Clavier."

Schirmer Pocket Manual of Musical Terms

"No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;

Am an attendant lord, one that will do  
To swell a progress, start a scene or two,  
Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool,  
Deferential, glad to be of use,  
Politic, cautious, and meticulous;  
Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;  
At times, indeed, almost ridiculous --  
Almost, at times, the Fool."

- T. S. Eliot, *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*

"Donnerwetter! Was Sie alles erlebt haben!" [Gee! What you've been through!]

- *Spoken German. Basic Course.* Unit 23, p. 421. United States Armed Forces Institute.  
August 1944

## Foreword

This is the book that every foreign service retiree intends to write but seldom gets around to, an account of experiences on the job. After you serve in half a dozen posts and adjust every three years to changes in political, economic, climatic, geographic, educational, linguistic, cultural and recreational conditions, you look back on the good times and the rough times, the rewards, frustrations, compensations, sacrifices, inconveniences, and physical dangers and say to yourself that you ought to put it all down on paper. This book does not expose world-shaking international negotiations or raise the curtain on backstage deliberations but seeks merely to entertain and to inform about the sort of events that can happen to those who climb round-by-round up the foreign service career ladder.

## Prologue

Things happen to me. When I was three, I fell off a bench and broke my arm. At age four I drank a bottle of iodine but was saved by frantic purging. At seven I gave my first and last violin recital. If you stop playing in the middle of the piece and say to the pianist, "Let's take that line over," you are not invited back. At fourteen, in the Insect sandlot baseball league, I pitched a nine-inning shutout. Well, almost. Actually it was 21 to 1 because they scored in the ninth, but negotiations were held and it was agreed that the game should go down in history as 20--0. At this stage in my development I wanted to be another Walter Johnson, but that comes hard when you reach your full five-seven at 15. At other times I wanted to be a great magician, a great singer, a great actor, and just simply great. Actually I never wanted to be anything great, I just wanted people to think I was great.

On September 14, 1938, three days before a hurricane hit the New England coast, I sailed from New York on the *President Roosevelt* for Hamburg, en route to Moscow. On September 21 Czechoslovakia ceded the Sudetenland to Hitler's Germany. On September 28 I began at Moscow a foreign service career that kept me wandering until 1967, or thirty years off-and-on. In February 1939 I was transferred to Warsaw, and a month after that I was assigned temporarily to Bucharest. I was back in Warsaw in time for September 1, 1939, when the first German bombers came over at the start of World War II. After fleeing with the rest of the Embassy to Bucharest, I was posted to Budapest for a year. I got home in 1940 by crossing the Atlantic in a Pan Am Clipper flying boat, Lisbon to the Azores to Bermuda to New York.

Detailed to Pretoria, South Africa, I was 35 days at sea, New York to Cape Town, in a resurrected Hog Island freighter, the S. S. *Polybius*. In 1944 my new bride and I sailed in convoy twenty days Durban to Port Tufiq and then twenty more days in another convoy Port Said to Newport News aboard the Liberty freighter S. S. *Pierre La Clede*. I have sailed the Atlantic seven times and the Pacific once. I have flown the Pacific in propeller craft Manila to Guam to Midway to Hawaii to San Francisco to Washington. I have flown by jet to Thailand and Laos and to New Caledonia-Australia-New Zealand. I have rowed one hour on the Susquehanna River in a longboat as a seaman second class in the U.S. Navy. We were to have had a second outing, but the brass decided the water was too rough. For the record, two months after I put on a U.S. Navy uniform, Germany surrendered.

While a contract clerical employee assigned by the U.S. War Department to Pretoria, 1941 to 1943, I persuaded a South African girl to give up her family, her job in the office of the Canadian High Commissioner, and her citizenship, in order to come with me as my wife, although she knew I would have to go into the armed forces after arrival in the States. By marrying me she lost her nationality, as under the law then current a woman espousing an alien forfeited South African citizenship. The Union of South Africa Government refused to give her a passport for travel to the United States and would agree to issue only a document declaring her a stateless person. Riekie (pronounce it Ree-kee) was a woman without a country from her wedding January 1943 until October 1947 when

she completed the interview with a U.S. judge and was awarded United States citizenship. She and our daughter, Karen, have gone with me uncomplainingly to Middle River (Maryland, near the Navy base at Bainbridge), Staten Island, Bern, Haifa, Tel Aviv, Manila, New York, Ottawa, Washington, Vientiane, and finally Washington.

On August 14, 1945 I obtained a pass for leave from Bainbridge and got off the train in Washington as dusk was falling. Walking into my mother's house, where Riekie large with child awaited me, I remarked absent-mindedly that traffic on the neighborhood street was picking up in volume and noise and that people were honking horns and cheering. Turning on the radio, we learned that Japan had surrendered. At 3:00 a.m. next morning I headed for Union Station and the train back to base. An hour later our daughter, Karen, began to make her way into the world. Phoning home from the base the evening of August 15, I learned that Karen had waited for peace to break out before consenting to be born.

I took the written examination for Foreign Service Officer, U.S. Department of State, in the autumn of 1947, passed the oral examination the following year, and was appointed FSO Class VI in June 1949. We went to Bern in October, and Karen attended a kindergarten where the language was Schweitzerdeutsch. She went to a French convent with an Irish mother-superior in Haifa, to the Tabeetha Presbyterian school in Tel Aviv, to the Noyes public elementary school in northeast Washington, to an American school in Manila, to a public elementary school and a high school in Ottawa, and to Woodrow Wilson High School in Washington. She graduated from the University of Maryland while Riekie and I went off to Vientiane, Laos, in 1964. Karen spent a summer with us in Vientiane and was evacuated by helicopter when the mighty Mekong overflowed and turned the city into clumps of isolated islands. For her part, Riekie had to hide in our house when soldiers of General Kouprasith and General Phoumi Nosavan began shooting at each other in 1966, an insurrection that ended with the flight of General Phoumi to Thailand.

After I retired in 1967, we settled down in the house in Washington we had bought ten years earlier, and at age 52 I began a career in research. Research organizations live precariously from one project to another. When they get funding, they hire a bunch of researchers, and when the project is over they fire the researchers unless they succeed in getting more funding. My first job lasted five years, and then there were two others, followed by a year of unemployment. In 1975 I joined the staff of the American Association of Retired Persons and, fittingly, began a stint of more than fifteen years in the old age business.

Chapter 1  
Journey  
(September 1938)

"Travel, in the younger sort, is a part of education; in the elder a part of experience."

- Francis Bacon

"It sure does show what a fool navigator a guy can be."

- Douglas (Wrong Way) Corrigan, July 17, 1938

Once, in the souks of Damascus, I watched a man making legs for wooden stools. His lathe was a brace of metal spits placed on the ground, and he hunched over it like a mantis. His motor was a bow, as in arrow. He wound the bowstring around the wooden stick and sawed back and forth with his right hand to rotate the stick against the cutting tool. He pressed the edge of the cutting tool against the wood with his left hand and pinned its base with his left foot. Thus he spent his threescore and ten on this earth, bent into a hump over his primitive machine. Inefficient, yes, but he and his like had Damascus up to its knees in wooden stools. Every country knows him, the rounder out of stool legs, because that is what the environment affords and because he accepts what comes his way.

A few of us are smart enough to say at age one: "I want to be a pincushion salesman," and then direct all efforts toward preparing for a career selling pincushions. But most of us drift into the first available job and realize thirty years later we have spent our days humped over a lathe. Those who drift into the right vocation are lucky.

A drifter I have invented is called Eddie Derheld, which is German for The Hero. Derheld was I, me, of course, only different. Sometimes I admire him greatly, and sometimes I think that alongside him Simple Simon was a genius. Back when I entered McKinley High School in 1929 only 3.2 percent of the civilian labor force was unemployed, but by 1937 when I graduated from American University the percentage of unemployed was 14.3, and in the following year it went up to 19.0 (*Historical Statistics of the United States*. Table D 46-47). Employers showed not the slightest interest in me, sheepskin or no sheepskin. I had learned stenography as a sort of afterthought while in high school, and in July 1938 after going more than a year without work I heard of a government clerical job overseas.

I gulped when War Department Personnel said I would have to go to the Soviet Union and stay abroad at least two years, but the salary was a princely \$2,000 plus quarters allowance, and I signed on as clerk-typist in the office of the U.S. Military Attache at Moscow. I had drifted into foreign service. As have others more eminent. The distinguished diplomat and historian, George F. Kennan, acknowledges in his *Memoirs* (p. 17): "My decision to try for entry (into the Foreign Service) was dictated mainly, if my memory is correct, by the feeling that I did not know what else to do." Former

Ambassador Robert Murphy goes a bit further: "I did not deliberately plan to enter the diplomatic service, and it seems to me now, as I review the development of American foreign relations during my lifetime, that our nation's entanglement in world problems came about almost as haphazardly as my own." (Robert Murphy, *Diplomat Among Warriors*, p. 1)

In January 1937 Georgi Piatakov, Karl Radek, and other Soviet leaders had been convicted of counter-revolution and sentenced to death. In March, U.S. Ambassador Joseph E. Davies gave a dinner for Marshal Tukhachevsky and others of the Red Army high command and was shocked when within nine weeks Tukhachevsky and four other generals who were at the dinner were court-martialed and shot on charges of conspiring with Germany and Japan (Joseph E. Davies, *Mission to Moscow*, p. 132). Stalin's great purge spread through the government and military. Did Tukhachevsky look down from Soviet heaven and make bitter comments when this same Stalin concluded a non-aggression pact with Germany only two years later? I did not reflect on the purge, nor did I ponder the trip that British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain was making at the time I set out on the S. S. *President Roosevelt* for Hamburg. The important thing was that I had a job. (The *Roosevelt*, remodeled into a troop carrier and under a different name, was to be sunk by German torpedoes a few years later.)

I sailed from New York on September 14, 1938. Three days later a hurricane hit the New England coast with tremendous destruction, but by that time the *Roosevelt* was well at sea. The ship tossed so much I had trouble staying in bed, but I put the mattress on the floor and managed some sleep that way. In Europe stronger winds blew. Adolf Hitler had made a provocative speech about German rights in the Sudeten areas of Czechoslovakia on September 12, and the Czech authorities had to put down an insurrection by Henlein's hooligans. Chamberlain went to Germany three times to confer with Hitler. Passengers gathering around the short-wave radio in the ship's bar twitted me on my chances of getting across Germany to Russia, but I was unconcerned. The world had been made safe for democracy, and war could not come. Naivete triumphed; I was proved right.

On September 21 President Benes yielded to the joint representations of the British and French Ministers in Prague and ceded the Sudetenland to Germany. The *Roosevelt* threaded its way up the Elbe through freighters, sailboats, and kayaks and docked at Hamburg on Sunday, September 25, setting a pattern that was to pursue me for years. I was always to arrive on a Sunday, when offices and banks are closed.

I took a train to Berlin and put up at the Central Hotel, close to the railway station for Warsaw and Moscow. Strolling on Unter den Linden, I saw a notice that *Der Freischutz* was being given at the Staatsoper, with the great soprano, Maria Muller, as Agatha. I went to an opera house for the first time in my life. The Wolf's Glen scene so seized my fancy I dwelt on it for pages in letters home.

The following evening I went again to the Staatsoper, this time for *Madame Butterfly*. It was September 26, 1938. The lights dimmed, the audience settled down, and loudspeakers brought into the auditorium the voice of Adolph Hitler. For more than an

hour I sat in darkness listening to a tirade I could not understand. Afterward, English-speakers in neighboring seats explained that Hitler had ordered Czechoslovakia to clear out of the Sudetenland by the following day. I was relieved that nothing had been said about war with Poland or Russia. I was concerned only with getting to my destination. But I was irked at Adolph. Because the train left at midnight and Hitler's speech had delayed the start of the opera, I had time to hear only the first act. War is hell.

Uncertain whether the train would have a dining car, I bought a two-foot loaf of black bread before getting aboard. There was no need for it in Poland. By the time I reached the Soviet Union, where it would have made a welcome snack, it had hardened into a shillelagh. The train rattled energetically across west Poland but became more and more reluctant after it passed Warsaw, as if fearful of what was coming. I looked at the ragged peasants and somber countryside and was reminded of the opening lines of "The Fall of the House of Usher." I looked them up later on:

"During the whole of a dull, dark and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country, and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy house of Usher. I know not how it was--but with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit... I looked upon the scene before me--upon the mere house and the simple landscape features of the domain--upon the bleak walls--upon the vacant eye-like windows--upon a few rank sedges--and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees--with an utter depression of soul..."

Stolpce, the Polish frontier post, was reached at dusk. I strolled along the platform waiting for Polish customs clearance and talking to the Wagons-Lits porter. "Americans astonish me," said the man. "Now, I speak Polish, German, French, Russian, and a little English. I've seen dozens of Americans on this train, and I've never found one who could speak anything but American. But somehow they always get somebody to take care of them." I was amused to see the Polish soldiers exchanging salutes every time they passed each other as they strolled the platform. The Poles are the politist troops in the world, but it is not true that their officers command: "Squads right, march, *please*."

Soviet frontier guards hopped aboard and took away my passport as the train proceeded through the strip of no-man's land between the last Polish outpost and the Russian post, Negoroloye, which is said to mean "unburned," presumably by Napoleon. The customs room was done in gooey brown varnish, and its walls were rimmed with bigger-than-life photos of Stalin, Lenin, Marx, Engels, Kalinin and Molotov, but not Trotsky. Running as a frieze in foot-high silver letters were the words, "Workers of the World, Unite!" in half-a-dozen languages.

I had fondly imagined that with official status I would be eased through customs, and I was disconcerted to see that every bit of reading matter in my bags was set aside and studied. There were a *Saturday Evening Post*, a diary which was discarded with a contemptuous snort, an address book which was read minutely, an account book, the lists

of the suitcases' contents, the instruction book for my camera, the pamphlet with a first-aid kit, the forms and travel regulations from the War Department, and a Gregg shorthand dictionary that was scrutinized like a secret code. Everything was returned to me except two programs from the Staatsoper. The inspector, whose English was little better than my Russian, held them up accusingly. "German," said he. I agreed.

"No," said he.

"You mean I can't take them in?"

"No, said he.

"But they're only opera programs."

"No," said he. On that date Germany was the enemy. What's the Russian word for *verboten*?

It is written that when men began to build railways they based the gauge, or width between the rails, on the common road wagons of the day. Because this happened to be 4 feet 8 1/2 inches, most of the railways of Great Britain, Canada, and the United States have a 4' 8 1/2" gauge. The Russian troika being of a different width, the Russian railways are five feet (1.524 meters), but I found the extra width not all that noticeable. I shared a compartment with a German newspaper man who told me in fluent English that the car dated back to the days of the Tsar. He didn't say which Tsar.

The newshawk got the porter to bring glasses of tea with lumps of beet sugar and said he had represented his paper in the Soviet Union for four years. Asked how he liked it, he raised his voice and said loudly: "I like it fine; it's paradise," then grinned. Lying in the upper bunk, I doubted that the rails were really laid in sand as I had read somewhere. More likely the wheels ran without rails directly over rocks. The old car had a voice like a hog caller, and I was astonished to open my eyes at eight in the morning and realize I had been asleep.

My first glimpse was of a heavy blanket of mist that weighed against the panes. Gradually this cleared, and a rolling country emerged, intermittently wooded with scrub trees. Now and then the train passed a tableau in the railway embankment done in some sort of mortar and consisting of a red star and Cyrillic words of propaganda that I could not read.

As I looked at the bleak countryside, at the kerchiefed women in dresses the color of the soil, who served as train dispatchers and platform sweepers, and at the men dressed in anything they could lay hands on, I wondered which was preferable, two years in Moscow or two years in an apartment on Devil's Island. My spirits were not boosted by the lack of breakfast. When my newspaper companion arose, tea was obtained, but that was all. In 1900, railways in Russia totaled 28,000 miles. By 1950 the figure had risen to 59,000 miles, including the trans-Siberian completed in 1905 under the Tsars. Based on

my experience of the Minsk-Moscow line, I had no wish to sample the rest of the network. If anybody cares, the United States had 196,000 miles of railway in 1909 and 241,000 in 1950 (Railway Figures from *Imperial Encyclopedia*, "Railways," and Hammond's *Complete World Atlas*, 1951. Trans-Siberian data from Langer, *An Encyclopedia of World History*, p. 707).

At the station the newsman, taking care of the helpless American, said he would telephone the U.S. Embassy, and if they could not send a car he would send his own chauffeur back. For it had not occurred to me to telegraph notice of my arrival. At this point, the chauffeur remarked that there was a taxicab present. "A taxicab? Here? At the railway station?" said the newsman incredulously. He installed me and bags in the taxi, instructed the driver, and went off in his own car. At once the driver began asking questions, holding up one finger. I sat mute. A crowd gathered, and urchins hung on the running board offering smiling advice. The driver continued inquiring about his finger, but at last concluding there was nothing to be got from the stupid foreigner he shifted gears and took off down the crowded thoroughfare with his thumb on the horn.

This was Gorky Street, formerly The Tverskaya, since it runs from Red Square under the arch commemorating the triumph over Napoleon and past the Alexandrovsky station to Tver, a town on the route to Leningrad. The Bolshevik staff had its headquarters in the palace of the governor-general on this street in November, 1917. David Bronstein, better known as Trotsky, made his last Moscow appearance at the National Hotel on this street in November, 1927, prior to banishment to the provinces. On it are the Anti-Religious Museum, the Museum of the Revolution, the Lenin Institute, and the Moscow Soviet (Eugene Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia*, p. 83). But I did not know these things as the taxi threatened the pedestrians, nor did I realize when I entered the Embassy that the Kremlin was looking at me from across a small park.

I was brought to Colonel Philip R. Faymonville, the Military Attache. "I'm Ed Thrasher, your new clerk." Said the Colonel, "What new clerk?" Nobody in Washington had thought to tell him that a new clerk was on the way. Official notice arrived some weeks afterward.

Two days later, on September 30, 1938, the representatives of Germany, Italy, Great Britain, and France signed a memorandum accepting the partition of Czechoslovakia. On his return to England, Prime Minister Chamberlain declared: "I believe it is peace in our time...." A has-been named Winston Churchill aroused a storm of protest when he asserted in Parliament: "We have sustained a total and unmitigated defeat." (Winston Churchill, *The Gathering Storm*, Chapter 17, and p. 326)

Chapter 2  
Moscow  
(October 1938-February 1939)

"The first English embassies to Russia arose altogether from commercial interests. The constant interference which those interests necessarily occasioned between the subjects of the different states of Europe, has probably introduced the custom of keeping, in all neighboring countries, ambassadors or ministers constantly resident even in the time of peace. This custom, unknown to ancient times, seems not to be older than the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century,.... "

- Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (1778), p. 690 (Modern Library Edition)

"I cannot forecast to you the action of Russia. It is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma; but perhaps there is a key. That key is Russian national interest...."

- Winston Churchill, radio broadcast

October 1, 1939, quoted in *The Gathering Storm*, p. 449

The chancery of the American Embassy in Moscow was on the Mokavaya, next door to the National Hotel and two blocks from Red Square. The building had the offices on the lower two floors and the living quarters of most of the twenty-seven American staff members and their families on the upper. You entered from the street through an archway that led to a parking courtyard in the rear. A door on the right of the arch opened into the consular and diplomatic offices, a door on the left to the offices of the Military Attache. When personnel in the M. A.'s office spoke of people on the "other side" they meant not the Russians but the State Department personnel on the other side of the arch.

The Military Attache offices occupied a suite on the ground floor. Beyond them on the same floor was a large room used for billiards and ping-pong by the Embassy staff. It caught fire toward the end of 1938 and was gutted by Russian firemen. Up one flight of stairs were the Colonel's apartment and, across the hall from it, the two rooms k. & b. shared by me and Francis Flavin, the other American clerk. Major Hayne, the Assistant Military Attache, was one of the few Embassy Americans who had lodgings outside the Mokavaya chancery. The M. A. office had four Russian employees: Miss Tolstoy, a maiden lady interpreter who claimed to be related to the great writer; Gleb, a translator; his brother Vladislav, a messenger; and the Colonel's chauffeur. Shortly before I left Moscow I took a few Russian lessons from Gleb. I learned afterward that Gleb went mad and had to be committed.

In our apartment, Flavin and I had a cabinet-sized radio-phonograph (on loan from the Colonel), government-issue metal furniture, and a chubby maid-cook named Tanya. It was taken for granted that Tanya reported on us to the G.P.U. A placid woman of middle age, she spoke almost no English and showed no remarkable characteristics except on the occasion when I found a two-foot fish swimming in the bathtub. Tanya had decided to

serve it on the morrow and wanted to keep it fresh.

The working-living arrangement encouraged personality clashes. Flavin was my immediate boss. We worked at adjoining desks during the day and in the evening walked up one flight to share the same apartment. Swallow and Gulp (not their real names, of course), two predecessors who had worked under the same conditions, had come to detest each other so positively they strung a rope down the middle of the apartment. "You stay on your side; I'll stay on mine." My immediate predecessor, Gerry, had had little in common with Flavin. Like me he was slight, idealistic, and mercurial in temperament, whereas Flavin was six foot three, practical and stolid. We got along because Flavin was not easily provoked, but we never became real pals.

Just before I left Washington a colonel had given me a bit of last-minute information. "The man you are replacing," said he, "had to leave Moscow under mysterious circumstances. I can't tell you the story. Just do your work, don't meddle in things that aren't your business, and you'll be all right." This cryptic warning, together with stories of the Great Purge, hung over me during my five months in Moscow.

Flavin said he did not know the reasons for Gerry's sudden departure. He only knew that Gerry had conferred urgently with the Colonel and high officers of the Embassy, had hastily packed in a state of near hysteria blurting through tears to Flavin that he had been a fool and everything was his own fault, and had left in a frantic hurry to make the 11:00 p.m. train. According to Flavin, only one American other than the top officers knew the story, an American clerk with whom Gerry had been close. This man declined to give me any particulars, saying he had sworn secrecy, and in any case nothing would be served by revealing what had happened.

It was thirty years later in Washington that I heard the details, and perhaps they did not deserve all the mystery. Gerry had gotten involved in a multiple sexual relationship. G.P.U. agents had burst in on him and companions and had taken photographs of a compromising situation, then threatened blackmail. Gerry had had the good sense to report the matter immediately to the Colonel. There is no telling what complications might have ensued if he had tried to conceal the affair, but his prompt confession enabled the Embassy to get him out of the country at once.

Daily Grind. I settled into a routine. The alarm clock woke me in darkness, for as winter approached the sun did not rise until after 9:00. A fruit juice and tea man, I had to talk Tanya out of giving me bacon, eggs and coffee every morning. After breakfast, Flavin and I walked down one set of stairs and were at work. My job was mostly typing despatches and occasional letters. Flavin as chief clerk did reports and letters, handled the accounts, took care of the files, and encoded the small volume of cablegram traffic.

At one o'clock we walked back upstairs for a half-hour lunch at which I was likely to get the eggs I had refused for breakfast. The Embassy commissary imported most of the food from Riga, Latvia. Tanya bought in the market only black bread, lettuce, tomatoes, and tiny potatoes. Then to work until 4:30 by which hour heavy darkness had settled. For

recreation I read, wrote letters, listened to records from the Colonel's private collection of symphonic music, studied French, got stewed if invited to a party by Embassy personnel, or went to theater, ballet or opera.

For exercise I walked around the Kremlin, sometimes with others but often alone. The great, grim walls, closed to outsiders in that era of Stalin, watched me as I puffed with frosty breath around them, clockwise one evening, counter-clockwise the next. The counter-clockwise route took me down the Manezh to the Moscow River, left along the Kremlin Quay, left again into Red Square past St. Basil's Cathedral and the Lobnoya Mesto or place of execution, then past Lenin's Tomb (I sometime stopped in if there was no queue), and back to Mokavaya. The walks, lasting approximately half an hour, grew more demanding as the weather grew bitter. Before long I began to do without the walks now and then, and after Thanksgiving I gave them up altogether. By late December I was remaining inside the Embassy building for days at a stretch.

All staff members complained of the monotony and lack of diversion. Every man could tell to the day when he was due for home leave or transfer. The purge of Marshal Tukhachevsky and other high ranks had made the Russians afraid to consort with foreigners, and the Embassy people were isolated in the middle of a great city. Officers had official contacts with the Russians and acquaintances in other diplomatic missions, but such contacts were rare for the staff.

Maybe Moscow is a sylvan glade in the springtime. I knew only its autumn and winter faces, gloomy, drab, misty and moist, with cold ranging from teeth-chattering to marrow-chilling. With the setting in of November frost, Muscovites bundled themselves into earth-colored wraps topped by kerchiefs on the women and fur contraptions on the men. "That look on their faces," commented one of the staff, "is called grim determination." Rarely one saw a woman in a coat of gray squirrel and black shoes; most wore shapeless quilts and dun felt boots. The best dressed men were soldiers in uniform, of whom there were legions.

The monotony of the people was complemented by the monotony of the buildings. Utilitarian is the word for most, and the grime and damp could not hide the shoddy workmanship. Near the Mokavaya was a movie house with a gash in the middle where the building split settling into its foundations. Charles Thayer reports that when Beaverbrook and Harriman came to Moscow in 1940 to lay the groundwork for Lend-Lease their aides were deceived by the run-down condition of most of the buildings and commented on the "bomb damage". At that time Moscow had suffered little from bombs, and Embassy personnel had to reveal that the cracked walls, broken cornices, and fragmented streets were the result of the way they were built (Charles Thayer, *Bears in the Caviar*, p. 223).

Incongruities abounded. In retail shops the cashier worked with an electric cash register alongside an abacus. Sidewalk beggars soliciting alms raised doubts about official assertions that the Soviet Union had no unemployment. Peddlers sold shoelaces, candles, *pirozhki* (doughy cakes), and home-made coat hangers despite the official ban on private

enterprise. Roasted but unground coffee beans were a popular sidewalk item a tumblerful at a time, and you supplied your own tumbler. Soda water carts were plentiful, but these were state-owned. Square boxes on wheels, about the size of a baby carriage, and on top glass tubes of colored liquids. You chose the flavor; the vendor drew a squirt from a tube and added mineral water from the box. She had only three glasses, but it was all right because she rinsed them between users.

Street sweepers worked with brooms they made themselves from bundles of twigs. Many were women, as were trolley conductors and motormen, even steamroller operators. One day I saw a massive person, over six feet, and carrying a double-bladed axe, a woman woodcutter. In Russia women drove tractors and railway engines, broke stones on roads, dragged rails and sleepers, and worked on construction projects. One observer reports seeing women at a port near Stalingrad carry hundred-kilo sacks of corn to ships from a magazine a hundred meters away (Leon Make, *Russia by the Back Door*, Sheed & Ward, London, 1954, p. 123). That's 220 pounds; could you do it? But using women for heavy labor is not the monopoly of the U.S.S.R. I was to see the same thing years later in Macao. And it must be remembered that use of women for heavy tasks was the accepted thing in Europe not so long ago:

"...An immense building near our hotel, occupying a whole block, is in course of erection, on which not less than four hundred persons are employed, fully three hundred of whom are women. All the hard laboring work is done by women, such as making and carrying mortar in buckets on their heads to the workmen, and handling the brick. They are not allowed a moment's leisure, several overseers being on guard to keep them constantly in motion. We found the same proportion of women at work on all the new buildings, and there must be many thousands of them to-day doing this species of laboring work...."

- The writer is an America newspaperman touring Europe; the year is 1873; and the city is Vienna (Charles Carroll Fulton, *Europe Viewed Through American Spectacles*, J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia, 1874).

The Russian attitude toward religious practices was another incongruity. In 1929 Sunday was declared a working day, which meant that workers could go to church only if they took time off and risked loss of job. Industries were pressured to adopt the uninterrupted work week. Every fifth day became a free day for one-fifth of the employees, the idea being that with the day of rest staggered the wheels of industry would never stop turning. Some years later this unbroken work week was replaced by a uniform day of rest for all workers every sixth day, making the whoopee night for everybody the night before the sixth day, or "free eve" (Eugene Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia*, pp. 210 and 453).

Sunday, nevertheless, remained taboo as a day of worship, and a militant campaign continued against the church, as characterized by a tablet, "Religion is the Opiate of the People," affixed to the Shrine of the Iberian Virgin at the entrance to Red Square.

But shortly after I arrived I heard a choir from Leningrad do the *Requiem* of Verdi. Why

the godless government should permit the performance of a religious work was one of the riddles in the Russian enigma. Christmas was not celebrated, but you could buy Christmas tree bulbs and Santa Claus figurines. *Faust* was regularly performed at the affiliate of the Bolshoi Theater, although Marguerite was not allowed to ascend to heaven at the end. A full-length portrait of Liszt in his abbe's cassock hung prominently in the concert hall. Was it because he, so it is said, took religious orders to escape the attentions of ladies? The one major composer whose works were never performed in the Soviet Union was Wagner, reputedly an atheist.

Music and a blond. My first visit to the Bolshoi was to hear *Podnyahtah Tselina (The Soil Upturned)*, an opera by Dzerzhinsky, not to be confused with the Dzerzhinsky who headed up the Cheka and G.P.U. Ivan Ivanovich Dzerzhinsky also composed *Quiet Flows the Don* (based on the novel) and *Far from Moscow*. All three have been enthusiastically declined by opera houses in the west. Strolling in the promenade between acts I encountered Jimmy Lewis, one of the Embassy's accountants, with beautiful Shura, his Russian girl friend. The rosy blond, who spoke exotically accented English, explained the story of the opera.

A Worker from Leningrad tries to persuade the peasants to collectivize their farms. The kulaks resist, and one of them stirs up counter-revolution until Comrade Stalin announces that certain officials who gave the peasants hard times have been purged. Now that Tovarich Stalin is on the ball the peasants are sure everything will be all right. They counter-counter-revolt against the counter-revolutionary and encourage him to jump out a window. But the Worker still has problems. A mob of women believes he has hidden the keys to the granary and, as the song says, they "tore his clothes, broke his nose, punched him in the face/ Gave him a prize of two black eyes, with him they swept the place." The Worker is nursed back to revolutionary vigor by a keg-shaped temptress who tries to brew a romance with him. He is dedicated to the Party, but she joins up, and with no further reason to disdain her love he chases her around the stage until they find the spotlight and sing a love duet. At the end, all the farms are collectivized, and the peasants stand at the footlights telling the audience it's just great to give all to the communal farm.

I had no trouble forgetting the music of this opera, but the memory of the stage direction lingered for years. Nobody posed with a spear; the mob was a collection of individuals, questioning, seething, fighting, but always leaving open the point where the soloists had to grapple with the next high note. At one point a group of peasants received a bit of news, and you could see it spreading through them bit by bit, not hitting them all at once like a draft notice. When the women attacked the Worker, only a few actually clawed his hair and stuck their fingers in his eyes, yet the impression was that every girl in the bunch was taking him apart like an Erector set. Amazingly spontaneous realism.

Jimmy Lewis, who had come to Moscow before the purge, had met Shura at the University of Moscow where she was studying to be a teacher of English and French. The then University adjoined the Embassy's Mokavaya building; the modern university with its fantastic tower was built after the war. "Jimmy's been going with her for years," said Flavin. "He wants to marry her and take her home. It's a bad situation. The Russians will

never give her an exit visa."

But Adolf Hitler invaded Russia, and the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. became allies. Jimmy married Shura in 1943 and was permitted to export her to the States. He enrolled at George Washington University after the war, and Shura helped the family budget by teaching Russian at a private school in Washington and giving talks about her native land. And suddenly she awoke to find herself infamous.

On May 7, 1947 the *Washington Post* reported that four students had walked out of a public high school assembly in protest against what a seventeen-year-old called a communistic speech by Mrs. Aleksandra P. Lewis. The walkout was triggered by a statement that everything in Russia was free -- schools, even having babies -- whereas in the United States it cost money to go to school or have a baby. The school principal, N. A. Danowsky, told reporters he had invited Mrs. Lewis to speak on the Soviet educational system after hearing her give a talk, "I Lived in Russia," at a local teachers' college. He said Mrs. Lewis had digressed into political aspects that he had expressly asked her not to discuss. The newspapers, however, reported no political aspects beyond the remark about babies.

Congress roused itself. On May 7 Representative Karl Mundt, acting chairman of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, said the incident would be investigated. Representative John M. Rankin spoke on the House floor in praise of the students who had walked out. Dr. Robert Corning, the Superintendent of District of Columbia Schools, sent a letter to Congress: "The reported statements of Mrs. Lewis are repugnant to all who are working with youth in Washington schools." He absolved Principal Danowsky of blame and praised him for loyal and faithful service. The students of Western High School adopted a resolution of confidence in their Principal.

On May 9, in a ceremony broadcast over the Mutual network, Representative Alvin E. O'Konski, president of the American Anti-Communist Association, presented scrolls and silk flags to the four students on the steps of the Capitol, as well as a letter lauding them for "helping to expose enemies of the American way of life". The senior vice commander of the District Department, Veterans of Foreign Wars, gave them gold-plated American flag pins. But Shura Lewis told reporters she thought the students had enjoyed her talk. On May 11 the Un-American Activities Committee was reported to be checking her citizenship status to see whether she could be deported. Then she dropped from the headlines as abruptly as she had made them and went back to being a housewife (*New York Times*, May 7, 1947, 19:4. *Washington Post*, May 7, 1947, 1:4. May 8, 1947, 1:3. May 9, 1947, 3:5. May 10, 1947, 1:3. May 11, 1947, 3:1.). Satisfied that the threat to America's values had been stifled, Congress returned to lawmaking.

The Foreign Service. The American clerical staff consisted of two groups, those who intended to make a career of the Service and those who didn't. Many of the latter were youngsters who joined for a few years to see the world at public expense or to work on projects such as university dissertations. The permanent staff were mostly middle-aged

men who liked the nomadic foreign service life with its privileges and lack of roots. Some of these were confirmed bachelors or men whose marriages had not worked out. Some clerical personnel, on the other hand, had families and intended to make a career, and several had applied to take the examinations for officer commissions.

The Foreign Service examinations, given once a year by the Department of State, were highly selective. It was expected that some 2,500 applicants would take the "writtens," fewer than 100 would progress to the orals, and only a handful would receive appointments. Personnel who entered the Service without examination and served a specified number of years in staff positions were exempted from the written examinations but still had to demonstrate their fitness to an examining board. At that time there were twelve classes or grades of career Foreign Service Officer. If you passed writtens and orals, you were appointed officer of career "Unclassified" and served a probationary period, after which you were promoted to a higher degree of officer of career. Thereafter you had to achieve promotion to Class 10, Class 9, and so on up the line to Class 1 within designated periods or suffer "selection out".

If you wished to rise above clerical status but were reluctant to take the examinations, you could apply for appointment as a non-career vice-consul. Such an appointment meant you could rise no higher, unless you tried for career officer, but you were not subject to selection out. There were three non-career vice-consuls on the Moscow staff and five officers of career, with only the latter holding full diplomatic status. In 1938 these were the Ambassador, Counselor, First Secretary, two Second Secretaries, and one Third Secretary, or a total of six, but actually only five because Ambassador Joseph E. Davies had just transferred to Brussels. Twenty years later Embassy Moscow was to have ten officers in the political section alone and twenty-seven in the Embassy entire, not counting those in the administrative section. Note, however, that such expansion was endemic to the diplomatic corps of all countries, not just that of the United States. In 1930 the diplomatic corps in London totaled 56 embassies and legations, the largest made up of only 17 staff members. In 1964 London had 96 embassies and legations, with an average staff of 13.6 each (Article "Diplomacy" in *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences 1968*).

George Kennan has left us a portrait of Alexander Kirk, who headed the Embassy as *charge d'affaires ad interim* pending the replacement of Ambassador Davies:

"...Kirk worked at giving himself the aspect of exactly that sort of American career diplomat of which the American Philistine has always been most suspicious; elegant, overrefined, haughty and remote.... 'The only thing worth living for (he once said) was good form'...."

- George F. Kennan, *Memoirs*, pp. 112-115)

Kirk, who was an heir to the Kirkman Soap fortune, was addressed by the staff as "Mr. Ambassador," and in due course he became one. In 1939 he went to Berlin as Minister of the U.S. Embassy and was interned with other allied diplomats when the United States

declared war with Germany. Later he became Ambassador at Cairo and still later Ambassador at Rome.

Of the other four officers, First Secretary Grumman left the Service shortly after completing his tour of duty at Moscow. Second Secretary Norris Chipman rose steadily in the Service and became Counselor at Rome, but succumbed to unexpected illness at an early age. The other two Secretaries became legends. Charles "Chip" Bohlen, who was serving his second tour at Moscow, came back in later years as First Secretary and still later as Ambassador. Bohlen served as interpreter for President Roosevelt at Tehran and Yalta, held top posts in the Department of State, and ended as Ambassador, first to Manila, and then to Paris. Angus Ward was to open a consulate at Vladivostok, be imprisoned for more than a year by the Chinese Communists while Consul General at Mukden in 1946-47, and wind up as Ambassador to Kabul.

I came to foreign service life with biases about cookie pushers and striped pants based on fictional portraits like the cold-creamed vice-consul in Fitzgerald's *Tender is the Night*. Because I had pre-decided that officers were stuffed shirts, I tended to avoid them. Officers and staff mixed more freely at Moscow than at many other posts, but at the same time there had to be an area of reserve. It was recognized that discipline depended on an officer's being one of the gang and at the same time above it. My introduction to the diplomatic service came at a time of transition. The "before and after" are illustrated by articles on Diplomacy in successive editions of the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. Said the edition of 1931:

"In almost every country the diplomatic service is practically closed to all but the most wealthy class. In some countries not even the sons of wealthy merchants or industrialists obtain easy entrance into the service, which is reserved for those who bear names of ancient dignity. In the United States the practice is supported by the governments' refusals to provide public moneys for the use of diplomats in carrying on the lavish and extravagant entertainment functions expected of them."

By contrast, the edition of 1968 said:

"Until the twentieth century members of the diplomatic corps were recruited from the wealthy classes. Those selected were generally amateurs whose rank and social position entitled them to consideration for diplomatic appointment.... By World War II an appreciable democratization and professionalization of foreign services had occurred. Competitive substantive examinations requiring high educational attainment had been instituted in most major countries...."

Angus Ward illustrates this transition. Whereas Chipman was Dartmouth and Bohlen was St. Paul's and Harvard, Ward was Valparaiso University and a businessman before entering the Service. Ward's hard-handed background was reflected in his postings to Mukden, Tientsin, Moscow, Vladivostok, Tehran, Mukden again, Nairobi and Kabul. The other two served in glamor posts, Bohlen for example in Prague, Paris, Moscow, Tokyo, Moscow again, Paris again, Moscow once more, Manila, and once again Paris. It

was not until after the war that the Service encouraged entry of young people from non-Ivy colleges.

Flavin and I had several talks about becoming clerical staff in the Service for, as clerks for the War Department, we were in foreign service but not The Foreign Service. There was an advantage to having "permanent" status as compared to the contract status under which Flavin and I worked. But permanent or not, overseas service offered quarters and other allowances you did not get working in the States. It offered pay rises up to a ceiling, vacation leave while at post, home leave with transportation paid to the United States every two years, a pension system, and relatively high salary in terms of the Depression wages then prevailing. Beyond the material rewards were the aesthetic and educational; you could see lands, works of art, sites of history you could never hope to visit if you had to pay for the travel yourself, the opportunity to meet persons of distinction and to move in social circles that would not be available in clerical jobs at home.

On the other side of the coin, you were a vagabond, with diminishing home ties and a fluid body of friends. You would have little choice of posts and might have to spend your working life in a succession of disagreeable holes. One compensation, though; if you didn't like a particular assignment you could take comfort from the knowledge that after four years you would be assigned somewhere else. Your children (and here was the roughest part of the deal) would have to be pulled out of school and their circle of friends at least every four years and might find themselves without roots. I was to weigh and review these considerations many times over the next few years.

Diplomatic bags and the rouble. Embassy staffers had a choice of receiving personal mail by diplomatic pouch or open mail. In the days before air service, diplomatic pouches followed circuitous routes. Material from Washington traveled to Embassy Paris no matter what its final destination. Embassy Paris re-assembled the materials into pouches according to transit point. Embassy Berlin, for example, was responsible for onward transit to U.S. consular posts within Germany.

A diplomatic pouch is a canvas-leather bag that is padlocked and wired, and the wire sealed with wax or lead. Classified materials are hand-carried by diplomatic couriers, and pouches containing materials classified secret or higher must be chained to the courier's wrist. Couriers in that era, who were often military officers detailed to Embassy Paris, followed southern and northern circuits throughout Europe, Embassy Moscow being serviced by the northern circuit. The courier traveled by train to Berlin where the Embassy removed materials for posts in Germany and re-sealed the pouches. This operation took one to two days, depending on train schedules. Next to Warsaw, where the procedure was repeated, and then to Riga, Latvia. The arrangement was for Embassy Moscow to send a staff member to meet the courier in Riga and bring the pouches on to Moscow. Because the trip to Riga provided a change from the Moscow monotony, Embassy Moscow clerks sought the courier assignment although they had to spend most of their two days in Riga carrying out shopping errands for the Moscow staff. To our chagrin, Flavin and I were not permitted to participate in trips to Riga. We were officially part of the Embassy and had the requisite security clearances, but because we were not

employees of the State Department we were judged not eligible to carry State Department pouches (or so ran the story).

Pouch materials took approximately twenty-one days to travel from Washington to Moscow. Because of this length of time, many staff members used open mail for correspondence. Open mail usually took only fourteen days, but the risk had to be accepted that one's letters might be held up by the Russian censors.

In addition to personal mail and official correspondence, the diplomatic pouch brought Russian roubles. Most European nations in the pre-World War II days had official rates of exchange and unofficial or black market rates. Diplomatic missions customarily bought their local currencies at black market rates with the tacit approval of the host government. This was true of diplomatic missions in Moscow, except that they had to buy the roubles at the black market rate outside Russia and bring them in by diplomatic pouch. With export of roubles prohibited, the only way large amounts of roubles could regularly make their way abroad was with the connivance of the Soviet Government. Soviet agents would carry sacks of roubles to Riga where couriers from the various embassies would purchase them and bring them back to Moscow. Why the Soviet Government insisted on this arrangement was just another missing piece in the Russian jig-saw.

During the negotiations for recognition of the Soviet Government, the United States objected to this state of affairs and stipulated that its Embassy should be supplied legally with roubles at the black market rate by the Russian central bank. Under heavy pressure to obtain recognition, Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinov acceded to this condition, but the Soviet Government reneged on it after diplomatic relations were established. Like other missions, our Embassy had to buy roubles on the black market abroad and bring them in by pouch (Charles Thayer, *Diplomat*, pp. 211, 212).

The official rate of exchange was five roubles to the dollar, and at the time of my arrival the black market rate was nineteen. When Flavin had arrived one year earlier he had received only seven, for the rate varied in accordance with the capitalist law of supply and demand. Oddly, he was better off with R7.00 to \$1.00 than with R19.00 to \$1.00.

The reason was the Foreign Exchange Relief Act by which Congress compensated U.S. Government employees overseas with enough extra dollars to realize that quantity of foreign currency which they could have realized before the dollar was devalued in 1934. The bountiful feature was that this Act was interpreted as if the overseas employee converted his entire salary into the foreign currency, whether he actually did so or not.

To illustrate with round figures, assume that an employee's monthly salary is \$100 and that before 1934 the rate of exchange was R20 to \$1, meaning he would receive R2,000 if he converted the entire salary. Now, pretend that after devaluation the rate slips to R10 to \$1, meaning that he would receive only R1,000. Under the Act, he would be paid an additional \$100 to bring him back up to R2,000. But since nothing in the Act required him to convert his entire salary, if he could get by on R1,000 he could keep the extra

\$100 as gravy. In Moscow there were few expenses in local currency because there was little to buy. Flavin and I had to pay Tanya's wages, buy a few foodstuffs on the market, and pay for theater tickets in roubles, but virtually everything else we used was imported. Thus, Flavin had been better off with a rate of R7 to \$1 because he had been compensated with a greater amount in dollars.

Roubles and shops. Spending roubles in Moscow could be an adventure. Walking with Flavin one evening, I spied some figs in a shop window. At my request, Francis asked the price in his uncertain Russian. One rouble twenty kopeks per kilo. I paid R1.20 to the cashier, received a ticket, presented it to a salesgirl, and was dismayed to see her weigh a chunk of melon. Pantomime negotiations followed. Flavin's Russian had backfired. It was the melon that was R1.20 per kilo; the figs were R4.00. I took a closer look at the figs, saw that they were full of wormholes, and decided to accept the melon, for who knows what international incident might have resulted if I had asked for my money back? In our apartment I put the melon in the refrigerator. Tanya threw it out two days later and bought a watermelon instead. This was my introduction to shopping.

Subsequent expeditions were equally frustrating. Telling Flavin I wished to buy a chess set, I understood him to say that the phrase for "How much is it?" was "shakmatz". Using this, I bought a board and men for R21.50 in spite of an undefined hesitation by the salesgirl. I then tried to buy a phonograph record at the Mostorg. The girl brought the record, but "shakmatz" failed to bring out the price though repeated confidently, authoritatively, beseechingly, and winsomely. Bystanders joined in, and finally it was realized that the silly foreigner was trying to ask the cost. Four roubles, tovarich, and it's yours. At home, Flavin cleared up the misunderstanding. "Shakmatz" is the word for chess.

At the state-operated international book store I bought the works of William Shakespeare in English, complete in four volumes, of which only three were available, and including a preface proving that Shakespeare was a forerunner of Karl Marx. The cost was 18 roubles per volume, or about 90 cents at the diplomatic rate of exchange. The print was large, but the paper and binding were little better than newsprint, and the whole reeked of fish glue. Flavin said Gerry had kept a dog that was passionately fond of this glue and would riddle anything that smelled of it.

The system followed in the shops was not consumer oriented. Most were sardine-packed. You shoehorned your way in and made the rounds of the counters to see whether what you wanted was available and to jot down the prices. When you had your purchases figured out, you totaled the prices and got in line before the cashier, who made no attempt to verify your total but accepted your money and gave you a receipt. You elbowed your way back to the counter and handed the receipt to a salesgirl. If you were lucky, your choices had not been sold while you were waiting at the cashier; the salesgirl wrapped your purchases in newspaper, and you had achieved your objective. But if you had figured the price wrong, or if all the goods were sold, you had to get back in the cashier line and ask for a corrected receipt or a refund.

*Krasnaya* means both beautiful and red in Russian, and it was Beautiful Square before the communists. It was also a market place famous throughout the world, and while I was in Moscow the great department store across from the Kremlin was called the Mostorg. Later on it was closed because somebody thought it detracted from the dignity of the Square, and still later it was re-opened under the name G.U.M. (*Gosudarstvennyy Universalnyy Magazine* or State Department Store). The Mostorg had the widest variety of goods of any shop I got to know in Moscow and was also the most crowded.

Scads of small shops lined the side streets and the arcades. Of special interest were the government second-hand or "commission" stores. A Muscovite who had something to sell could leave it with a commission store where an expert would place a value and affix a price tag. If the item were sold within a month, the store deducted seven percent commission and remitted the balance to the seller. If the item remained unsold, the store might suggest a reduction in price or recommend another store. About half of Moscow's twenty commission stores dealt in general wares, while the remainder were divided into "art" stores specializing in paintings, sculptures, carpets, and the like, and "hardware" stores offering radios, cameras, bicycles and sporting goods. Foreigners were not permitted to sell goods through the commission stores, only to buy.

You could still find ikons in the art stores (later on the Government prohibited their export) and also paintings which I did not buy because I did not trust my own taste. Lacquered cigarette boxes with pictured lids depicting wolves chasing troikas were popular, as were red-gold lacquered peasant-made end tables. A small shop sold stamps for collectors and even packaged them neatly. My most successful purchase in Moscow was, of all things, a pair of spats that proved a marvelous antidote to cold ankles. Finding this article of the elite in the dictatorship of the proletariat was just one more incongruity (Section on shops based on personal observation supplemented by Norton, *Only in Russia*, pp. 13, 35 and 151, and *National Geographic* for March 1966, p. 309.).

I could almost always buy phonograph records at the Mostorg without waiting in line, although the selection was limited. These were 78 r.p.m. shellacs made in the Soviet Union. Because the surfaces shortly became scratched and unplayable, I soon gave up buying them but continued to visit the record counter because I had vague hopes of dating a pretty salesgirl in a tight sweater after I should have learned a little Russian. (Nothing came of this romance.)

Incredibly on one occasion an import appeared on the posted list, a French Columbia recording of the Overture to *Le Roi d'Ys* on two ten-inch discs. I had never heard of *Le Roi d'Ys* or its composer but decided to go ahead although the price was R15 per disc (75 cents at the current rate) rather than R4 per Russian disc. Big spender or not, it was not to be. The sweater girl brought one disc but shrugged when I asked for the second. Only half the overture had been imported. Later I acquired a complete Russian recording of *Eugene Onegin* of which only three records of seventeen were missing. And then one day in February 1939 I found a long queue at the record counter. The reason, the Mostorg had got in a stock of crank-em-up phonographs. Now I understood why no Russians had been waiting to buy records; they had no machines to play them on.

Also plentiful in Moscow shops were guitars. I ordered a self-instruction book from the States and set out to buy an instrument. Until the book arrived I had assumed that a guitar is a guitar. Now I learned that a guitar has six strings but that all those in the Russian shops had seven. Consulting an encyclopedia, I learned that guitars can have four to seven strings, depending on local preference. The problem of how to play a seven-string guitar with a six-string instruction book set my musical education back by weeks. I thought of taking one string off a seven-string but could get no authoritative opinion on whether this would work. Continued searching located a second-hand shop with a six-stringer for the equivalent of five dollars, and I began to teach myself. Today, some fifty years afterward, I still can't play Swanee River, and I'm beginning to suspect I have no talent.

Ballet and opera. My second trip to the opera was to hear *Faust* at the "Filial," which was the way Americans pronounced the name of the Bolshoi's affiliate theater. This smaller house drew from the same roster of singers but held its performances to a less grandiose scale. Not that the Bolshoi artists were premier singers. Some of the basses were sonorous, but tenors and the women used a type of voice production that sounded oddly constricted to one accustomed to Western voices. On the other hand, the stage presence of many performers was outstanding, and the sets, costumes, and choral organization were magnificent. *Butterfly* and other familiar pieces at the Filial (done in Russian, of course) were on the level of an Italian small town house, but the Bolshoi with its flair for spectacle made a tremendous impact with the Russian repertoire.

Alongside Radio City Music Hall or the Berlin Staatsoper, the Bolshoi (Grand or Big) is just another theater, although its seventy-foot deep stage does justify its name. Completed in 1824 and rebuilt after a fire in 1856, it has six horseshoe-shaped balconies, painted in gold and with red seats and curtains. Contrary to popular notion, the national colors of the Soviet Union are red and gold, not just red. At the rear of the theater, stretching through the first and second balconies, is the royal box, now wearing the hammer and sickle. Is it significant that in opera houses the royal box is always at the most distant point from the stage?

The great curtain is gold and covered with the letters U.S.S.R. (in Cyrillic characters) and the dates 1871, 1905, and 1917; and when the curtain goes up a wave of cool air sweeps over the footlights carrying an odor of scenepaint and fishglue. I never was sure of the dates: presumably 1871 was the fall of the Paris commune, 1905 the October Manifesto granting Russia a constitution following the Great General Strike, and 1917 you know.

The Bolshoi has a staff of 3,000 to entertain an audience that at top capacity numbers 2,000. It has its own costume and scenery factory, a seven-story building housing twenty-two shops where 600 full-time workers make everything that goes onto the stage or into the auditorium. One enthusiastic statistic claims that it turns out 1,500 pairs of hand-made ballet shoes a month; since this would mean at least 50 pairs of hand-made shoes a day even with a 30-day work month, it is open to question. The Bolshoi has a print shop for tickets and programs, a power plant to produce its own electricity, a warehouse where

more than 100,000 costumes are catalogued and stored, a fleet of trucks, and a complex of apartment houses for its employees (what's this footnote? I seem to have forgotten to put it down.). Thus do the resources of the state support an enterprise that, if it entertained 2,000 people twice a day 365 days of the year, could be seen by only 1,460,000 of Russia's 250 million comrades. T.V. of course can expand the audience.

Although the Bolshoi's operas were competently done, they were notable largely because of their ballet scenes, and indeed the full-scale ballets were unforgettable. The most impressive opera I saw was Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, which has begun to regain the place it once held in Western opera houses although it has never been wildly successful outside Russia. Tchaikovsky wrote eleven operas, but with rare exceptions only this one is exported. As others have said, it is a collection of episodes rather than a true dramatic work, but it offers so much histrionic conflict, tuneful music, elaborate costuming, and varied dancing that it makes for superb theater. No other Tchaikovsky opera was on the boards while I was in Moscow. I regretted not having heard *The Queen of Spades*. I'm told it is the only extant opera that opens with a chorus of wet nurses.

After *Swan Lake*, which has become a staple with Bolshoi troupes performing in Europe and America, I found *The Fountain of Bakhchisaray* (sometimes called *The Fountain of Tears*) most memorable. Bakhchisaray is a city in South Crimea which was the seat of the Crimean Khanate, a kingdom on the Peninsula that got along by itself for a while but fell to the Tartars in the 13th Century and passed to Russia in 1783. *The Fountain* was one of 37 ballets and 10 operas composed by Boris V. Asafyev (1884-1949), who wrote music criticism under the pen name Igor Glebor in his spare time. His *The Prisoner of the Caucasus* and *The Three Fat Men* also hold the stage in Russia.

This ballet has so much going for it you wonder why it isn't a favorite in the West. The music is adequate, the costumes and sets are lavish, the situations are packed with drama, the styles of dancing include traditional ballet, pulsating harem beauties, and barbarian frenzy, and there are major roles for four soloists. One would think it would be a welcome change from *Giselle* and *Les Sylphides*, but to my knowledge it has never been seen in the United States except on a Soviet-made film.

Borodin's *Prince Igor* is a pleasant but conventional opera except for its third-act ballet. Prince Igor (1150-1202) is the hero of a Russian epic, *The Lay of the Host of Igor*, discovered in 1795 and attributed to the Twelfth Century, which was used by Borodin's librettist. In 1185 the Prince led the Russians in an unsuccessful expedition against the Cumans, a nomadic people of Turkic language. They were also called Kipchaks, but you probably think of them as the Polovtsi. They raised considerable hell in southern Russia until defeated by the Mongols around 1245, after which they moved to Hungary and merged with the Magyars, and that's why you don't hear much about them any more.

Borodin left the opera incomplete, and it is thanks to Glazonov and Rimsky-Korsakov that we have it today. In a prologue, Igor announces he's going to pummel the Polovtsis, and an eclipse darkens the sky. In the theater, this dramatic moment falls flat, with little excitement in the music and the chorus just standing around and yipping. During Act I

Prince Galitsky, Igor's basso brother left in charge of the store while Igor is out on the steppes, gets nastily drunk, sings a braggart aria (the best song in the opera), and chases a pretty girl. There is a fire at the end of the act, and everybody beats his breast and wails as the flames consume something.

Act II makes it a great show. Igor, the silly ass, has got himself captured by Khan Konchak and tells us in a despair song his head is going to decorate a tent pole. Improbably, old Konchak sits down with him for a fatherly talk and tells him he can go back home. Rimsky-Korsakov disclosed in *My Musical Life* that Borodin intended to have a scene of Igor's escape from the Polovtsi, which would have made better sense, but never got around to writing it. At any rate, Konchak claps his hands to order the girls to do the dance of the Polovtsi maidens, and it is at this sort of thing that the Bolshoi excels.

Then Igor's son sings a duet about romance with the beautiful daughter of Konchak, after which comes the great punch of the opera, the tremendous ballet done to the Polovtsian Dances. The deep stage of the Bolshoi comes into play and assists the Russian genius at organizing chaos into pandemonium. You think there are hundreds of savages flinging themselves in hordes of directions, berzerking into frenzy, yet somehow without turning the stage into shredded wheat. I have seen this ballet done in other opera houses, but none has matched the Bolshoi.

At the end of Act II the opera fan is advised to head for the nearest exit as Act III is a soggy letdown. Igor comes home, the naughty Galitsky is not to be seen, there is no struggle for the throne or even a P.T.A. debate, everybody just stands and sings except for two comics who fail to amuse, and you're better off sipping beer and trying to re-live the tremendous ballet you have just seen. The Russian word for beer is *pivo* (pee-voh).

I heard several other Russian works at the Filial. The dullest was Rimsky-Korsakov's *Snyegorochka* (Snow Maiden) in which the vinegar-faced heroine walks around holding onto her own long braids. More interesting musically is *The Tsar's Bride*. Its motivating character is Ivan the Terrible, although he is on stage only long enough to cast a lascivious look at the soprano, who is about to marry the tenor. The plot hinges on this look, for Ivan is so snared by the soprano's beauty he decides to liquidate the tenor and take over the girl himself.

The pleasantest R-K opera I saw was *The Tale of Tsar Saltan*. The Tsar, misled by suggestions from wicked sisters that his Tsarina is unfaithful, has her and her infant son thrown into the sea in a barrel. They sail away for a year and a day, while the son grows to manhood, and land on a magic isle where good fairies promise to help restore them to their kingdom. The fairies change the young prince to a bee, and you've got it, there's the *Flight of the Bumblebee*. The flight runs throughout the act, not just the two-minute version you hear in the concert hall. The bee-prince buzzes around the wicked aunts and his stupid father through several scenes, meaning that the violins keep buzzybuzzybuzzy. The characters are less intense in this opera, and perhaps that's why it's less of a bore although it runs over three hours.

Diversions. One evening I stretched to my full five-seven and walked beside six-foot Flavin through Sokolniki Park. When we smiled at two girls, they giggled and kept peeking girl-fashion from the corner of their eyes as we followed to a building where they bought tickets and disappeared inside. There was a placard over the door, but we could not translate it. "A lecture on communism," hazarded Flavin. Since there was one sure way to find out, we plunked down three roubles each and entered. It was a ballroom dancing hall.

I was amused to see an electric sign tell the dancers what was being played: fox trot, tango, boston. Fox trot and tango I could figure out, but what was a boston? A waltz; in fact it's in Noah Webster and in *Petit Larousse*; "*Danse lente sur une mesure a trois-quatre*". The Russian boys wore business suits with padded shoulders, the ladies wore house dresses of the customary sackcloth, and the musicians wore tuxedos. The girls stood in clumps or danced in pairs; the stags stood in other clumps until they screwed up their courage to ask for dances or cut in on the pairs.

Seeing the Russian chaps cutting in, we said what the hell we might as well try it, and we began approaching the ladies, making a bow, and saying *pashalsta* (please). Refusals were unanimous, so Francis changed the tactics. Dragging me in tow, he broke up a pair of girls, and I grabbed No. 2 before she could flee. International relations did not prosper. The foxtrot was paced for the third race at Pimlico, the girl danced like the broom in *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, and I was too winded at the close to prevent her from scurrying back to the safety of the herd. Flavin was equally unsuccessful. We stuck it gamely for an hour but made no progress. The girls were courteous, they let us cut in, but they declined to stay with us although Francis turned loose all fifty words of his Russian vocabulary.

We tried again at Sokolniki a few weeks later. I gave up after an hour, but Flavin stayed on. When he returned to the apartment he began talking excitedly, an amazing metamorphosis from his customary reserve. He had been the lion of the evening, had danced with a dozen girls, and had even given one his phone number. (No use asking for hers; nobody in Moscow has one.) I hoped the girl would call; never had I seen Francis so light-hearted.

She did not, but Flavin doggedly went out to Sokolniki again, alone this time, and again gave his number to a girl. This one did call. I overheard his side of the phone conversation and had to laugh at the obstacles to intercultural communication, every other sentence being, "*Nye panimayu*" (I do not understand). A date was arranged and kept, but no lasting friendship developed. Flavin, who was to stay in the Soviet Union seven years without home leave, eventually found the right girl on the staff of the Swedish Embassy.

The principal night spot for foreigners and many natives was the Metropole Hotel, a great barn three blocks from the Embassy. The first time I went there the place was jammed because of "free eve," the evening before the working man's day off. The dance floor was a ring around a pool filled with live fish, railed to keep revelers from falling in. It was said that if you had enough prestige and *valuta* (foreign currency) the chef would net a

fish of your choice and prepare it for you. The narrow dance floor was crowded, the food indifferent, the service slow, and the band mechanical. The merriest prank of the evening was to buy gas-filled toy balloons, light the strings, and allow them to float up to the vaulted ceiling to pop. Here at the Metropole were the only attractively gowned girls in Moscow. This was the place to rent yourself a romantic liaison if you didn't mind her connections with the G.P.U.

During the early years of the communist regime the Metropole was out of bounds for Russians. The idea was to let it earn foreign currency, and its tariffs were listed in dollars (pounds, francs, marks, of course were acceptable). This policy was changed because there weren't enough foreign visitors to make it pay, but even after the place was opened to Russians there was a period when they were allowed only into the grand salon and not the bar. Eventually this restriction was also relaxed. Russians were given a menu in roubles; foreigners were asked whether they wanted to pay in roubles or *valuta*. If they chose *valuta*, the meal and the service showed improvement.

The National Hotel next door to the Mokavaya building (the U.S. Embassy) was also patronized by foreigners. Then there was the famed Moscow Circus, notable for its lion act, but not because of the derring-do of the trainers. An iron cage protected front-row spectators from tooth and claw but not from other perils. The lions had not been housebroken, and a male lion does not pause beside a fire hydrant like faithful Fido. The front rows of spectators were drenched without warning. I was amazed at the range and trajectory.

Not all diversions were indoors. When freezing weather set in, the Embassy staff skated at the public rink, which was made by flooding tennis courts with a hose. Later on Ambassador Kirk provided a private rink in the garden of Spaso House, the official residence. Although this had the advantage of a charcoal brazier and refreshments, I never warmed up to skating.

In January came snow, and the staff headed for skis like lemmings for the sea. They pooled resources to rent a *dacha* or wooden bungalow some miles out in the country. From the *dacha* they set out on ski across country for some two miles to a valley ringed with small hills. Raised in Washington, D. C., which has little snow or ice, I was new to skis and skates, and once the novelty had worn off I lost my enthusiasm, though I had bought skis left by my predecessor, and I kept to the Mokavaya where I could play records and stay warm.

"...What new acquisition of House Berghof was it which at length released (Hans Castorp) from his patience-playing mania and flung him into the arms of another passion, nobler, though at bottom no less strange...? It was an overflowing cornucopia of artistic enjoyment, ranging from grave to gay. It was a musical apparatus. It was a gramophone..."

This substitute for musical ability, this mechanical and later electronic caterer to one's enjoyment called the gramophone or phonograph, so took the fancy of Thomas Mann he

devoted an entire chapter to it in *The Magic Mountain* (Chapter headed "Fullness of Harmony," beginning page 635).

"...Of course, it was scarcely like a real orchestra playing in the room. The volume of sound, though not to any extent distorted, had suffered a diminution of perspective. If we may draw a simile from the visual field, it was as though one were to look at a painting through the wrong end of an opera-glass, seeing it remote and diminutive, though with all its luminous precision of drawing and colour...."

In a Broadway play of the 'forties, *The Voice of the Turtle*, I think it was, the hero remarks that he's not much good at doing things but he sure is good at appreciating. I could have been that hero. As a child I put up dogged resistance when I was told to practice the violin, but I was hooked by the windup phonograph in the front parlor. First it was a comedy record:

Gus, Gus, Gasoline Gus,  
Gasoline Gus and his jitney bus,  
He bought a pound of dynamite,  
He bought a pint of gin,  
That had the zip and pepper for  
His old machine of tin.  
'It's got a bigger kick than gasoline,'  
Said Gus as he loaded his tin machine.  
Gus, Gus, Gasoline Gus,  
Gasoline Gus, and his jitney bus.

- (that's all I remember) (I'll cite composer and title if I ever find them.)

Then it was a record of Weber's *Invitation to the Waltz*, and when at Christmas I was given the Overture to *Oberon* I decided that Weber was the greatest composer of all time, and I turned my feet on a path from which I was not to deviate for fifty years, the pursuit of recorded music. Louis XIV could crook a finger and Lully would perform, but what king in history was so well served as I have been, who can command thousands of artists to play by pushing a button?

The records bought at the Mostorg were not very satisfying, but Colonel Faymonville gave me liberal access to his amazingly large library of classical records, all of them 78 r.p.m. shellacs, for long-plays were not to come for nearly ten years. I also ordered a few classical records from the States that arrived in good condition although held several days in Customs. Rumor had it that the Russians had to play them first to make sure they were not capitalist propaganda, but maybe it was just bureaucracy at work. Also received was a record featuring Louis Armstrong called *Shadrack* over which the Embassy staff went mad. Pierce and Pressley exclaimed over it one night at our apartment, and Pressley borrowed it to play for himself. Costello and McKee dropping in, Pressley played it for them ten times. "There were three children in the land of Israel; Shadrack, Mishack, Abednego...." Others heard about it and called on me to hear me play my wonderful

record. If I could have charged a dime for each playing, I would have earned a week's pay.

I held decided opinions about jazz. The greatest dance band of all time, bar none, was Jimmy Lunceford, and his greatest arrangement was *Rain*, followed closely by *Jealous*. I'm still inclined to this opinion, even today. Duke Ellington had a good dance band, too, although not as good as it was cracked up to be. For a short time, Cab Calloway was on a cloud of his own. The old Dorsey Brothers band, with its unique one trumpet and three trombones, was vastly superior to either the Tommy or the Jimmy band; its classic was *Honeysuckle Rose*. Guy Lombardo always played one-eighth interval sharp, but he went on forever. Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Woodie Herman were late arrivals and too full of squawk. A great, really serious band was Isham Jones, dance music without strain all the way. Ray Noble's English band was much better than his American, and its best number was *Who Walks In When I Walk Out?*, although his smoothies like *Love Locked Out* with crooner Al Bowlly (who was killed in a London air raid) were tops in their realm. The finest of the conventional swing bands was Glen Gray and the Casa Loma. Gray was precision; Lunceford was so dispersed you wondered if his men would end on the same chord, and in any case at least one instrument was usually outside it. Gray always turned out a competent job, Lunceford gave you either filet mignon or hash.

Sheltered in my office job, I had but one brush with Soviet officialdom. Colonel Faymonville sent me to pay a bill at a Moscow bank, and for this routine junket he supplied me with the bill, roubles, a letter from the Government, a car with chauffeur, and Miss Tolstoy, the office interpreter. This lady, somewhere in her fifties I suppose, had an aristocratic way of carrying herself, a knack of looking chic even in Soviet clothes, and a trick of managing to smile without showing her teeth, presumably because she needed dental work. The chauffeur drove us to the bank building, and Miss Tolstoy started making inquiries.

A girl directed us to another girl. The other girl directed us to another building. Here we found not the desired *caisse* but an information booth. The information booth directed us to a nearby room. When we tried to enter, a policeman demanded our passes. The letter from the Government was produced, but the policeman insisted on passes. He directed us to the office of the pass-giver-outer. The pgo demanded our passports. All this, of course, in Russian, and I could see that Miss Tolstoy, who dealt with matters like this every week, was losing her temper. She now made the mistake of telling the pgo that no passports were needed because of the letter from the Government. Oh, says the pgo, is that so? Well, maybe you have a letter from the Government, comrade, but all he had to say was he wanted to see you get the pass without showing your passport, that's all he had to say. We had to return to the Colonel with bill, money, car, chauffeur and interpreter, and the debt still unpaid. The Colonel did not seem astonished.

Change at the top. My boss, Colonel Philip R. Faymonville, left Moscow on February 15, 1939, after more than five years in Russia as Military Attache. It was his third tour of duty in Russia and was to be followed by a fourth. A graduate of Stanford University and West Point, Faymonville served on the Mexican border and in the Philippines, and during

the first World War was assigned to Ordnance Corps duties. In 1918 he was promoted to temporary major and sent as chief ordnance officer in the American expeditionary force to Siberia. This weird episode in U.S. military history merits a digression.

The execution of Tsar Nicholas II and family on July 16-17, 1918 provoked an Allied reaction. On August 2 the British disembarked several thousand Allied troops at Archangel, overthrew the local soviet, and set up a provisional government of the north. A few days later British and French contingents landed at Vladivostok, followed by a Japanese division on August 12 and two U.S. regiments on August 15 and 16. By the end of 1918, reinforcements had brought the number of U.S. troops among the Allied forces in eastern Siberia to approximately 7,000.

What they were doing there was a matter of doubt to themselves and their governments. In May 1918 about 100,000 Czechoslovak troops which had been organized by the tsarist forces from Austrian Army prisoners, began hostilities against the Bolsheviks while being transported across Siberia to Vladivostok. This Czech legion became split, some of them occupying Samar, Simbirsk and Kazan in western Siberia and others Omsk, Irkutsk, and other points on the trans-Siberian railway in eastern Siberia. In July they entered Vladivostok and appealed to the Allies for aid. The Allied Supreme War Council proposed a joint Allied expedition to help them form a junction with their compatriots in the west, and they sent in the British, French and Japanese contingents. President Wilson, believing erroneously that German-Austrian prisoners of war were controlling sections of the trans-Siberian and keeping the two groups of Czechs apart, sent the U.S. force to guard the line of communication as the Czechs moved westward.

Ironically, the junction between the two Czech groups had been effected two days before the American forces under General William S. Graves reached Vladivostok, and the War ended a few weeks after they arrived. The Americans remained in Siberia, guarding limited sections of the railway until April 1920, because of President Wilson's preoccupation with the Paris Peace Conference and with the struggle for acceptance of the Covenant of the League of Nations, followed by his sudden paralytic stroke (George F. Kennan, *Russia and the West Under Lenin and Stalin*, pp. 102 ff. Also *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and William L. Langer, ed., *An Encyclopedia of World History*, pp. 947 and 1032.).

Faymonville, a participant in this exercise in futility, returned to Russia briefly in 1922 as an American military observer, and from 1923 to 1926 he was U.S. Military Attache in Tokyo. This was followed by training in ordnance and in military industrial and chemical warfare fields until 1934, when he was sent to Moscow as military attache under Ambassador Bullitt, remaining until February, 1939.

On August 23, 1939 the U.S.S.R. signed a non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany and sat back to watch the capitalist-imperialists destroy each other. Approximately two years later, however, Hitler invaded the Soviet Union, and Russia suddenly became "our brave ally" and a recipient of aid under Lend-Lease. "It is an open secret here (Washington) that Colonel Philip R. Faymonville, in charge of Lend-Lease aid to Russia, already is

supervising arrangements for shipment of existing war supplies to Russia," reported the *New York Times* on August 5, 1941. By September 12 Faymonville was back in Russia designated as the link between U.S. production facilities and the Soviet forces (*New York Times* September 13, 1941, p. 7:4).

The *Times* noted on January 23, 1942 that President Roosevelt had nominated Faymonville for promotion to brigadier general because of his work as permanent secretary of the American Mission to Moscow in expediting American aid to the Soviet war effort. Star ascendant. But what goes up can come down.

Twenty months later the *Times* said it had learned from reliable diplomatic sources that Faymonville would soon be recalled to Washington, as would also Brigadier General Joseph A. Michaela, his successor as military attache in Moscow. According to the article, for some time it had been well known in Moscow that there was a conflict of ideas and aspirations between the Lend-Lease Mission on the one hand and the Embassy and its military attache office on the other.

On November 18, 1943 it was reported that former Brigadier General Faymonville was currently on duty as a colonel in the Office of the Chief of Ordnance in Washington and that Brigadier General Michaela would also revert to colonel. The *Times* said it was known that the recall of the two officers had ended a situation which had given great concern to American officials for many months. Friction within the U.S. group in Moscow had been reported by official emissaries on their return to Washington.

Faymonville's successor as head of the U.S. Supply Mission, General John R. Deane, explained in *The Strange Alliance* (p. 91) after the war that the President had instructed Faymonville to attach no strings to our aid and to avoid using the program as a lever to obtain information from the Russians. In the opinion of his colleagues, Faymonville observed these instructions too literally. A conflict developed between him and the War and Navy Departments, which tried to get him to supply information on whether effective use was being made of the supplies, information that Faymonville did not have.

The impression left by the newspaper accounts is that there were personal differences between Faymonville and Michaela, but historians suggest that the causes lay elsewhere. Our Ambassador in 1943 was Admiral William H. Standley, former Chief of Naval Operations. Standley is said to have been annoyed that Faymonville handled the important lend-lease contacts on direct authority from the White House. Although every cablegram Faymonville sent and received was placed on Standley's desk and the Ambassador was kept fully informed, he felt it a derogation of his position that he had no authority over the disposition of lend-lease aid.

On March 8, 1943 Standley called in American and British newspaper correspondents and made a public charge that the Russian people were not being informed about the lend-lease aid they were receiving. He even threatened to have lend-lease stopped. Although the Department of State declared that the Admiral's statement was not an expression of official policy, the smooth working of lend-lease was seriously disturbed. It

is contended that Standley was really striking at Faymonville and that the State Department, too, resented Faymonville's authority to communicate directly with the White House, the War Department, and the Lend-Lease Administration (D. F. Fleming, *The Cold War and Its Origins*, Doubleday, 1961, pp. 138 and 141-143. Waverly Root, *The Secret History of the War. Vol. III, Casablanca to Katyn*. New York, Scribners, 1946. pp. 343-350.).

Faymonville disappeared into the obscurity of Stateside Army assignments, retired as a brigadier general, and died at his home in San Francisco in 1962, aged 73 (*New York Times*, March 31, 1962 (obituary)). I remember him gratefully as a kindly, cultured, generous and tolerant gentleman under whom I was most lucky to work as a green, hyper-emotional kid in my first assignment (A notice in the *New York Times Book Review* of May 10, 1970 asked readers to send any available information concerning the position of Brigadier General Faymonville to the Department of History, U.S. Air Force Academy, for use in a book that was currently in preparation describing and evaluating Faymonville's role in Soviet -American relations.).

You're going to Warsaw. With Flavin doing three-fourths of the clerical work of the office, including virtually all the clerical duties, I had no basis for judging the quality and utility of the military attache intelligence output. The contributions of military attaches as a group were held in low esteem by Army upper echelons. Witness General Eisenhower: "Within the War Department a shocking deficiency that impeded all constructive planning existed in the field of intelligence. ...(D)uring the years between the two world wars no funds were provided with which to establish the basic requirement of an intelligence system -- a far-flung organization of fact finders. Our one feeble gesture in this direction was the maintenance of military attaches in most foreign capitals, and since public funds were not available to meet the unusual expenses of this type of duty, only officers with independent means could normally be detailed to these posts. Usually they were estimable, socially acceptable gentlemen: few knew the essentials of intelligence work. Results were almost completely negative...."

- (*Crusade in Europe*, Garden City Books 1948, p. 48)

Faymonville was an exception to this indictment. He knew the Russians and he knew their military capability. After Stalin's 1937 purge of the Red Army, the consensus was that the Russian military machine had been greatly weakened. But in 1938 Ambassador Davies wrote to Washington: "...It is generally considered here that the liquidation of the older and experienced generals has weakened the army very materially. Personally I agree with our Military Attache, Colonel Faymonville, that while this is measurably true, it is much exaggerated." (*Mission to Moscow*, 1941, p. 409) Root notes that Faymonville was almost the only U.S. Army officer to contradict the general prediction that Russia would be beaten in a few months and indeed expressed the belief that it was unlikely Russia would be beaten at all (*The Secret History of the War*, op. cit., circa. p. 345).

Of these matters, I formed no opinion. During my five months under the Colonel I typed routine correspondence, kept out of Flavin's way, and spent many hours searching for

means of killing time. I had a high opinion of the Colonel as a person but no clue whatever as to the importance of the military attaché office contribution. I learned nothing of codes, accounts, files or drafting. In view of the hours that hung on my hands, I sometimes wondered why the military attache office had asked Washington to send out a second American clerk.

Washington must have wondered the same thing. A telegram in code arrived seven days after Colonel Faymonville's departure. Flavin decoded it and, in accordance with standard procedure, declined to reveal what was in it until he had shown it to Major Hayne, the Acting Military Attache. Unusually, however, he volunteered that it concerned both him and me. This was one of the few days that I went skating, and when I got back to the apartment Flavin was eating Tanya's dinner. To my question about the telegram he responded with: "How'd you like to go to Warsaw?" The War Department had asked the Major to wire his opinion as to which of us could be spared.

There was no hesitation about the answer. I was ignorant and inexperienced, Flavin was knowledgeable and proven. Flavin wanted keenly to go. He pointed out to the Major that he had been in Moscow eighteen months, that he was fed up with Russia, and that he had earned a change. He even praised me as eminently qualified to be chief clerk. The Major remained unconvinced, but he did agree to request a raise for Flavin as a reward for staying. An answering telegram was sent to Washington the following day, somewhat remarkable in phrasing: BOTH MEN WORKING AT CAPACITY BUT IF ONE MUST GO PREFER KEEP FLAVIN HERE.

For the first time I knew what it was to wait for orders from home base, but not for too long. A telegram came in two days later, and I waited tensely while Flavin decoded it. "Pal," said Francis earnestly, "you asked for it. You're leaving in twenty-four hours for Addis Ababa." In accordance with instructions he declined to let me read the telegram until he had shown it to the boss, and by the time he returned I was ready for a strait-jacket. When he saw how worked up I was, Flavin apologized. The telegram had contained nothing concerning a transfer.

But only half an hour later a second telegram came in, and after consulting with the Major Flavin handed it over. It said orders transferring me to Warsaw would be issued shortly. "Shortly" turned out to be approximately two weeks. The orders arrived on March 7, 1939.

Francis remained in Russia seven years in all, transferring to Kuibyshev when the Embassy moved with the Russian Government before the advancing Germans. On my side, I was to spend three weeks in Warsaw, two months in Bucharest, three more weeks in Warsaw, two weeks running from the German forces, and a year in Budapest, before going home.

Flavin's joke about Addis Ababa brought a recollection that someone on the Embassy side had received orders transferring him to Pretoria. "Where in the world is *that*?" I had asked. I could not foresee that two years later I would be heading there myself.

Last days. After weeks of trying, I managed to obtain tickets to the Moscow Art Theater performance of *Anna Karenina* only a few days before my departure. Four hours, and I could not understand a single sentence, but I sat enthralled at the twenty-odd scenes, the beauty of the costumes, the lavishness of the sets, and the technique of the actors. Again, it was the realism of mobs that was outstanding. There was a drawing room filled with finely appareled ladies and gentlemen who had to keep up hubbub and yet permit dialogue between main characters to come through. There was a scene at the races where the actors actually "saw" the imaginary horses. There were the opera boxes where Anna overhears the insults of her neighbors and shows the audience that she cannot face their sneers. There was a scene of breathtaking splendor at the Royal Palace. There was the incredible final scene where you, in the audience, go under the wheels of the train with her.

The stage is black, impenetrable, except for a spotlight on Anna as she waits on the railway platform, down right. You can make out the rails dimly receding upstage. In the distance the red light of a semaphore and green of a switch. The rails run from the gloom of the stage straight at you in your seat. As Anna voices her despair you hear the hum of wheels on rails, gradually becoming louder. Now the shrill of a whistle; Anna starts and looks up the tracks at a pinpoint of light. It rapidly grows larger as it comes at you, becomes three lights, the searchlight and two cowcatchers. And now you hear the *puff* of the stack and the clank of the drivers, and the train is here. A scream from Anna as she jumps onto the tracks. The train is on top of you; and *blackout*. You have just committed suicide. Eugene Lyons wrote:

"I took in the Russian theater, ballet and opera in great droughts. Ardentely if illogically, I gave the revolution credit for everything cultural that it had inherited from the tsarist era. A hundred years of classical ballet, the meticulous art of Stanislavsky's theaters, the piled-up treasures of Russian music and stagecraft were for me, as for all foreign worshipers, subtle confirmation of Karl Marx's theories. Tchaikovsky and Mussorgsky, Moskvina and Madam Geltzer have made more converts to Sovietism among visiting outsiders than the marvels of the Five Year Plan or the adroitness of the guides."

- *Assignment in Utopia*, p. 63

At one of my last parties in Moscow we danced to a tune much in vogue, *The Lambeth Walk*. Flavin gave a cocktail party in my honor, Fahrenholz took me to a performance of *Eugene Onegin*, and a small crowd turned out to see me off at the railway station at 11:00 p.m. on March 9, 1939.

The Embassy asked me to carry some official materials to our Embassy at Warsaw and provided special documents designating me a diplomatic courier. These passed me through customs at Negoroloye at noon on March 10 without inspection. Few blessings are unflawed. Under State Department regulations a courier must occupy a compartment alone, but in the U.S.S.R. all first-class compartments were for two. The War Department, which was paying the fare, provided only enough money for one first-class

ticket, and I had to buy the second myself. The convenience of passing customs unmolested more than compensated me for the seven-odd dollars.

The train reached the outer Warsaw station about 9:00 the night of March 10, 1939. I had intended to get off at the central station, but a stately lady of dowager age cried through the pane to ask if I were Mr. Thrasher. Thus began a treasured acquaintance with Miss Juljana Mikwitz, the linchpin of our military attache office in Warsaw. The official Chevrolet and chauffeur took me, Miss Mikwitz, and the two diplomatic pouches to the Embassy and then to the Hotel Bristol, with the luggage following in a taxi. I was quite the distinguished traveler as I entered the lobby with five bags, a pair of skis, and a guitar. The distinguished traveler had so lost his poise that he left Miss Mikwitz to pay for the taxi, but he remembered to apologize and repay her next morning.

The hotel porter (bellhop captain) said in accented English: "If I knew somebody was coming from U.S.A., I would asked him bring me cigarettes." He looked at me hopefully.

I answered that I had not come from the United States but from Russia.

"If you just come from Russia," said the porter, "you ain't got *nothing*."

Chapter 3  
Warsaw  
(March 1939)

"The foreign policy of Poland since the (First World) War has been that of the nut in the nutcracker."

- John Gunther, *Inside Europe*, p. 427

"The partition of Poland is now something more than an accomplished fact.... (T)he rule of Russia has been harsh, and there has been no disposition, at least until the last few years, to conceal the character of the claim by right of which Russia rules in Warsaw... The penalties are dreadful for those who receive a stranger without at once giving notice to the police of his country and his quality. No hotel exists with out a passport bureau; and travelers are not 'ushered', as reporters say, into their apartments, but are rather 'interned' to await,..., the good pleasure of the Russian police as to their liberty within the city, and the time of their departure...."

- (Sir) Arthur Arnold, *Through Persia by Caravan*, p. 21; Harper & Brothers, New York, 1877

Lavender was fashionable that spring of 1939. Although early March, the weather was warm, and each girl showed a lavender ribbon or hatband or scarf. As I ambled from the Hotel Bristol, I kept one eye on shop windows and the other on the ladies' silk stockings. Compare the felt boots of Moscow! Clothes make the man, especially on a woman.

I reported to Miss Mikwitz at the Embassy and was presented to my new boss, Major William H. Colbern, six-three, blue-eyed, red-headed, who introduced me around the Embassy. Names and faces sorted themselves out later. On this first round, I was impressed with Ambassador Anthony J. Drexel ("Tony") Biddle, a slender gentleman impeccably tailored, with sleeked hair, huge nose, and homely smile who, in saying "Glad to have you here," made me feel that the Embassy had been barely limping along without me.

Biddle, of the Philadelphia family, was the son of that "happiest millionaire" who used to hold public sparring matches with Jack Johnson and Jim Corbett. While at St. Paul's School in Concord young Tony became engaged to Mary Duke, the tobacco heiress, whose brother, Angier, had become engaged to Tony's sister, Cordelia. Newspapers estimated at the time that the combined fortunes of Mr. Biddle and Mr. Duke exceeded \$50 million. Tony served in the Army in World War I and left the service as a captain. He was a director of a number of commercial firms and reportedly had interests in several night clubs and in the Central Park Casino and the St. Regis Hotel. The marriage ending in divorce in 1931, he married Mrs. Margaret Thompson Schulze, the daughter of Colonel William Boyce Thompson, a Montana copper mine owner. She was said to have inherited \$40 million when her father died. This marriage, too, was to end in divorce in 1944, but in March 1939 Mrs. Biddle was resident in Warsaw.

Mr. Biddle was appointed Ambassador to Norway in 1935 and transferred to Warsaw in 1937. After being forced to leave Poland by the invading German Army in 1939, he became deputy to Ambassador William C. Bullitt in Paris, Angers, Tours, and Bordeaux, and after the fall of France was appointed Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary near the Governments of Belgium, Norway, the Netherlands, Jugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and Greece, all established in England.

Leaving the diplomatic service in 1944, Mr. Biddle resumed active military duty and in a few months was appointed brigadier general and named deputy chief of the European Allied Contact Section of the Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF). At the time of his retirement from the Army in 1955 he was a special assistant to General Matthew B. Ridgway, the Army Chief of Staff. He then became Adjutant General of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and chairman of the Pennsylvania Aeronautics Commission.

In March 1961 President Kennedy appointed Mr. Biddle Ambassador to Madrid, but he had been in Spain only a few months when he became seriously ill and was flown back to Washington. At Walter Reed Hospital he was found to have lung cancer. He died in November 1961, aged 64. President Kennedy and former President Eisenhower issued statements of tribute, and the *New York Times* wrote: "Few United States diplomats have ever participated in such a variety of diplomatic missions as the trim, personable and athletic scion of the famous Biddle family (November 14, 1961. 39:2. Also Department of State *Biographic Register*, 1961-62)."

Other officers of the small staff had careers of distinction. Counselor North Winship was to become Minister to South Africa in later years. Second Secretary Landreth Harrison went on to high posts in London and Paris. Third Secretary C. Burke Elbrick became a deputy assistant secretary of state and Ambassador to Portugal and Yugoslavia, and he was to have the dubious distinction of being kidnapped while Ambassador to Brazil.

The Warsaw chancery was smaller than that of Moscow, the consular officers occupying a separate building in the heart of town. Warsaw's greatest development had taken place during the reign of Poland's last king, Stanislaw II Poniatowski (1732-1798). The Chancery occupied a two-storey mansion on the broad, tree-lined Aleja (avenue) Ujazdowskie in the Ujazdow to the south laid out under the plan of King Stanislaw.

Miss Mikwitz suggested that I take up quarters in a *pension*, and although I was suspicious of boarding houses I let myself be installed in a room with bath for 23 zlotys per day, or about \$4.60, including three meals. The *pension* was on the Szopena, which is the Polish way of spelling Chopin Street. Grove's *Dictionary of Musicians*, however, denies the story that Frederic Chopin was the son of a Polish emigre named Szop and says that his father was Nicolas Chopin, from the Vosges, and of purely French stock, who took up residence in Poland in 1787 at age 16 to avoid conscription into the French revolutionary army. The Poles, nevertheless, claim the composer as particularly their own because his mother, Tekla-Justyna Krzyzanowska, was Polish and he was educated and

lived in Poland until 1830.

The first day at the *pension* I survived on a breakfast of two eggs, ham, rolls, jam and tea; a dinner of soup, meat cakes, chicken, potatoes, rice, bread, endive, tea and dessert; and a supper of beefsteak, endive, bread and tea. The *pension* was clean, comfortable and gracious, but my prejudice against boarding houses prevailed, and I persuaded Miss Mikwitz to help me find an apartment.

Miss Mikwitz was a gray-haired beauty *d'un certain age*, obviously once a dish but now running to *poitrine*. A White Russian of aristocratic family, she came from St. Petersburg (she refused to call it Leningrad) and had been imprisoned by the bandits (her term for the Bolsheviks) and released in exchange for a bandit held by the Pilsudski forces. She lived with her antique aunt, a ramrod erect lady of bones and parchment, in a small flat not far from the Embassy and had earned their joint livings as a clerk for the Americans since 1925. Following Hitler's invasion of Warsaw in 1939, she and her aunt emigrated to Holland and then to the States, and she ended her career working in the Pentagon.

Over the years observers have contrasted the Poles as persons and the Poles as a nation. In 1890 Jeremiah Curtin, translator of the novels of Henryk Sienkiewicz, wrote:

"The Poles, though intellectually sympathetic, brave, and gifted with high personal qualities that have made them many friends, have been always deficient in collective wisdom; and there is probably no more astonishing antithesis in Europe than the Poles as individuals and the Poles as a people ."

- Preface by Jeremiah Curtin to Henryk Sienkiewicz, *With Fire and Sword*. Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1904, p. xix.

An instance in point was Poland's action at the time of Munich. The former principality of Teschen had been part of Austria (as Silesia) for nearly four hundred years, 1526 to 1918. After World War I the western section of Teschen was awarded to Czechoslovakia, the eastern to Poland. To one not familiar with the centuries-old animosities of eastern Europe it would appear reasonable that Poland should have united with Czechoslovakia against the common enemy, Nazi Germany. Instead Poland took advantage of the Munich dismemberment of Czechoslovakia to seize the western section for itself. It can be argued that Poland, having itself been three times partitioned beginning in 1772, was justified in taking its neighbor's territory, but the move was strongly criticized in the West. Winston Churchill's censure was harsh:

"The heroic characteristics of the Polish race must not blind us to their record of folly and ingratitude which over the centuries has led them through measureless suffering.... We see them, in 1919, a people restored by the victory of the Western Allies after long generations of partition and servitude to be an independent Republic and one of the main Powers in Europe. Now, in 1938, over a question so minor as Teschen, they sundered themselves from all those friends in France, Britain and the United States.... It is a mystery and tragedy of European history that a people capable of every heroic virtue,

gifted, valiant, charming as individuals, should repeatedly show such inveterate faults in almost every aspect of their governmental life.

Glorious in revolt and ruin; squalid and shameful in triumph. The bravest of the brave, too often led by the vilest of the vile...."

- Winston Churchill, *The Gathering Storm*, p. 323

After grabbing Teschen, Poland renewed a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union in November 1938 to assure its eastern frontier, but this was not enough to balk Hitler. While I looked for an apartment in Warsaw, Tiso, the premier of Slovakia, declared Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine (Ruthenia) independent from the Czechoslovakia that had already been mutilated at Munich. Hitler used this declaration as a pretext to send German troops into Bohemia and Moravia on March 15, 1939. A deeply shaken Neville Chamberlain reproached him for breaking the pledge he had given at Munich: "This is the last territorial claim which I have to make in Europe."

By March 31 Chamberlain had steeled himself to tell the House of Commons: "I now have to inform the House that... in the event of any action which clearly threatened Polish independence and which the Polish Government accordingly considered it vital to resist with their national forces, His Majesty's Government would feel themselves bound at once to lend the Polish Government all support in their power. They have given the Polish Government an assurance to this effect (Churchill, *op. cit.*, pp. 342-346)." The seeker of *Lebensraum* had at last forced the seeker of Peace in Our Time to commit the British people to war.

As Poland had seized Teschen, so too Hungary marched into Ruthenia and annexed part of it after stiff fighting. But Poland was not allowed to be complacent. On March 23, only eight days after he had occupied Bohemia, Hitler annexed Memel, which had been an autonomous city in the Lithuanian state since 1923. Now Poland had Germany on its borders to the west, south, north, and northeast, and it began preparations for war as Hitler posed stiff demands regarding Danzig and the Polish Corridor.

On the day that Hitler took over Memel, I moved into my new apartment, remaining unworried and serene in the teeth of the war scares. I would like to claim clairvoyance, some prescience that told me war was still months away. The fact is, I was just too damn dumb to know better. I even wrote home: "There may be a war, I suppose, but I do not think Warsaw or I will be in any danger." In the same letter, however, I did admit that a war could have grave consequences. "...War time means increased work for us: the Embassy staff works overtime every day now at the mere threat of war. In the event of war all leave would be canceled.... Frankly, if there is war in any part of central Europe during July, then my vacation is out."

Polish personnel on the Embassy staff told me my apartment was the only one of its kind in the city. An "efficiency" in a modern building on the bank of the Vistula close to the Poniatowski Bridge, it offered a lovely view of the railroad tracks out the only window. If

it had been a front apartment, I would have had a lovely view of the river, if a small hill had not been in the way. The kitchenette had a tiny refrigerator (a luxury in Europe of that day) and hot plate, and the bathroom had the usual fixtures and also a sitz bath, a device that I eyed warily. Because I spoke no Polish, the manager arranged that when I telephoned for room service I had only to say: "*Osm, jest.*" (meaning Room Eight, Eat) and food would be brought to me. The tariff, including heat, hot water and maid service, was 250 zloties per month, or about \$50.00.

My crony in the Embassy was an American, Charles Mosczynski, who had come to Warsaw to gather research materials for a Ph.D. dissertation in Slavic history and had joined the staff as a telephone operator. Charles lived a few blocks from the Chancery at the Polish Y.M.C.A., pronounced *Polski Imka*, and I joined in order to use the gymnasium and swimming pool. My routine was to walk the mile or so from my apartment in the morning, lunch at the *Imka*, and frequently dine there as well after a swim or game of basketball. The Y.M.C.A. served plain, hearty meals that always included boiled *kassa* or buckwheat. In Alabama you always get grits; in the Y.M.C.A. you always got *kassa*.

The Military Attache offices were not set apart as in Moscow but took up two rooms on the second floor of the Chancery. The office that I shared with Miss Mikwitz looked over the lawn to the spacious Aleja Ujazdowskie and the British passport office across the street. The imposing mansions and gardens were a marked improvement over grimy Moscow, and even the typewriter seemed to work better. I had enough sense to let Miss Mikwitz run the show although I was nominally her boss, taking precedence over the local employee. After all, she had been there since 1925 and she had met me at the train, put me in the hotel, installed me in the *pension*, helped me locate the apartment, padded through shops to help me buy blankets and utensils, and instructed me in the niceties of sending calling cards to members of the Embassy and Consulate, a procedure that had been ignored in Moscow where everybody lived in the Chancery building.

Miss Mikwitz did the translations, handled the Major's social engagements, took care of telephone calls, and instructed me in maintaining the files and keeping the accounts. I typed the classified reports and did the encoding and decoding. There was relatively little telegraphic traffic because of limited funds. When the Major wanted to tell Washington something important, he had it incorporated into the output of the Embassy, which spent much time and money on cablegrams.

Not only were my working and living conditions improved, so was my pay. My salary was still \$2,000 per year, but in Warsaw I also received \$600 for quarters, plus exchange relief. Before the United States went off the gold standard, one dollar would buy nine zloties, but now it bought only about five. To compensate, I received an extra \$150.00 (in round figures) per month in exchange relief. Thus, I received approximately \$4,000 all told rather than \$2,000. Whether or not I chose to convert all the dollars into zloties was up to me.

A disturbing note in my new flat was an order by Warsaw authorities to fit black paper to

windows in preparation for three days of air raid drills. Apartment house areaways were designated as "shelters" to which people were to report during the drills. The Embassy began installing a shelter in the garden behind the Chancery. When night drills were held, the populace stood outside and watched the search-lights try to track the fictional invading German planes. But it was just an exercise. I felt no uneasiness and was happily content to be part of the Embassy family.

But after only three weeks, all this was upset. It was the morning of March 28, my 24th birthday. Major Colbern had sent a telegram to the War Department requesting routine authorization for certain disbursements, and as I began to decode the incoming message I assumed from the opening words that this was a response to the Major's request. As I continued decoding, however, I was astonished to read: "Quartermaster General authorizes you to send Thrasher to Bucharest for temporary duty immediately...." There was a good deal more about appropriations, pay, per diem, and the like, but nothing as to why I was ordered or for how long. The Major raised his eyebrows. He had been without an American clerk for months, and now he was losing me after only a few days. Moreover, to his knowledge, there was no U.S. Military Attache to our Legation in Bucharest. The presumption was that the War Department intended to establish one.

"Immediately" meant in three days as the next train for Bucharest did not leave until March 31st. Despite the words "temporary duty" there was no offer to pay a rental allowance in Warsaw in addition to per diem while in Bucharest. This meant I had to give up my cherished apartment. I had to pay a month's rent to break the lease, but I was more concerned about the apartment than the money because it would probably be rented to someone else when I returned, if I returned.

I packed my blankets and utensils in a hastily-bought trunk and stored it in the basement of the Chancery. The three girl clerks of the Embassy fed me a farewell luncheon at the Hotel Europejski, my friends at the Y.M.C.A. wished me godspeed, and the Major's chauffeur put me aboard the train. I was grateful for the chance to see more of Europe but saddened by the thought that I might not be returning to Warsaw, Major Colbern, and Miss Mikwitz.

Chapter 4  
Chrysalis  
(1915-1938)

My maxim was, "*La carriere est ouverte aux talents*, without distinction of birth or fortune."

- Napoleon Bonaparte, *On St. Helena* [1816]

Pop. James Nelson was born February 14, 1843, in Ballydehob, County Cork, Ireland. If you are looking for Ballydehob, it is on Ireland's route 71 at the head of Roaringwater Bay, not too far from the seacove called Baltimore. At about age 12 he, his sister, and his widowed mother emigrated to New York where, hearsay has it, she enjoyed modest success as a singer of operettas. Apparently the success did not trickle down to the children, for at about age 17 Pop enlisted in the Union Army. He was not a writing man, but he did leave this entry in a brief journal:

"James Nelson, son of John Hussey Nelson and Hester Wright. Born in Ireland February 14, 1843. Came to New York City in 1852. Enlisted in Company "D," 40th Indiana Infantry (Captain Jack Caster) December 15, 1863. Was with my company for service on all occasions of duty being only one night in hospital (for an attack of diarrhea) and joining my regiment next day. Was in 11 skirmishes and battles, including the battles of Reseca, Dallas [N.B., believed to be Dallas, Georgia], New Hope Church and Kenesaw Mountain. Was wounded at Kenesaw Mountain June 27, 1864 by an Enfield rifle ball in left knee, being at the time within 30 or 35 yards of the breastworks of the enemy and on the point of attempting to penetrate their abattis. I crawled off the field carrying my rifle and equipment, and after getting a considerable distance to the rear (I judge it was a mile and I crawled on hands and knees with my musket and all accoutrement).

I was picked up by some stretcher bearers and taken to a surgeon who cut the ball out of my leg. He extracted a piece of the leg of my drawers which the bullet had carried into the wound but failed to find a piece of my pantsleg which was also in there, and this substance, combined with the dirty ways of dressing the wound used by the hospital attendants brought on gangrene which hollowed out the entire calf of the leg and also cut through a branch of the artery. I was discharged from the Army at Madison, Indiana, June 21st, 1865, being then unable to set the left heel upon the ground and being obliged to limp along painfully with the aid of a cane.

The wound was then healed, but having hired a year or so later to drive cattle on horseback (being unable to do anything on foot) the wound again broke out and gave me great trouble, but having finally got it healed I enlisted some time later in Co. C, 43 U.S. Infantry, Captain Henry Brownson, now a major on the retired list of the Army and a prosperous lawyer at Detroit, Michigan. I enlisted March 1st, 1867 for 3 years. I was appointed company clerk in the month of April, sergeant in the month of June, and 1st sergeant in the month of November following. I was stationed then at Fort Wayne, near

Detroit, Michiga. I was transferred to Co. C, 1st Infantry, a year or two later and served in that as sergeant and 1st sergeant until June 23, 1873 when I was appointed commissary sergeant and in April 1877 was sent to Fort Totten in North Dakota where I remained until Feb. 29, 1880, when I took my discharge.

I resided at Fargo, Dakota, that Spring & Summer and in May 1881 went to Miles City, Montana, and took up a ranch on Tongue River, 20 miles south of Miles City, and this ranch still belongs to me. It is described as the east half of the northeast quarter and the east half of the southeast quarter of Section 26d, Township 5, North Range 47, east. I resided there until July 1885 when I went to St., Paul, Minn., passed a civil service examination, and was appointed to a department clerkship in Washington. I was naturalized as a citizen of the United States Dec. 20, 1865 at Lafayette, Indiana. The original of this paper is with the Agricultural Department as I had to send it on from Montana before I could get my title to the 160 acres of land on Tongue River. A copy of the paper is in Box 235, Washington Loan & Trust Co."

He stumped on this leg, blackened, and with a never-healing scab the size of a silver dollar at the knee, for the rest of his 85 years. Details are lacking, but according to family legend he lived for a time in Buffalo, New York, and there acquired a wife. Returning west without her, he was granted a divorce in Fargo December 20, 1880 from DeEtta Nelson, last known address Boonville, New York.

He took advantage of the land grant program and for seven years scratched a living on 150 acres a few miles south of Miles City, Montana, living alone in a one-man shack. Settling in Washington, D. C., he got a job as a government clerk, married Annie Blackburn Rose of Fredericksburg, Virginia, on December 19, 1889, bought a house at 417 M Street, N. E., and raised three daughters plus a handlebar moustache that he tamed with mutton tallow. Florence (Toddie) died of typhoid in 1908, Anne (Nan) became my mother, and Caroline (Cass) became the mother of my cousin, Robert Nelson Jones.

Nan married Edward Whelan Thrasher of Camden, New Jersey, in January 1914. In 1915 occurred two events: the mathematician-physicist Albert Einstein published the general theory of relativity; I was born March 28 in Philadelphia. If you ask my Mom, she will tell you which of the two was more important. The marriage had long been sour, and six weeks after my birth she returned to the parental home in Washington. My dad made no attempt at reconciliation, and I grew up without contact with him or his relatives.

Pop's House was on M Street between Fourth and Fifth, Northeast, in the vicinity of Gallaudet College for the hearing impaired. If you walked one block north on Fifth to Florida Avenue, N. E., you came to Camp Meigs, a staging area for U.S. Army troops in World War I. After the war the fields, which today are occupied by a wholesale produce market, stood vacant for years and were used in spring and summer by Barnum and Bailey, Johnny J. Jones, Ken Maynard, and other traveling shows. We kids could sometimes earn places in the last row by small jobs like setting up chairs. Another benefit was watching the elephants shuffle past the house to water from horse-troughs at 3rd and M. Horse troughs are hard to find these days, but I believe you can still chance across one

or two around Washington.

The house was a three-storey row brick, built about 1890, with a small yard fenced with spiked iron and a flight of iron steps leading up to the second floor entrance. Usually you entered through a door at the sub-basement level, and on summer afternoons Pop would doze in the areaway, a flyswatter in his hand and the *Evening Star* in his lap. He bought the paper at a shop on H Street for two cents, preferring to walk a mile rather than wait for newsboy delivery at four o'clock. I read only the comics, Mutt and Jeff and Keeping Up With the Joneses. Sundays I would visit a neighbor who took the *Times* to read the Katzenjammer Kids and Bringing Up Father. The other Washington newspaper, the *Post*, had The Gumps.

My grandmother died of pneumonia two days before my first birthday, and after her death the second floor door was rarely used. Pop was very security conscious. At bedtime he wedged a board between the door and the foot of the stairs, effectively sealing it. He did this not only for the basement and second floor entries but also, after the family left and he lived alone, for his own bedroom. If he woke during the night he would unsheathe his Masonic dress sword, whip the door open, and lunge into the darkness before making his way to the bathroom. Anybody unlucky enough to be standing on the other side of the door would have been split like an Oreo. Happily, it never happened. If he walked on the street at night, Pop carried a hammer by the handle. If you had tapped him on the shoulder to ask the time, he would have bonked you first and spoken second. Again happily, it never happened.

The sub-basement door brought you into a hall with an ice chest the size of an upright piano. Pop had no faith in refrigerators but insisted on setting food direct on ice, and twice a week the ice man delivered a hundred-pound chunk of it. Every evening before bed Pop would get down on his bum leg to empty the drip pan. Beyond the ice chest were the stairs to the upper floors. When I came to schoolboy age I would arm myself with a match, mount the stairs in darkness whistling to keep up my courage (I had read that the goblins will get you if you don't watch out), scratch the match on the wall, and light the gas jet on the third floor landing to go to bed.

Each floor had two rooms. On the ground floor was a dining room that was never used for dining and a 20-foot kitchen in which we lived. On the second floor were the front parlor and a back room. The parlor was used only for formal occasions, and these were few after grandmother died. Here stood the Franklin piano and the Regina music box that played 15-inch metal platters. The feature of the room was a wall-sized, framed engraving of a 17th century military procession with the title "Wallensteins Zug Nach Eger." Why Pop should have a drawing of Wallenstein's march to Eger was a never-solved mystery as he was Irish in origin, spoke no German, and never showed the slightest interest in the Thirty Years War. He was, however, self-trained in reading French. One of the first books he gave me was a sprightly child's tale, *Les Malheurs de Sophie*. Since it was about a little girl, I despised it heartily.

Pop had converted the back room into a gymnasium with dumb-bells, Indian clubs, and

weights on pulleys. He was still exercising with ten-pound bells in his eighties; he also went regularly to the gym at the YMCA. He carried his zest for physical fitness to his daughters, trained them in fencing with foils -- "*Tierce*, not *carte*, you lunkhead!" -- and required them to descend a knotted rope hand under hand from the third storey window as a precaution against fire. Nan captained the girls' rifle team at Business High School and was an enthusiastic basketball player in an era when girls had to play in middie and bloomers. She and Cass won cups for swimming, especially long distance events in the Potomac River.

Two bedrooms and a bath with a tub lined in copper were on the third floor. Because the plumbing did not include a hot water heater, you carried a steaming kettle up three flights for your bath. All rooms had latrobes or special fireplaces named after the engineer, but because it was too much to keep fires burning in five grates, the only heated room in the house was the kitchen. When he read his paper by the window in the "dining" room, Pop would sometimes park a portable kerosene heater beside his chair. In late years he would wad snuff-saturated pads up his nostrils to deter colds. As the pads also prevented him from smelling smoke, he did not notice until too late that Nan's pet canary had suffocated.

In the kitchen was a coal/wood stove on which a kettle of water always simmered. There was a gas range for cooking, but the coal stove was both cooking and heating. Evenings we sat at the oilcloth-covered kitchen table after the dinner things were cleared, Pop reading by the light of the single gas jet and the rest of us yattering, playing games, and doing homework. It wasn't until about 1925 that the house was wired for electricity. There were speaking tubes so that you could talk from the top floor to the bottom.

Neighborhood. Trash and garbage collectors came through the back alley in horse-drawn wagons. The garbage man announced himself with a blast on a brass horn, and as a toddler I wanted to be a garbage man so I could toot that horn. Hucksters in horse-drawn wagons peddled produce at the front door. Some were specialists, like the watermelon and oyster men. I still hear the singsong: "Watteemelon/Red to de rine/Sellem cheap/And pluggem alla time". The oysterman called his shucked wares, carried in a great copper pot, with a sound like clearing his throat. The lamplighter made his rounds at the close of day, carrying a ladder on his shoulder and turning on the gas lamps with a hooked stick.

Early mornings I would walk to Abraham's grocery, at Sixth and M. The man from Corby's bakery had already left the bread, double loaves unwrapped of course, in wooden boxes on which you sat while you waited for the store to open. The boxes had padlocks, but as they were never locked you could split the loaves apart and grub the warm insides. Abraham's was a poppa-and-momma store. Bananas were sold by the dozen, potatoes by the peck, and you told the butcher how thick you wanted your round steak. In 1923, I think it was, there was a food exposition at the Washington Auditorium, 19th and New York Avenue, where they exhibited a marvelous machine that sliced the loaves and wrapped them in wax paper, but it was months before sliced, wrapped bread showed up in stores.

If Abraham's didn't have what you wanted, you could walk to where M Street joined

Florida Avenue near Seventh. There, across from Gallaudet College, was an outlet of the Sanitary Grocery Company. Years later the Sanitary merged into the Safeway chain, and eventually the little shop proved too small for the supermarket era and had to close. On the corner of Fifth and M was Rockecharlie's general purpose store where you bought thumb tacks and flypaper and licorice sticks and jawbreakers and five-cent ice cream cones (The Velvet Kind). On request, Rocky would ladle you a pickle from the barrel of brine. My chain-smoking neighbor used to send me to Rocky's to fetch packs of Piedmonts or Sweet Caporals. Rocky's store served at least three generations of customers.

Most of the area around M Street, which today includes houses and police station and commercial establishments, was open ground. We played bang-bang-booie and buckbuck-how-many-horns-are-up. In the fields we spun tops, flew kites, and played mumblepeg and marbles. I was never any good at marbles (toys, we called them) because I shot cunnythumb instead of knucklethumb and could never learn the difference. But I got along all right with snake purgy, where you dug winding trenches in the ground and shot the marbles according to elaborate rules I have long forgotten.

Saturdays my 15 cent allowance took me to the Apollo Theater on H Street to see a chapter from a serial and a feature. The serials were Ruth Roland and Art Accord and The Green Archer. The features were William Farnum and Milton Sills and Hoot Gibson and Lon Chaney. I remember there was this film where Lon Chaney in the role of a crazed doctor transformed his soul into her body, or was it the other way around. For excursions the family would take the H Street streetcars to the Chesapeake Beach Railway terminal at Seat Pleasant. Chesapeake Beach had a boardwalk built over the water with carousel and dance hall and roller coaster. All were destroyed in a fire in the late twenties and never rebuilt.

Nan enrolled in normal school, as teacher-training colleges were then styled, and later on she completed her B.A. in night classes at George Washington University. Because her elderly father with a game leg was ill equipped to take care of a toddler, she confided me to a neighbor widow. This family had a set of books by L. Frank Baum, and I would pass hours curled up in a rocker with Ozma, the Sawhorse, The Patchwork Girl, the Gingerbread Man, and Queen Zixi of Ix. I don't know how old I was when I discovered the pleasures of reading, except that I was already reading when I entered Blair School kindergarten at age five. Pop had *The Book of Knowledge* encyclopedia, and I devoured its stories, poems, biographies and histories but studiously avoided all articles that threatened to be instructive.

Schools. During the 1920s the Washington public schools weaned themselves from the eight-four to the nine-three-three system, and in 1926 I entered a newfangled institution called a junior high school. Nan, by that time teaching at one of these schools, bought a house on a dirt road close to Catholic University. Then the edge of town, today it is a thoroughfare to the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception at 4th and Michigan Avenue. Pop was persuaded to have surgery on his leg in his 70s but the operation was only partly successful. Living by himself, he tried to lug a roll of linoleum to the second floor, fell

backward down the stairs, and lay unconscious the better part of a day. After he woke, he walked to Sibley Hospital at M and North Capitol about a mile away. Nan brought him to our house to die of old age in 1929.

Nan's house was two blocks from the seminary of the Paulist Fathers, one of the many colleges of various priestly orders dotted around the Catholic University campus. We kids played baseball and football under the supervision of the seminarians on open fields that have since been built up by other orders. Today kids who play on neighborhood teams are outfitted with helmets, pads, cleats, but in that epoch sports shops had not awakened to the profits from equipping kids' teams, and the only uniforms we ever achieved were baseball caps. My career in contact sports fizzled early. At age 15 I arrived at the status of skinny little runt, and I have stayed there ever since.

I learned tennis on public courts, and though I graduated from holding the racquet like a flyswatter I got myself into sins of commission that I never afterwards overcame, particularly failure to keep an eye on the ball. I always thought of golf as a patsy game, nothing to it. When the dream tennis player Ellsworth Vines became a golf pro and reaped only a modest success I should have realized there is a great deal to golf, but I was age 70 before I took it up and with difficulty achieved a 40 handicap.

I was undistinguished at Langley Junior High except that perhaps I was more noisy than most. A new school building, McKinley High, was rising next door, and I moved there when it opened in 1929. High school was for me a mixed bag physically, socially, and intellectually. Except for mathematics I had no troubles with studies and got good enough marks to qualify for the Pharos honor society. I had no particular bent and could not imagine what I wanted to do in life, in fact for most of the high school years it never occurred to me that someday I would have to earn a living. I contracted a bad case of acne rosacea that made me miserably self-conscious. My nose swelled to the size of a potato, and my face and back were studded with semi-boils. Over the years Nan took me to six doctors and quacks who offered six different remedies, all of them unavailing. The rosacea has stayed with me for life, though it became less virulent as I approached age 30. In high school it generated alternate fits of shyness and aggression. I was ill at ease when it came to making acquaintances but querulous and dominant once I had been accepted as a friend.

My salvation socially was ballroom dancing. In that epoch you grabbed the girl and tried trick steps, and I got pretty good at it, especially something called the shag which was not so much a dance as a frenzy, although not in the same class as the athletic contests that grew out of jitterbug. Dances held by clubs, organizations and fraternities were common, almost weekly, and girls were willing to go out with me if no better bid materialized. At every dance there was a stag line, boys without dates, and it was accepted practice to let stags cut in. You went stag when you had no money, and since this was a common condition in those years of the Great Depression you tried to crash without paying, often with success. Thus my social life prospered despite the acne, and I was a cruising prince Friday and Saturday nights. Rarely, however, did I emulate other boys and try to pitch woo, although somewhat to my astonishment on the few occasions that I did try to steal a

kiss I found girls tolerant. I formed no strong attachments and broke neither any girl's heart nor my own.

Looking back from the 1980-90s atmosphere of drugs and mayhem, I marvel that I never went in for self-destruction. Simply, I was never tempted. The boys I associated with took for granted we would sneak into a dance without paying, but it never occurred to us to abuse ourselves with anything stronger than Lucky Strikes. On one occasion I went out with three boys not in my regular group and was taken aback when they stopped en route to pick up a pint from a bootlegger, but I took no nip and was not pressed because it was they who had paid for it.

When you're a teenager you will do anything if all the other guys are doing it. It just happened that the other guys never went in for booze or crime or vandalism, although this is not to say I never did anything foolish. About a mile from our house was a rainwater pond where dozens of us would skinny dip. It was a cesspool, not yet stinking but filled with cardboard boxes, broken bottles, discarded tin cans, and boards with rusty nails. Why we didn't all come down with lockjaw cannot be explained by modern medicine. If my poor mother had known I was swimming in such a pit she would have had apoplexy. Today I would swim in it as soon as I would bed down in a leprosarium, but then I did what everybody else did. If drugs had been the in thing, I would probably have been into drugs, but I was lucky and stayed out of trouble.

Organized high school sports were outside my realm. The gods were the Circle T Club, the members of the football team which won the city championship (only five segregated schools competing) three years in a row. How times change! We would make jokes about the left tackle, the heaviest boy on the team. "Here comes Jake. Feel the building tremble?" He weighed 175 pounds. In today's milieu of double cheeseburgers he wouldn't make the first string, but that was the time when Albie Booth quarterbacked Yale at 145 pounds. What became of the dropkick?

I was strongly involved in the boys' glee club, under the inspiration of the worshiped Bella Brooks "Ma" Thompson. For undefined reasons I obdurately refused Nan's recommendation to try for the dramatic club, but I was strong in the operetta club, singing in the chorus of *Robin Hood* and *Iolanthe* and having a minor lead in *The Chimes of Normandy*. Reginald de Koven's *Robin Hood* is something of a showbiz puzzle. Once tremendously popular, it has roles for two sopranos, contralto, tenor, baritone, bass, and buffoon, but it has faded from the boards and to my knowledge has not been recorded since the acoustic era. A lasting result of taking part in the operetta club was an unbounded admiration for Gilbert and Sullivan. I can still do numerous songs from *The Mikado*, *Pinafore*, *Iolanthe*, *Patience*, and *The Pirates of Penzance*. Give me a martini the next time you invite me to a party and you'll see. Thanks to Nan, we never knew want during the Depression. Her salary was \$100 a month, and there was many an able-bodied man in America who would have been glad to take home as much. She supplemented her public school pay by teaching "Americanization" school to immigrants three nights per week. On these funds she contrived to feed three (Bob lived with us), pay the mortgage, and buy a Model A Ford. I delivered the *Herald* and *Times* for awhile, but I was such a

poor businessman, failing to keep track of the number of papers I was charged and collected payments for, I probably was a net loser.

Travel. Nan also contrived two trips to the west coast. In 1934 she signed up for a teacher-tour by train to the Grand Canyon, Los Angeles, and Berkeley, where she took a three-week summer course at the University of California. I went along although the others in the party were women in the age range 30 to 60. At Berkeley I attended Armstrong Secretarial College and played pickup tennis on the University courts. The tour went on to Seattle, Vancouver, Banff-Lake Louise, and Chicago. It was so successful that Nan did it again the following summer, this time with the Model A and a tent. We drove at 40 m.p.h. across mid-America to Belle Fourche, Yellowstone, Grand Teton, Portland and Seattle. At the University of Washington she took teacher courses and I took drama courses, and then we drove back across Montana, which at forty miles an hour goes on forever.

I graduated from McKinley in 1931 but being still eligible for schooling at age 16 and a long way from maturity Nan felt I should stay a fourth year. The only achievement was that I learned to typewrite, a tool for which I have been forever grateful. I occupied myself outside school with amateur dramatics, conceiving that my incredible talent would be recognized by a discerning critic. I saw myself as another Gary Cooper or Randolph Scott, and I never grasped that other people did not picture my scrawny 120 pounds in the same way though I was always cast as a cowardly policeman or lowly buckprivate or creepy crawly villain. In 1936 I thought I had a foot on the yellowbrick road to Broadway when I obtained a scholarship with the Little Theater of the Rockies at Greeley State Teachers College, Colorado. Nan loaned me the Model A, and I drove across country for a six-week summer stay during which I had minor parts in three plays but remained undiscovered by Hollywood. The notion that I should cast off the apron strings and try to make a living as an actor was never given serious consideration.

There was never any question but that I would go to college. I was indifferent myself, but Nan had experienced enough rough times to be sure that the way to get ahead was to get an education backed by a piece of paper called a degree. I enrolled at the University of Maryland, College Park, in 1933 and during this freshman year day-dodged, that is, lived at home and drove to the campus in the Model A. Getting the notion that I would really experience university life by living on campus, I took up residence in a dormitory in the sophomore year but had the ill luck to be given a single room and made few acquaintances. At the start of the second year I came down with a whopping case of croupe or bronchitis or influenza, you name it, was ill six weeks and unable to complete the second semester. When I went back in the autumn I found that the second-semester courses would not be given until the succeeding February and meanwhile I would have to while the time with the History of Maryland and Lives of the Victorian Poets. Nan, who was paying for all this, did not think much of this state of affairs, and switched me to American University. At that time A. U.'s student body numbered about 500 and it offered only a B.A. undergraduate degree, although it did have graduate degrees as well. As in high school, I had neither troubles nor distinctions in studies, was shy about making friends because of the acne, and was active in the glee and dramatics clubs. I also played

Number 7 on the six-man tennis team. I graduated by myself in February 1937, meaning that it is not clear whether I can call myself Class of '36 or Class of '37.

Career. In the months following my illness I worked as a bicycle messenger boy for Western Union, and in my final semester at college I earned a bit off tuition by working in the university library. After graduation the only job I could find was as a teacher of shorthand at the private Washington School for Secretaries three nights per week. I still had no fixed goal for life work. Nan had been salvaged by teaching. It was a steady job, it had pulled her through the Depression, it had bought her a house, it had educated her son, and since her son was too dumb to set a path for himself she suggested that I try teaching.

I went back to the University of Maryland for a master's degree in pedagogy, was assigned to practice teach a class of junior high squirmers, and confirmed that I just wasn't cut out to be a teacher unless perhaps at the college level where the students could be expected to sit still. I did not complete the master's degree. It was the head of the Washington School for Secretaries who told me about the clerical job overseas with the War Department that sent me to Moscow and foreign service.

Chapter 5  
Bucharest  
(April-June 1939)

"No woman is so highly placed that she can afford to neglect her beauty. Personal appearance is vital to her success -- she cannot allow the usual marks of fatigue or exposure to show in her face. I believe her beauty can be thoroughly guarded by a daily use of Pond's Two Creams."

- Marie, Queen of Rumania (Advert in *Woman's Home Companion*, April 1925, p. 58)

The train left Warsaw Friday evening and arrived in Bucharest the following afternoon. The only incident occurred at the frontier where the matter of currency bothered the Rumanian inspector. I declared the \$100 in travelers checks that I had bought at the Bank Polski Amerikanski in Warsaw, but the inspector felt that the traveler must be concealing additional funds. Eager to please, I produced a book of blank checks from a Washington bank. The triumphant inspector counted the blanks and solemnly entered a note in my passport.

I stepped out of the station into shirtsleeve weather. April Fool's day, and 'tis said that Bucharest jumps directly from winter to summer. European cities have character, distinguishing attributes. There are lots of towns with ornate, domed structures of uniform height, with a snarl of boulevards and lanes, with here a monument and there a park. Bucharest had all these, but it was obviously Bucharest, not Warsaw. Maybe I'm making this up, because I don't know anything about architecture, but there was a mix of what I shall style Turko-Germanic-Slavic romance in the public buildings that stamped it as unique. But in the final analysis, what sets a place apart is people. Warsaw had a set of solid citizens; Bucharest had a stratified society, a meld of people accustomed to urban life and people evidently brought up in the country. In Bucharest you either had money and lived well or you had nothing and lived hand-to-mouth. There was no in-between. And the women. Those in Warsaw were well-dressed, but those in Bucharest were fashionable. Such are first impressions.

No one met me, although I had sent a telegram. I registered at a hotel and then called the Legation, instead of the other way around like a man of sense, but I was complacent that the Legation would be deserted on a Saturday afternoon. My new boss answered the phone, and I took a taxi to the Legation to introduce myself to Major Lowell M. Riley.

Three years previous, Major Riley had been assigned to Embassy Paris and for a few months had made courier swings around Europe carrying diplomatic pouches. Then he was assigned to Legation Vienna as assistant military attache but soon found himself without a post when Hitler took over Austria. He was transferred to Prague as military attache and again lost his job because the Germans occupied Bohemia. Like me, he had received a War Department telegram ordering him to Bucharest, and he had left by car within twenty-four hours for fear the Slovaks or Rumanians might close the border.

His clerk had been on leave in the States when Hitler overrode Bohemia. For reasons of its own, the War Department sent her to Berlin and assigned me to help Major Riley set up the office in Bucharest. I was kept wondering for several weeks whether I was to remain indefinitely in Bucharest, but in due course word came that a new clerk would be assigned to Major Riley and I would some day go back to Major Colbern.

Menage a 2 1/2. Milos, an American boy of about 20, of Czech parentage, whom the Major had hired as chauffeur, proposed sharing a double room at the Hotel Union, ten minutes' walk from King Carol's royal palace. I was not keen on doubling up but was lured by the promise of a private bathroom, a scarcity in Bucharest hotels. Major Riley, the boss, resided at the plush Hotel Athenee Palace but had to walk down the corridor. The double room at the Union, moreover, was on a street corner, something like New York's old flatiron building, and had windows on both sides and front balcony, all on the ninth floor. The cost of this luxury was 330 lei per day. At the official rate of exchange this would have been \$2.20, but at the prevailing black market rate it came to \$0.66 per day, of which Milos and I each paid half.

All foreign missions bought lei at the black market rate with the tacit but unofficial knowledge of the Rumanian Government. Because the Legation accounts duly recorded the advantageous rate, staff members drew no exchange relief, but with Bucharest full of German-made consumer goods and home-grown produce the exchange relief was not missed.

Resident in Bucharest less than week, Milos had already cultivated a girl friend. The Major had sent him to a *farmacia* for dental floss. "*Bua seara, Domnule,*" said the neatly-packaged girl at the counter. Milos spoke Czech, German, French and American, but what does one say to a girl in Rumania? The best he could do was an incompatible: "*Bon soir, mademoiselle. Parlez-vous allemand?*"

"*Oui, monsieur,*" Anita replied gravely. "*Je parle allemand.*"

But this left him no better off than at the start. "Now how," he muttered aloud, "do I say dental floss in German?"

"Why don't you say it in English?" asked Anita, and a beautiful friendship was formed. Of Rumanian birth, she had relatives in the States and had arranged to emigrate in June, two months hence. Meanwhile she was pleased to know a young American. Picnic lunches, in which I was permitted to join, became a daily routine on the ninth-floor balcony. Anita would bring rolls and pungent sausages; Milos would bring bottles of green wine costing about 20 cents per liter, raw, mildly alcoholic, and generously cathartic; I would bring Jaffa oranges at three cents each plus succulent strawberries and thick cream in little cardboard boats, but sour.

You could live frugally but lavishly in Bucharest if your salary was based in dollars. An *entrecot* (sirloin steak) with *cartofi* (potatoes) and *salata verde* could be had in unpretentious restaurants for about fifty cents, and you could choose the steak yourself

and watch the chef grill it over charcoal. Rates of exchange are amazing things. The piece of paper called a dollar that would buy only franks and beans in New York would convert into pieces of paper called zloty that would buy beef and *kassa* in Warsaw and into pieces of paper called lei that would buy filet and wine in Bucharest. Economists can explain it to you. They also can explain why few economists are rich.

Bucharest had shoe shine parlors -- *lustragea Americana*. It had American cars and taxis on the streets, and there were American-style gas stations on the corners; it pays to have oil fields in Ploesti. The trolley cars ran in pairs, the first car with woven-straw seats and costing one leu more than the second car with hard benches. I always rode in the second car, not to save one-third of a penny but to stand on the rear platform in the open air. The Rumanian school of cooking puts great stress on garlic. Sitting in the enclosed first car was equivalent to sitting in the San Quentin gas chamber. A novelty on street cars was the mailbox. If you wanted to mail a letter, you waited for the next street car and dropped it in a box on the front.

In movie houses I innocently offended the ushers by declining to buy a ten-lei program. After suffering audible sneers I observed that other customers slipped the usher one or two lei even if they did not buy the program, and once I began complying with this custom I grew more popular. Tipping the usher used to be common everywhere until Richard d'Oyly Carte proscribed it when he opened his new Savoy Theater in London, October 1881, with Gilbert and Sullivan's *Patience* (Deems Taylor, ed., *A Treasury of Gilbert and Sullivan*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1941). Although the practice has disappeared from American theaters, it has cropped up again at baseball games.

The Legation revolved about Ajutor. Any age you like over sixty, flap jowls with perpetual five-o'clock shadow, brown bald pate sprouting stray wisps; he wrapped his prominent tummy in a soiled brown suit that dated from Francis X. Bushman and got things done for everybody in the mission. If you wanted to find an apartment, get a license for your car, obtain a good seat at the races, rent a cottage in Transylvania, you went to Ajutor. His specialty was foreign exchange. You just handed your personal check to him and next day he would bring you a fistful of lei. Months later, Ajutor dropped in at my office in Budapest and produced from his rumpled left pocket a bundle of Rumanian lei. When I declined to buy these, he pulled from the right pocket a bundle of Bulgarian leva, then from other pockets Jugoslav dinars, Austrian schillings, German marks. "Don't you have trouble crossing frontiers?" I asked. "They all know me," said Ajutor airily.

When Ajutor went back to the States on home leave every other year, he unabashedly took along a dozen Zeiss cameras, declared them to U.S. customs, and sold them for a profit. An American of Rumanian ancestry, Ajutor became a clerk in the Foreign Service after serving in the Marine Corps in World War I and spent his working career in Bucharest.

Despite his 60-odd years, Ajutor boasted continually of his sexual prowess and as evidence was continually passing around photographs of unclothed young ladies he had taken himself. I lunched at his Bucharest apartment on one occasion and was introduced

to a lovely Rumanian girl. "A sort of relative," explained Ajutor. "She's getting married next week." "Prettiest girl in Rumania!" I exclaimed, and the girl gave me a ravishing smile when Ajutor translated. Two days later Ajutor showed me a snap of the bride-to-be in the nude. The surprising thing about Ajutor's art was that it offered neither excitement or gratification. He was neither pornographer nor portrayer. There was nothing obscene about his photographs, and neither was there any pretense at posing or lighting, simply a matter-of-fact lump of flesh.

I who had never set foot in an opera house until I had arrived in Berlin only six months previous now felt condescending about patronizing the little Bucharest house, although the Rumanian singers were quite competent. It was at the Bucharest opera that I became acquainted with Puccini's comic masterpiece, *Gianni Schicchi*. The Rumanian National Symphony, which held forth at the Atheneum, was on the same level as the opera house, not the greatest but still of high rank. The bit of music that stuck in my memory was a service at a Rumanian Orthodox Church where the soprano, tenor and bass soloists half-chanted and half-sang, wandering vaguely through a queer sequence of notes but returning to the tonic, on which the choir would utter amens and every now and then burst out in a clump of sound, after which a soloist would resume in a fresh key. The congregation came and went as it liked. I was told that the usual service lasts four hours.

Romance. We were frequently joined by Phreddie the Phallic Phrenchman, who lived in a hotel across the street. A photographer on assignment for *Paris Match*, Phreddie knew what Bucharest was notorious for and pursued it single-mindedly. "I took that girl to bed last night," he indicated. "But she's from the sidewalk!" I protested. "I didn't know," said Phreddie gloomily. "I thought it was for love, but when we were finished she asked for money."

Although the Hotel Union was a bowshot from the Royal Palace, sidewalk girls solicited business openly. Higher priced girls made arrangements with the hotels. A carefully groomed lady frequented the lobby of the Union, and I assumed she was one of the office staff. Coming in alone one evening, I nodded to her as one does to a desk clerk and was startled to find her at my elbow in the elevator. She had misconstrued my nod as a request for personal services.

Phreddie was so devoted to his quest for *amour* that anyone in skirts was eligible. When a group of peasants came to town for some sort of crafts exhibition, he brought a buxom woman to his hotel room on the pretext of photographing her costume and began making advances. As she seemed amused, he started to undress her. She shook her head violently, but he put it down to coyness, and although she waved a red handkerchief at him he failed to get the message. He unpeeled her almost all the way before he realized it was the wrong time of month. On another occasion I was definitely irked when Phreddie made a conquest of another girl and enjoyed her in my bed while Milos and I were out. "My own hotel would not let me take her upstairs," he explained cheerfully, "so I asked the clerk in the Union for your key."

Some weeks later when Milos was about to leave Bucharest and the double room would

no longer be needed, I went to look for other lodgings. I found an attractive hotel on a street bordering a large park, with rooms giving a fine view over a pretty lake. Although the rate was high in comparison with the Union, I was tempted to sign up, but the desk man looked at me so oddly I decided to think it over. Anita explained afterward that rooms in that hotel were usually rented by the hour. City of romance. The newspapers carried pages, and I mean pages, of classified ads from doctors offering to treat *sifilis*.

His Majesty the King. In December 1933 Prime Minister Ion Duca had been assassinated by members of the Iron Guard, a fascist organization. In November 1938 Corneliu Codreanu, the leader of the Iron Guard, was reported shot by guards when trying to escape from prison. Prime Minister Armand Calinescu was to meet death from assassins late in 1939. Aware that he, too, had potential as a target for assassins, King Carol maintained a tight security cordon.

Hence, Anita was distinctly apprehensive when my roommate Milos proposed that she and I attend the midnight Easter Eve service at the cathedral in order to see the King. Major Riley had been invited along with the rest of the diplomatic corps. Milos would be going along as the Major's chauffeur. His plan was to drive the two of us there well in advance of the ceremony, leave us off at the cathedral, and go back for the Major. "Even if you can't get in," said he, "you can stand on the sidewalk and see the King and all the diplomats in fancy dress."

"They'll stop us," protested Anita. "They'll never let us near the cathedral."

"We'll be in the Major's car," said Milos. "The diplomatic license plates will get us through."

Anita emphatically lacked zeal for the enterprise, but I thought it was great. There would be a few police around, but what of it? If we were questioned, I could show my Legation identity card. I who should have known better joined Milos in recommending the proposal. Anita, who really definitely positively should have known better, allowed herself to be persuaded. Half an hour before midnight Milos picked us up at the Hotel and headed the Plymouth down the Calea Victoriei. I sensed something amiss, but it was several moments before I realized just what.

The great boulevard was deserted and yet it was crowded. The curbstones on both sides of the broad avenue were lined with armed men posted fifty feet apart. Down the Uhlea and into the cross boulevard they extended, every soldier spruce in dress uniform, alternately wearing spiked helmets (*pickelhauben*) or helmets with plumes of white horsehair, all standing in rigid silence. The Plymouth was the only thing in motion, for the official guests were not to start for another thirty minutes. Anita began urging Milos to give up the project, and I dimly perceived that perhaps I was not so smart after all, but Milos pooh-poohed and sped on.

The car turned into a driveway perhaps three hundred yards in length leading up the hill to the cathedral. Here the soldiers were lined shoulder to shoulder, still ominously silent.

Anita was nearly ill with fear, but we were committed. Milos let us out on the plaza facing the portals, gave us a blithe, "See you later," and drove back down the hill. We stood in the amber of the street lamps and wished we had gone to the wax museum instead. In case you haven't tried it, you get stage fright when you are the focal point of several hundred soldiers, all with fixed bayonets.

Plainclothes men emerged from shadows and began to ask harsh questions. I should have responded in English, but I stood petrified and let Anita reply in faltering Rumanian. The men were acutely suspicious, and they gave Anita some tense moments before she managed to convince them that we were harmless nitwits. If I had ever had a firm intention of smoothing all difficulties with my identity card, it never entered my mind now that the moment had come. We were firmly invited to depart, and two of the men walked us down the long hill between the rows of soldiers and thereafter a full block away before turning us loose.

When funeral services for the murdered Prime Minister Duca had been held at this cathedral, King Carol had developed a sudden illness that prevented him from attending. The extraordinary array of troops on this night in April 1939 testified that the Government feared the Iron Guard had not forgotten or forgiven the reprisal shooting of Codreanu. Irresponsible and thoughtless young people that we were, we were lucky to get off so lightly.

I have forgotten whether or not I ever told Major Riley of this episode. Since it sort of suggested that I was not of sound judgment, I rather doubt that I did.

No transportation being available at that hour, Anita and I had to walk home through the Cross of Stone or red light district. The ladies standing before their parlors had a great deal to shout at her, and she told me they were commenting pungently on her lack of taste in escorting a man through their domain. "If you were alone," she said, "you would not pass without becoming a customer."

Travel. The advantageous rate of exchange led me to buy a short-wave Blaupunkt radio, made in Germany. It would have cost more than \$100 in Warsaw but was only \$30 in Bucharest. On April 7, 1939, almost as soon as I plugged it in, the BBC brought the news that Mussolini had invaded Albania. The Franco-British pledge already made to Poland was extended to Rumania and Greece on April 13.

Major Riley took Milos and me on several trips by car through the countryside. Some twenty-two miles north of Bucharest is Lake Snagov, a boating and fishing recreation spot. We rode a motorboat on the fourteen-mile lake and visited a 16th Century church at its head where the priest accepted a cigarette and chatted in German. The building was so small it was more chapel than church, with exterior of weather-beaten brick and interior covered with faded paintings of saints. Nothing was said of the first printing press in Wallachia which, according to the guidebooks, was established here in the 17th Century.

On Easter Monday 1939 the three of us set off to the south of Bucharest, crossing the

Danube by barge from Oltenitza to Tortucaia, two villages of no distinction whatever. Turning east we motored across the southern Dobrudja, a windblown, sandy waste over which the Bulgarians and Rumanians have quarreled for decades. It's amazing what nations will get excited about. You remember the big stew a few years ago over the desert called the Rann of Kutch, or was it the Kutch of Rann (the Kann of Rutch?). For reasons not immediately apparent, Rumanians and Bulgarians are willing to kill each other for the southern Dobrudja (Dobrogea), although lots of people if offered a choice between the Dobrudja and 10,000 green stamps would take the stamps. Bulgaria had it for awhile after the two countries pried themselves loose from Turkey but lost the Second Balkan War in 1913 and with it the Dobrudja. When Russia took back Bessarabia in 1940 it made Rumania give the Dobrudja to Bulgaria, but Rumania recovered it when the Germans took over in 1941, only to lose it once more at the end of World War II. Probably the last has not been seen of this game of shuttlecock.

Silistra, a town dating from Roman times, is on the Danube about half-way through the Dobrudja to the Black Sea, but otherwise the only things noteworthy are dusty bullock carts, a few dusty sheep, and occasional dusty inhabitants in turbans and Turkish pants. When you reach Constanza, however, you come to a modern city, Rumania's principal port on the Black Sea and the terminus of an oil pipeline from Ploesti. We did not explore this metropolis but turned north to the seaside resort of Mamaia, with its unique salt water sea on the east and fresh water lake on the west, and there we sheltered for the night. We eschewed the gaudy Casino that was put there to separate us from our money.

Next day we headed south along the coast through a swank resort called Carmen Sylva, after the pen name of the queen of King Carol I (1839-1914), who wrote poetry (you remember *The Bard of Dimbowitza*) and dressed in white draperies and veil. South of Carmen Sylva came excruciating ox-trails that stayed within sight of the sea all the way to Balcic, near the Bulgarian border. When Queen Marie sensed her own death approaching in 1938 she left instructions for her funeral. No black but a deep shade of violet was to be worn for mourning, and although her body was to be entombed in Bucharest her heart was to be buried in Balcic.

That she looked on Balcic with affection is remarkable because she was virtually exiled there by her son, Carol II, after the death of King Ferdinand. Two motives are ascribed to her choice of Balcic, the one patriotic and the other scandalous. The first is that she wished a sort of monument to the efforts she had made toward a greater Rumania, for she helped steer Rumania into World War I on the side of the Allies. Rumania had been committed to the Axis, but as a result of this switch it received Transylvania, Bessarabia and the Dobrudja, including Balcic, following the defeat of Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria. The second is that she had a small summer palace built in Balcic for Hassan, her twenty-year-old Turkish lover, and wished her heart to be near him (Harold Rose, *Your Guide to Bulgaria*. London: Alvin Redman, 1964. p. 164). The Poles also tried this ploy and buried the heart of Marshal Pilsudski in Wilno as a symbol that Wilno was a Polish city. In neither instance did it work. Wilno went to Soviet Russia and Balcic to Bulgaria.

From Balciic we travelers turned west through Bazargic, a village of mud and thatch, back to Silistra, the barge across the Danube, and Bucharest. A hurried trip but instructive. I was grateful to Major Riley for giving me a chance to see and inhale so much of the country.

Bucharest Scene. Major Riley handed me a letter that originated in Moscow and traveled via Prague, and asked: "Did you type this?" I had indeed. Colonel Faymonville had dictated it to me just before he left for the States. Major Riley dictated a reply, and I had the unique experience of typing both letter and answer. I was reminded of a vaudeville act in which a man on ice skates plays badminton with himself.

For a few days three United States military attaches to Rumania were on the scene. Major Villaray, accredited to Yugoslavia and Rumania but resident in Belgrade, flew in to make farewell calls on Rumanian officials. Major Riley, as we have seen, had assumed the post of military attache in Bucharest following the abandonment of Prague, but already Major John P. Ratay had arrived to replace Major Riley, whose tour of duty in Europe was ended. Old and new-style dress blues were on parade. Fresh from the States, Major Ratay wore the new, lapel-collar blues whereas the two officers who had been living in Europe still had the old-type choker-necks.

After leaving Bucharest Major Riley served as an artillery commander under General George S. Patton and received a number of combat awards. Retiring as a colonel in 1952 to a Leesburg, Virginia, farm, he rode with the Loudoun County Hunt and dabbled in real estate. He died in 1971, aged 78. Of interest is an article: "Duty as Military Attaché," that he wrote for the *Field Artillery Journal* shortly after returning from Bucharest, in which he reviewed the qualifications desirable in an officer selected for military attache duty:

"First, he must be an officer of experience and must have behind him the basic training of his (Service) arm.... If he has served in more than one branch, it will be to his advantage...

"In addition... the prospective military attache must have certain personal attributes which experience has shown are desirable... -- initiative, intelligence, force, judgment and common sense...

"An officer will prove of little use abroad unless he can speak the language of the country to which he is assigned...

"It has always been thought, and there is some ground for the belief, that considerable outside means, a large independent income, are prerequisites for service as military attache. While desirable and perhaps essential in one or two of the most expensive and important capitals, it will be less and less the case as time goes on... Even in our democratic army, birth and breeding still have their place -- but principally ours is an aristocracy of accomplishment, a 'noblesse' of recorded and proven worth...."

If you were looking for someone to play a military officer in a movie, you would pick Major Ratay over Faymonville, Colburn, or Riley. In civilian dress the latter three were casual gentlemen, but Ratay, so to speak, wore his uniform to bed. Of German origin, he

spoke with a bit of accent, and he walked in cadence. Major Ratay was every bit as amiable and relaxed in the office as the others, but you felt at all times that with this man all things were military. Owing to the course of events, his tour of duty as military attache to Rumania was to be relatively short, but he served with distinction in the war and afterward retired as a brigadier general to Mexico. For he had the foresight to buy property in Acapulco when all the rest of us thought of it as a place to go fishing.

More touring. "Haven't you a basque?" asked Miss Gheorghiu, a woman of a certain age hired as an interpreter. "What's a basque?" I inquired. "A small chapeau. A hat," said Miss G. "You mean a beret?" I cried scornfully. "I wouldn't be caught dead wearing a beret!" At that moment Major Ratay came out of the house wearing, you guessed it, a beret. Major Riley had departed and with him Milos. No new chauffeur having yet been hired, I was driving Major Ratay and Miss Gheorghiu on a two-day tour of nearby towns. I don't know how the Major came to select Miss Gheorghiu, and she was an agreeable and helpful lady, but I have to say she could talk the ear off a cornstalk, in French, German, and of course Rumanian. From Bucharest I pointed the Plymouth northwest some fifty miles through wooded, gently rolling country to Tirgovista, a town on the edge of the oil lands and featuring the Dealul Monastery, to which the head of Michael the Brave was brought following his assassination in 1601 by an agent of Vienna. Except in remote areas like the Dobrudja, Rumanian roads were two-lane asphalt, requiring no special driving skills. Turning due west, we crossed another seventy miles of lush countryside to Pitesti, among the foothills of the Transylvanian Alps. Here we lunched at an outdoor restaurant accompanied by the inevitable string orchestra with cimbalom, the keyless piano whose strings you hit with little hammers. Then on to Sibiu at about 1,400 feet where we found an adequate hotel for the night.

Originally a Draco-Roman village, Sibiu was settled by Saxons in the 12th Century and called Hermannstadt. Tartars destroyed it in 1241, but fortifications were built that helped it withstand attacks from the Turks until the 15th Century. In between the fights it knew plagues, fires and an earthquake. It has two levels connected by picturesque staircases and sloping streets, and some of the houses built into the city walls still survive. But of all this we travelers saw little, turning eastward early the following day for Brasov. On the way we asked directions of a Rumanian soldier, who answered in German.

*"Und wo haben Sie deutsch so gut gelernt?"* asked the Major (Where did you learn German so well?). *"Ich bin deutsch,"* was the reply. I am German, and so he was although his forebears had been in Rumania for hundreds of years. Browning has explained it to us:

"And I must not omit to say  
That in Transylvania there's a tribe  
Of alien people that ascribe  
The outlandish ways and dress  
On which their neighbours lay such stress  
To their fathers and mothers having risen  
Out of some subterraneous prison

Into which they were trepanned  
Long time ago in a mighty band  
Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land,  
But how or why, they don't understand."

Brasov too is an old German town. Scholars still go there to study mediaeval German. The government of King Carol II, himself a Hohenzollern, had put up signs which Miss Gheorghiu translated as: "Let's all speak Rumanian," but with little effect. The Teutonic Knights who occupied it in the Twelfth Century named it Kronstadt, and the ruins of their fortress look over the city from a towering hill. Like Sibiu it has suffered from siege, fire and pestilence. Some fifteen miles distant is a castle at Bran that is believed to have been the home of Vlad Dracul or Vlad the Devil, a 15th Century tyrant who was the prototype for Bram Stoker's Dracula.

Time was limited, and the Plymouth headed south for Sinaia. Long a health resort because of its mineral springs, this Pearl of the Carpathians was nominated by King Carol I as the royal summer residence. Here are three castles, one of the smaller of which was a favorite haunt of Carol II and his red-headed Lupescu. Sinaia sits at the feet of high, wooded slopes that offer beautiful hiking trails in summer and ski slopes in winter. It has hotels, shops, restaurants and a casino built in 1912, and it remained a tourist resort even after the Communists took over.

Ploesti, the oil city, was the last stop on our way back to Bucharest. Situated clear of the mountains in a flat plain, its ten refineries and surrounding oil wells were admirable targets for Allied bombers when Rumania became involved in World War II. But that was not to happen for three more years. We voyageurs drove the last thirty-seven miles back to the capital, and Major Ratay immediately set me, fagged out from driving the whole way, to typing some papers by midnight preparatory to an official visit to London.

The police again. A few days earlier the four of us -- Anita, Milos, Phreddie the Phallic Phrenchman, and Our Hero -- were strolling back from an afternoon in a park. Milos and Phreddie were walking down the middle of a narrow street discussing some absorbing topic, like maybe the philosophy of Sumerian phylogeny. Anita and I, following, stood aside to let a taxi pass, but Milos and Phreddie, oblivious of traffic, did not realize the taxi was stalled behind them and continued to block the street. Because of a strictly enforced Bucharest ordinance, the taxi driver did not dare toot the horn, and he crawled behind the two promenaders growing fierouser and fierouser until finally, popping his cork, he nudged Milos with the bumper.

Unaware that he had been holding the man up for several minutes, Milos believed the taxi had come from behind at speed and barely managed to stop. Screaming hysterically, "He tried to kill me" he ripped open the door, got his hands on the driver's throat, and tried to drag him from the car. Phreddie got in through the door on the opposite side and began to pummel the unfortunate man with his fists. Although I knew Milos was in the wrong, I ran to get in the action but was lucky to arrive too late, lucky because a nearby policeman darted forward and arrested Milos, Phreddie and the driver, but not me because I had not

yet become involved.

The culprits were brought before a plugugly police official who clearly favored the taxi driver but seemed inhibited by my Legation identity card, which I showed in my role as interested spectator. The brouhaha lasted half an hour, with the driver and the official voluble in Rumanian and the two defendants voluble in French. Finally the matter was declared a draw, and all parties separated in good humor except the police official. Anita, who had stood silent and white-faced, heaved a sigh of relief when we were allowed to leave.

Wind-down. With Milos and Major Riley departed, Phreddie the Phrenchman gone back to Paris, and Anita off for the States, I decided to leave the Hotel Union. I had never adjusted to this neighborhood where girls on the sidewalk kept offering themselves for rent, and placards and newspaper ads kept warning against syphilis. I could not afford the Athenee Palace, and I did not want to live in the decaying Splendide which faced it across the Calea Victorei, but if you walked through the lobby of the old Splendide and out the back door you came to a third hotel, the Splendide Parc. This was quite a new job, with modern plumbing and garish white plaster that the management did not propose to improve because King Carol had informed them he intended to tear the hotel down in order to extend the royal palace. About a year later both the Splendide and the Splendide Parc did indeed come down, but the royal palace was never extended while Carol occupied it.

I transferred from the Union to the Splendide Parc and had a spacious room with blank walls, a private bath, and an alcove containing a double bed and another occupant. Yes, on my first night I was aware of little nips, but it took me three more nights to lay hands on the aggravating beast and give it a strong pinch twixt finger and thumb. Letting go, I was dismayed to see it give a terrific hop, and I realized that for the first time in my life I was eyeball to eyeball with a flea.

My knowledge of fleas was limited to the discourse in *Tom Sawyer Abroad* which explains that a flea is proportionately stronger than a man but gives no instructions on how to destroy one. Night after night I would waken at a nip and frantically search the bedclothes. When I did catch the pesky thing, I could not contrive to squash it. Several times when I was sure I had given it the coup de grace it would leap away and the game would start afresh. Not until the fifth night did I get the idea of pinning it against a glass table top and scrunching it with the flat of a nail file. After this bout I could appreciate why the flea was immortalized by Goethe in poetry and by Mussorgsky and Berlioz in music.

Freeman Bates, the permanent clerk for Bucharest, arrived the first week in June, but no word about re-assignment came from the War Department, and I stayed on. By this time I was yearning for "home," meaning Warsaw, and this was odd because Bucharest was a more ingratiating city than Warsaw and offered many more diversions for a young man, not to overlook the advantages from well-stocked shops and a favorable rate of exchange. The atmosphere at the Legation, however, was much more formidable than at Embassy

Warsaw. No one ever introduced me around. I had met the Minister only by insisting I ought to pay a courtesy call, none of the American personnel were my age, and I had received not a single invitation to a Legation social function, official or personal. Only Ajutor had extended the hand of friendship, but Ajutor was a bit seasoned to be a steady pal for a stripling of twenty-four.

So I wandered aimlessly around town taking snapshots with a newly-bought Retina and waiting for orders to come, of course demonstrating the office routine to Bates on his first assignment. It was curious to find myself in the role of instructor, but Miss Mikwitz had grounded me well in the few weeks I had been under her wing. The orders did come toward the end of June 1939, backed by a letter from Major Colbern urging me to return soonest. I took the train for Warsaw on June 28, 1939, glad to give up the less inhibited society of Bucharest for the more austere but friendly atmosphere of Embassy Warsaw. About one month earlier Hitler and Mussolini had concluded a political and military alliance marking the full development of the Rome-Berlin Axis. June 8 to 11 King George VI and Queen Elizabeth had made a good-will visit to the United States.

Chapter 6  
Invasion  
(September 1939)

"L'ordre regne a Varsovie."

- Sebastiani

Embassy Warsaw was tense with the threat that Germany might invade Poland. The bomb shelter in the garden back of the Chancery had been completed; the staff worked into the nights cranking out cablegrams and despatches; Ambassador Biddle and Counselor Winship were visited by numerous American newsmen consulting the crystal ball about the proximity of war. Nevertheless the routine of city life went on as usual. A few practice blackouts with restricted lighting were held, and instructions were published on taking shelter during air raids, but people continued their accustomed rounds of earning zloties and pursuing happiness.

Young Charles Moczynski, the Ph.D. candidate at the Embassy switchboard, welcomed me back into the familiar rut at the Y.M.C.A. The apartment by the Poniatowski Bridge was no longer available but Albert, an Embassy interpreter, sub-let his luxury flat while he was away on vacation, complete with cook-maid to take care of it. Albert, who had been educated at Princeton, was a Polish Count and his sister was a Princess by marriage, but even the nobility has to earn a living.

For several days the Y.M.C.A. buzzed over a minor crisis, the constipation of Mr. Dennis. This was an elderly schoolteacher from the mid-west, earnest of mien, bald of pate, and weighing 120 pounds in his overcoat. He had come to Europe on a shoestring to gather first-hand impressions for his classes and had been incautious enough to confide the state of his plumbing to one of the desk clerks. In no time it was all over the Y.M.C.A., and poor Mr. Dennis became the object of sympathy, nostrums, and attempts at ribald humor. Persuaded to consult a doctor, Mr. Dennis was even more distressed when he was advised that his trouble would right itself and was charged twenty-five zloties. My suggestion that he take an enema was rejected by all hands as totally bizarre.

Vacation interlude. Nan, my mother, came over from Washington for a three-week stay. With me she attended lunches and dinners, a reception by the Ambassador for the visiting Yale glee club, and an open-air concert by opera and movie stars Jan Kiepura and wife Marta Eggerth in the Old Town square. Late in July we entrained for a week-end visit to Danzig, the city-state that Hitler had said the previous March was his next objective.

Danzig claims Schopenhauer and Fahrenheit as native sons, although both of them lived most of their lives elsewhere. Fahrenheit introduced the use of quicksilver in thermometers; before him scientists used spirits of wine. Schopenhauer wrote books. Nan and I walked the old streets, drank *dunkeles Bier* in the ancient port, admired the ornaments of amber that filled the shops, and visited the 15th Century Artushof, the locus of both a museum and the stock exchange. We paid no attention to the undistinguished

Polish post office; we could not know that within a few weeks a dozen Polish workers would be besieged in this Pocha Polska and afterward executed by a force of one hundred Germans, or that years later novelist Gunther Grass would dramatize the episode in *The Tin Drum*.

A rubberneck boat gave us a tour of the harbor and a glimpse of Gdynia, the port expanded from a fishing village by Poland after the Treaty of Versailles authorized the Corridor. At dockside was the great liner *Batory*, named after Stephen a duke of Transylvania who became Poland's king, NOT after Elizabeth Batory, a relative who won renown as a werewolf by slaughtering six hundred maidens and bathing in their blood. The *Batory* made headlines in 1949 when accused Communist spy Gerhard Eisler used it to jump bail and flee from the United States to Europe. Nan and I were not allowed to get off in Gdynia, which was Polish territory, but landed at Zoppot, the seaside resort of the Danzig city-state where the burghers splash in the water of the tideless Baltic. Mediaeval Danzig was to be absorbed by Hitler's Reich within a month of our visit and to be almost totally destroyed in the battle between the Germans and Russians in 1945.

Although hard-pressed for office help, Major Colbern spared me a week's vacation early in August 1939. Nan and I spent three days in Cracow. We visited the Wawel, the great castle where Marshal Pilsudski and many of Poland's kings are buried. We watched the trumpeter blow the Hejnal, or warning of an approaching enemy, from the steeple of the 14th Century St. Mary's church, breaking off in mid-note in memory of the trumpeter who took a Tatar arrow in his throat back in 1241. We strolled through the university where Copernicus studied in his formative years. In the market place we watched woodcarvers from the Tatra whittle figurines, ornaments, and plates. On the third day we caught the train for Budapest, innocently unaware that we had offended the imp who louses up travel arrangements.

Speaking French, I had understood the travel agency to say that the train left at 11:40. Unluckily Nan and I arrived at the station at 11:00, and I saw that a train was scheduled to leave for Budapest at 11:14. I thought that what I had understood as "onze heures quarantes" was actually "onze heures quatorze" and that we had nearly missed the train. I grabbed Nan's hand and rushed her through the gate just in time to hop aboard.

For a time I was pleased at the accident that had led us to the station early, but I began to feel uneasy when the conductor hesitated over our tickets, started to say something, then shrugged and punched the stub. I became more uneasy when a second conductor on the Czech side of the frontier also hesitated, started to say something, and likewise shrugged and punched the ticket. That things had gone amiss became evident as hours slid by and the train kept puffing. The trip should have taken about four hours. It continued into the weak moments of the following morning, fourteen hours in all.

The proper train did indeed leave at 11:40, but mischance had led us to an earlier train that, while it did go to Budapest, turned latitudinally after it crossed the Czech border and traversed the length of Slovakia. The countryside was beautiful, but the uncertainty of what was happening, the inability to find anyone who could communicate more than a

few words of French or German, and the strain of sitting up fourteen hours put me in a vile temper.

When the train stopped at a hamlet, I leaned out the window and took a picture of its name (Satoraljauhely) which seemed longer than the town itself. A watchful station guard sprang aboard and demanded that I either destroy the film or surrender the camera. I tried to convince him that I was an important diplomat, a difficult job since the man understood only Slovak and Magyar, and poor Nan became nearly frantic for fear that her son might take up residence in a Slovakian dungeon. Perforce I opened the camera and destroyed not only the offending snap but most of the pictures I had taken in Cracow.

This misfortune made me so grumpy I was virtually snarling when we reached Budapest at 3:00 in the morning, but more was to come. The Hungarian conductor marched us into a room at the Budapest station and made me pay extra fare. Because the passengers had traveled many more kilometers than their tickets called for, they had to be charged for the difference.

A sorry introduction to Hungary, but it did not destroy our enjoyment of beautiful Budapest, its shops, restaurants, hotels, magnificent buildings, mineral springs, Danube bridges, and nearby mountains. We did the standard tourist things, took a sightseeing bus during the day and a nightclub tour in the evening, ate confections at Gerbeaud's, ooh-aahed at the artificial waves in the Gellert Hotel pool, and attended an open-air performance of *The Gypsy Baron* on the Margaret Island. Our few days sped quickly by, and all too soon I had to put Nan on the train for Vienna, Paris, and LeHavre. As for me, the memories of the trip through Slovakia were enough to overcome fear of flying. I got on an airplane for the first time in my twenty-four years and in less than two hours was back in a Warsaw that was girding for war.

The situation looks grave. On August 21, 1939 the British Consulate General advised British residents of Poland to leave the country at once. The Consulate had issued a similar notice in the crisis of September 1938 and was roundly damned when war was averted. At that time the United States had taken no action, but now the portents were more alarming. On August 23 the United States Consulate General issued a warning to Americans, recommending that they travel home via Stockholm and the Baltic.

Those who disregarded the official advice were caught by a German decree of August 28 closing the frontier. Because the border had stretched to include Slovakia, the only points of exit from Poland were Gdynia, Latvia, and Rumania. As Gdynia was uncomfortably close to Pomerania, and as the railway to Wilno approached within ten miles of East Prussia, the choice narrowed to Rumania, to which there were but two regularly scheduled trains per week.

On August 20 Albert Forster, the Nazi leader in Danzig, announced that the hour of deliverance (into Nazi hands) was near, and on the same date the two deadly enemies, Nazi Germany and the U.S.S.R., signed a commercial agreement as a preliminary to something far more significant. Three days later came the staggering news that Germany

and the Soviet Union had concluded a non-aggression pact, meaning that Stalin had promised Hitler he would not join Britain and France if they honored their treaty obligations to help Poland in case she were attacked.

The Poles called a partial mobilization that night, and I issued from my lodging next morning to find the streets of Warsaw aswarm with soldiers in full equipment. Hospitals were evacuated to provide room for anticipated casualties. The newspapers carried appeals for those not mobilized to help dig trenches for bomb shelters; please bring your own shovel. To compensate for the abrupt disappearance of all silver coinage, the Government issued paper money in denominations of two, five, and ten zloties. When I tried to buy dollar travelers checks, the Bank Polski Amerykanski insisted on seeing my passport to make sure I still held official status. Buses, trucks, taxis, and private vehicles were mobilized, and sale of gasoline was restricted to holders of official permits.

Sunday, August 27, and I drove with Major Colbern to Modlin, a military post some dozen miles north of Warsaw. Rows on rows of barbed wire, and alongside the highway piles of heavy stakes circled by four-foot wooden discs for use as tank stops. The Major remarked that the Poles seemed to have done a good job of mobilizing. Yesterday the Warsaw suburbs had been full of troops, but today they were empty, suggesting that the recruits had been equipped, organized, and moved up to the front in jigtime.

The rumor mills ground. France had mobilized 700,000 men; later reports made it a million. A Polish sentry had been disemboweled; a Polish courier had been arrested by the Germans and his diplomatic pouch opened in disregard of international law; angry crowds threatened the German Embassy and had to be dispersed by police. Because of the German-Russian non-aggression pact, popular unrest was so great in Germany that Hitler had to call off a speech scheduled for August 27 in Tannenberg. Japan had sent a note of protest to Germany, presumably against the threat to Poland. Italy had refused to support Germany; Germany was suffering from a food shortage; Gestapo agents had nipped a plot to overthrow Hitler. The crowning rumor of the day: Mussolini had resigned.

When Germany closed the border to all traffic on the 28th, gas masks were distributed to Embassy staffers with orders that they be carried at all times. There was much horseplay as we tried to show one another how to manipulate the clumsy things. In accordance with instructions from Washington, all American employees were offered the opportunity to leave Poland. All declined. The commercial attache and staff were ordered to Riga, and some of the consular personnel were sent to distant towns in Poland to look after American citizens.

Ambassador Biddle arranged for staff personnel to sleep in Konstancja, a residential suburb of Warsaw, to reduce the danger from bombs intended for military and industrial targets. Major Colbern remained in town to keep in touch with the Polish General Staff. Feeling that my place was with my boss, I too remained in town.

And life went on as usual. I drank beer in the outdoor gardens, played tennis, swam in the

Y.M.C.A. pool, and at the movies saw Virginia Bruce and Nelson Eddy try to calm the unruly coal miners by singing *The Star Spangled Banner*. Subconsciously I hoped that if I ignored the threat of war it would disappear.

On August 29 came news that the British Government had refused Hitler's demands for Danzig and the Corridor. Miss Mikwitz insisted on equipping me with a first-aid kit containing, in addition to the usual bandages, ointment for mustard-gas burns. War scare or not, I played tennis that afternoon on the sound reasoning that the war would not be prevented if I just sat around and moped. Across the English Channel about this time Winston Churchill was laying bricks:

"That night (August 27?) I slept at Chartwell, where I had asked General Ironside to stay with me next day.

He had just returned from Poland, and the reports he gave of the Polish Army were most favorable... Also at this time I completed bricklaying the kitchen of the cottage which during the year past I had prepared for our family home..."

- *The Gathering Storm*, op. cit., p. 401

Next day the Polish Government called for total mobilization, and Major Colbern told me word had come that the Germans had invaded Slovakia. I began packing my personal effects in order to deposit them in the Chancery basement but had to quit and go to bed because the Government imposed the first total blackout.

During the earlier practice blackouts, autos had been allowed to cover headlights with blue cellophane, a few street lamps had been permitted, and house lights could be turned on provided windows were covered with black paper. With total blackout, no auto lights were allowed, all street lamps were extinguished, and electric power was cut off from all but a few buildings to prevent spies from disclosing the city's position to enemy bombers. These precautions proved unnecessary. The German aircraft attacked only in daylight.

On August 31 General Franz Halder, Chief of the German General Staff, noted in his diary: "Fuehrer calm; has slept well... (Shirer, op. cit., p. 790 (paperback edition))"

"War's glorious art - "To murder thousands takes a specious name,  
War's glorious art, and gives immortal fame."

- Edward Young, *Love of Fame*, Satire VII, Line 55

The first bombers appeared on September 1 while I was eating breakfast at the Y.M.C.A. A helluva racket sounded a warning. Whistles and sirens held an unbroken scream for three minutes, the radio cried: "UWAGA (attention)! ALARME!" and stopped all programs to play over and over the first bars of Chopin's Grande Polonaise. The idea was that if you tuned in late and heard the Polonaise you would know the alarm was still on. No one was supposed to be on the streets during an alarm, subject to arrest.

If there were planes during that first alarm they came nowhere near the heart of the city. Alarms sounded throughout the day. At the third, all Embassy hands were warned to be ready to run for the shelter at a moment's notice, and everybody strapped on his gas mask. But no bombers appeared near the Chancery until late in the afternoon.

Rumors continued rife. The Germans had taken Danzig and were bombing Katowice. The Poles had counter-attacked at Danzig. A friend at the Y.M.C.A. assured me the British fleet was bombarding Hamburg and the French were flying over Berlin; this news could not be made public because England and France had not declared war.

Actually both Britain and France mobilized on September 1 although they continued diplomatic activity in the hope of averting war. The British War Cabinet did not meet until September 4, the day after the British Government declared war. The French also seemed sluggish, but this was in accord with their commitments.

The Franco-Polish Military Convention of May 19, 1939 provided that the French would "progressively launch offensive operations against limited objectives toward the third day after General Mobilization Day," and that "as soon as the principal German effort develops against Poland, France will launch an offensive action against Germany with the bulk of her forces, starting on the fifteenth day after the first day of the general French mobilization (*The Gathering Storm*, op. cit., p. 450 Shirer, op. cit., p. 839)." These facts were not realized by the general public, including me.

Lugging my biggest suitcase from apartment to Chancery at the close of this first day, I was caught by an alarm with three blocks to go. I tried to run but pooped out after one block and was herded into a doorway by an air raid warden. Regulations required that all persons on the streets at the time of a raid seek shelter. Public and private vehicles had to park; drozhka drivers were to attach feed bags to horses, turn them around in the shafts, and tie their heads to the wagons; and the passengers were to seek shelter. This was an overstatement. One simply entered the areaway, courtyard, or ground floor of the nearest apartment house/office building. If in a restaurant, store, or movie, you remained there until the raid was over. The sole protective measure taken by shopkeepers was to crisscross their windows with adhesive tape to prevent flying glass. Warsaw had no subway (tubes) to use as shelters, as in London.

A lull occurring, I persuaded the warden to release me and made it to the Chancery. When the planes came over again I stood in the courtyard watching the formations while Polish anti-aircraft shells coasted through the air and turned into white puffs in, around, over, under, alongside, but never on the planes. The height was tremendous -- the Major guessed not less than 12,000 feet -- and the angle of fire so oblique that the Poles registered not a single hit. Neither, so far as could be seen, were any bombs dropped, and the rumor even spread afterward that the whole show was a demonstration by the Poles to accustom civilians to the sight of planes.

I went up to the second-floor balcony to snap pictures. On a nearby roof a Polish machine gun kicked up an enthusiastic fuss, and the sound so close at hand upset my poise. I

speculated afterward on my feelings during this, my first experience "under fire". I was not afraid in the sense that ice grabbed my insides and left me shaken; rather was I stirred up and impelled to hustle and do something, not to hide but to be active, though in what way I could not define. The only intelligible words I could remember saying were, "Jesus Christ, the situation looks grave!"

Next day, September 2, came confirmation that the planes had dropped bombs on the city's outskirts, destroying buildings and killing several persons. I grew more and more nervous as alarms sounded throughout the day, although no bombs fell near the Chancery. Later I saw that I had put down in my journal: "All day I have been looking over my shoulder. I am very much afraid that I am very much afraid." One damnable aspect about air raids was that the Germans always seemed to time them when I was sitting in the john, an embarrassing place to be caught.

Money suddenly became a problem. When I routinely handed in a check at the Polski-Amerikanski Bank I was told that, under a ruling made that very morning, no more checks could be cashed. I consulted the Embassy, and a detour was found. The Bank was still allowing its customers to make and withdraw deposits. I made the dollar check payable to the Embassy. The Embassy deposited the check to its own account and then drew out the equivalent in zloty which it turned over to me. Where there's red tape there are scissors. When the canceled personal check came back to me many months later I saw that it had been taken over by the Germans and put through the Reichsbank. Unwittingly I had helped finance Hitler's war.

The morning of Sunday, September 3, I was setting out for the Chancery with two bags in hand when the sirens sounded. I sat for an hour at the foot of the stairs until the raid ended. After storing the bags in the Chancery basement I returned to the apartment and tackled single-handed the job of moving my trunk. I committed the crime of using the elevator to take it down (one is allowed only to ascend in Polish elevators) and then hunted half an hour for a drozhka. When I arrived again at the Chancery, I found it in a dither.

Ambassador Biddle, tireless, his hair ruffled, stood in a cluster of buzzing Embassy staff. The Germans had bombed a factory at Konstancja during the early morning raid and had smashed the house next door to the Ambassador's, killing its occupants. The windows of the Ambassador's house were broken; had the German bombardier pulled his release a fraction of a second later the career of Tony Biddle would have ended in Poland. The Ambassador did not wait for a second shot but piled his folks, dressed in whatever they could grab, into the Cadillac and beat it for Warsaw, the very place from which he had moved the staff in order to be safe.

A question then arose as to whether the staff members, who had been quartered about a mile distant from the Ambassador's house, should return to Konstancja that night or remain in town. With Konstancja shown to be no safer than Warsaw, the decision was to leave it to individual choice. Most opted to stay in town. As the Major remarked: "Might as well be comfortable."

Big news topped this flurry of excitement. England and France had declared war on Germany. When it became public, the Poles jammed the streets before the British and French embassies and shouted for a couple of hours. A branch of the British Consulate, the Passport Control Office, stood across from the U.S. Chancery, and a fair-sized crowd stood and cheered there as well. After a time they took a notion to come and cheer the United States too, jamming into the courtyard. Charles Moczynski came out of his cubbyhole to see what the racket was about, and at sight of the young switchboard operator, the first American to show himself, the crowd let out a tremendous huzza. They refused to break up until Ambassador Biddle appeared and waved. He would have said a few words, but the crowd kept on making noise, which was just as well because the Ambassador spoke fluent French but little Polish.

Major Colbern went off for a talk with the military and came back at day's end with a long report that I worked on until 1:00 a.m. putting into code. No messenger being available, and no taxi or drozhka, I had to walk the cablegram to the post office myself. It was an eery experience, groping through the blackout. The night was chill, the city lay steeped in ink, and there hung a silence through which my footsteps rang with startling clarity. I was a bit fearful of being waylaid and robbed. I thought of that scene in *Treasure Island* where young Jim hears in the silent, frosty air a sound that brought heart into mouth, the tap-tapping of the horrible blind man's stick upon the frozen road.

News spread on the morning of September 4 that a German submarine had sunk a British passenger ship, the *Athenia*. The Polish papers headed their articles "New Lusitania" and said that 800 passengers had drowned. Rumors flew. The Germans had taken Czestochowa; the Poles had retaken it; England and France were pressing Germany hard from two sides. The day's first alarm sounded about five in the afternoon. I got my gas mask and stood in the courtyard, but the sight of planes circling low and the sound of a machine gun coughing out its lungs on a nearby roof sent me scurrying for the shelter.

Planes seemed to point at the Chancery garden but passed low overhead aiming for the Vistula where they banked hard left and dipped from sight. We staffers sat in the clammy dugout for the next hour, popping out during lulls and popping back when the planes returned. There was much discussion of just how safe the shelter was. It consisted of a trench, perhaps eight feet deep and six feet wide, lined with timbers and beams on which rested a roof of concrete reinforced with iron rails. Sandbags lay over this roof, the supposition being that the sand would absorb the shock of striking bombs. The more optimistic staff members were of the opinion that the shelter offered good protection against a nearby miss or even a glancing blow. All were agreed that it could not survive a direct hit.

During the raid Major Colbern stayed in the Chancery building, coming out onto the balcony now and then for a look. When it was over, he and Second Secretary Landreth Harrison dashed off by auto to inspect the damage. An estimated eighty to one hundred planes had taken part, attacking Praga across the river. The great Poniatowski Bridge remained intact. The bombers never managed to hit it although they blasted to kindling

the yacht club that lay a hundred yards to one side of the bridge. My former apartment house, where I had lived before being sent to Bucharest, was across the street from the yacht club.

Flight to the east. While I was coding a cablegram the morning of Tuesday, September 5, the Ambassador entered the room, and I overheard him tell Major Colbern that the Polish Foreign Office insisted all foreign missions leave Warsaw that day. Was the situation so grim? The Major told me the Germans had reached the junction of the Vistula and Bug Rivers, about twenty miles from Warsaw, and the Polish Government had decided to move somewhere in eastern Poland. He added that he and I would not go with the Embassy because the Polish General Staff had given no indication of moving.

Hustle-bustle as the Embassy staff assembled its official and personal equipment and prepared to move out. Cars were loaded till the springs threatened to flatten; a truck striped with camouflage paint (loaned by the Polish Army) was crammed to bursting; U.S. flags were draped over the tops of the vehicles; and the cavalcade rolled away to a destination that was supposedly secret, for the Polish Government wished to conceal itself from German bombers. Within a few hours, however, German radio stations were broadcasting that the Government had moved to Naleczow, near Lublin.

Second Secretary Harrison, the Military Attache group, and the Polish messengers were all that remained from the Embassy staff. The consular staff moved from its downtown building to the Chancery. They would stay to take care of stray American citizens.

Anticipating that Major Colbern and I might have to leave Warsaw with only a moment's notice, I packed the office effects and suggested burning confidential papers, but the Major said he did not expect to evacuate for some time. All the same, he asked Miss Mikwitz if she wanted to come along in case it became necessary to move out. Miss Mikwitz declined because her Aunt was over seventy, but she accepted an offer to occupy the Major's flat which was closer to the Chancery than her own. That night, after I had encoded the evening cablegram, the Major's chauffeur drove me to the post office in the blackout. A new sensation this, creeping through the streets at five miles per hour, unable to see so much as the radiator ornament.

The morning of September 6 the Major said we might soon have to leave the city. At noon came a telephone call from the Ambassador instructing him and Mr. Harrison to depart that evening. I set about burning papers. There were the confidential files and also the codes. The Major considered leaving one of the two sets in the Chancery but decided instead to destroy it, an operation that took half an hour. The second set, consisting of five fat books, we would carry with us in a small field safe in the trunk of the car. This was a clumsy iron strong box weighing apparently half a ton. When Mr. Harrison heard we were carrying a safe he asked us to transport a set of Embassy codes as well. The office chores done, I ran to my apartment, threw my remaining personal effects into a bag, waited for the inevitable air raid to subside, and rushed back to the Chancery.

The raid was severe. Praga suffered heavily, an armament factory went up in flames,

numbers of civilians were killed, and houses were wrecked. But the Poniatowski Bridge stood intact, and we crossed it at five o'clock. Jan the chauffeur and I were in the government Chevrolet; the Major and his old pointer dog, Romey, led in his 1938 Ford with three newspapermen as passengers, Beatty of United Press, Lehrbas of Associated Press, and Mowrer of the *Chicago Daily News*.

We drove rapidly enough across the bridge and through Praga but slowed then to thirty miles per hour because we had a rendezvous with a third car, an acquaintance of the Major's. The slow pace made me unhappy because bombs started again on the edges of Praga. I could not see the planes from the car but I knew they were near from the way people crouched in ditches beside the road. My ears sang with *woomps* of exploding bombs, and my nostrils filled with an acrid smell although the bombs landed a good distance from the road.

The Major kept stolidly on through the remaining hours of daylight and into the night, his car's headlights dim behind blue cellophane, the following cars in darkness. We passed many troops in peasant wagons, trucks, motorcycles and afoot, as well as much civilian traffic, for everybody who could manage some sort of transportation was getting out of Warsaw. The journey ended at about 10:00 p.m. after some 130 kilometers. Five hours for little more than eighty miles.

We had traveled southeast from Warsaw through Garwolin and Kurow and then by a side road to Naleczow, a spa noted for treatment of heart diseases and nervous depression. The first thing we encountered was a long line of automobiles with C. D. (corps diplomatique) license plates waiting before the village's only gasoline pump. From Third Secretary Burke Elbrick, who was waiting in the line, we learned that the Polish Foreign Office had already moved on. Again the destination was supposed to be secret but was said to be Krzemieniec in eastern Poland. Ambassador Biddle and the staff had also left, with initial stopping place the Ambassador's summer home or estate at Pomerzhani, near Lwow. Mr. Elbrick had no information about the General Staff.

After reflection, Major Colbern joined the line of cars before the gasoline pump, turned the State Department codes over to Mr. Elbrick (he was relieved to be rid of them), and bedded down at 3:00 a.m. in the villa that was to have been occupied by the Embassy.

Arising after four hours' sleep, we and the newspaper men headed for Lublin, forty kilometers distant. On the road we met an open car with an officer in British uniform, and the Major hailed him for a talk. This officer wore a patch over one eye, and I asked afterward whether he had lost it in the First War. Not only an eye, said the Major, but an arm as well, for this was Major General Carton de Wiart, V. C., head of a British Military Mission to Poland, who later on was to lead the abortive British attempt to capture Trondheim in Norway ("General Adrian Carton de Wiart, VC, became a legend in the British Army for bombastic heroism of a kind which subsequently contributed to the creation of Evelyn Waugh's Brigadier Ben Ritchie-Hook...." [An excerpt from de Wiart's own writing. He had been invalided home from East Africa in 1914.]

"On my appearing before the Medical Board they seemed rather shocked at my desire to go to France.... They produced the astonishing solution that if I found I would wear a satisfactory glass eye they would consider me.... At my next board I appeared with a startling, excessively uncomfortable glass eye. I was passed fit for general service. On emerging I called a taxi, threw my glass eye out of the window, put n my black patch, and have never worn a glass eye since...."

- [Here is another excerpt, in 1915.]

"My hand was a ghastly sight; two of the fingers were hanging by a bit of skin, all the palm was shot away and most of the wrist.... I asked the doctor to take my fingers off; he refused, so I pulled them off myself and felt absolutely no pain in doing it...."

[While on sick leave:]

"....I went along to White's one afternoon, and a member known to me by sight came up and asked me if I would do him a favour.... He then told me there was a man paying undue attention to a lady he knew and he wanted to fight him and asked me to second him in a duel. I agreed at once, as I think duelling a most excellent solution in matters of the heart.... It was a lively change from the sick bed. I went off to see his opponent, whom I knew; true to form, he found the whole idea quite ridiculous.... As a last resort (he) produced what he considered a telling argument, which was that if this episode was found out we should all get into serious trouble.... My reply to that was that the war was on, everyone too busy to be interested, and that it would be simple to go to some secluded spot like Ashdown Forest with a can of petrol and cremate the remains of whichever was killed. This suggestion finished him off;.... He promptly sat down and wrote an affidavit not to see the lady again...."

- from Max Hastings, ed., *The Oxford Book of Military Anecdotes*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1985, pp. 314 and 343-345.).

Although the General did not know the whereabouts of the General Staff, he did reveal that his own Military Mission was quartered at Lukow, a village fifty miles north of Lublin.

At Lublin the three newspapermen sought other means of transport. They were bursting with a story to tell and wanted to reach a functioning telegraph line, whereas the Major wanted to turn north to Lukow and try to get a clue about the General Staff. While the men were making inquiries, a boy of about eighteen approached me and asked for a ride to Lwow (Lemberg). He said that one train per day ran between Lublin and Lwow, that special authorization was needed to ride on it, and that it had great risk of being bombed. As for travel by car, the highway had been so heavily bombed its distance was nearly doubled by detours.

The newsmen returned with a youth who had a car but no gas, and as they could get gas but had no car a bargain had been struck. Because the car was a two-cylinder DKW there was barely room for the three men and driver, and they had to refuse passage to the

young boy. Major Colbern was willing to give him a lift north to Lukow, but the boy declined to head in the direction of East Prussia. The boy's mother appeared out of nowhere and begged the newsmen to take her son. Seeing her distress, I assured her the Germans would not come as far as Lublin and even if they did they would not harm civilians. I meant to be comforting, but the mother remained unconvinced. Said she: "We are Jews".

I did not know that on the southeast edge of Lublin is an area that was to become known as Majdanek, the second largest (next to Oswiecim or Auschwitz) German concentration camp on Polish territory. At the Nuremberg Trials, the number of people executed at Majdanek was estimated at 1.5 million.

The newsmen were not without troubles. Once the car was filled with gas the owner took a fancy to drive fifty kilometers back toward Warsaw to say good-bye to his family. After this proposal was squelched in heated argument, the fellow suddenly insisted that his cousin go along. To this the newsmen gave in on the understanding that the cousin would ride only a few kilometers to his country home. The five passengers and their luggage piled into the tiny car and set out. They made it eventually to Rumania, although Mowrer was trapped by the Russians and had to swim the Dniester to get there.

Where's the General Staff? Major Colbern, Jan, Romey the dog, and I turned onto dirt roads that led through Lubartow, Kock, and Radzyn to Lukow. I was astonished at the numbers of black-hatted, bearded, ear-curling Jews in these villages. I had the notion that all Jews were shopkeepers in large towns. Some twenty kilometers before Lukow I noticed a cloud in the distance and wondered idly if it might be bringing the hoped-for rain that would slow up German tanks. We met increasing numbers of peasant carts filled to the brim with household goods atop which jolted entire families. As we neared the village, I realized that the cloud was smoke, and as we came close I saw that the village was ablaze. Arriving in gathering dusk, we found the road blocked by a bomb crater three to five feet deep around which we had to circle. A tree to the left of the crater had been splintered, but a house the same distance to the right stood untouched.

A block away from the blazing, straw-thatched houses men took turns working a wheel that pushed a feeble stream through a hose, while others ran back and forth with buckets. Their efforts were hopeless, and eventually the fire burned itself out. The presence of the British Military Mission, presumably revealed by spies, was apparently the cause of the bombing for Lukow had no rail junction, troop barracks, factory, or other military objective. The British had suffered one casualty, a Mrs. Shelley, wife of a colonel. They had been married only a few weeks earlier. She had refused to leave her husband, and now she met death in this remote Polish village.

From talks with the British officers, the Major got the suggestion that the General Staff might have holed up at Brzesc-nad-Bugiem (Brest-Litovsk). When he told me we would pass the night at Lukow there was nearly a mutiny in the ranks; I was all for leaving instantly. There was every reason to think the Germans would be back trying to do tomorrow what they had left incomplete today, and I wanted to put distance between

Lukow and us. Major Colbern explained patiently that it was better to get some rest at Lukow where the Mission would give us a place to stay than to blunder on into the night.

The British directed us to a canteen where we supped off tomatoes and black bread in the dim light of candles behind black-papered windows. Then Jan and I bedded down on piles of straw in a stable amidst Mission other ranks, and the Major joined the officers. Before bed, Jan fetched frigid water from a well, and I had my first shave since leaving Warsaw. As at Naleczow, I slept in ski jacket and pants under my blanket.

As the first streaks of light seeped through the sky, we took the road south to Radzyn and then turned east on the Warsaw-Siedlce-Brzesc highway. A few kilometers before Biala Podlaska we crossed a railroad track and noticed that a train seemed stalled a bit down the line.

Farther along, we overtook two Polish officers afoot to whom we offered a lift. They were surgeons, Warsaw civilians who had been ordered into uniform and sent to Brzesc, for what purpose they had no idea. Speaking French, I remarked slyly there were probably many soldiers in Brzesc (I was trying to find out if the General Staff was there), but the officers denied any knowledge.

It soon became evident that these gentlemen were unaccustomed to their uniforms. No bowl of jelly could have been more nervous, and had it not been for the Major's timely appearance they would have degenerated into cases of hysteria. They had been traveling by train from Warsaw for three days but had made less than a hundred miles because of bombings. Whenever planes appeared, the locomotive was detached to make it a smaller target while the passengers had to hide in field and forest. On the third day, they had been dismissed from the train permanently at Biala Podlaska, from which village they were making their way to Brzesc as best they could.

The Polish officers arranged for us to breakfast at the house of a friend in Brzesc. While the Major and I sampled fifty-seven varieties of sausage, Jan made the rounds of police, starostwo and wojewod and obtained permission to buy one hundred liters of gasoline. A knot of envious motorists watched as we filled the two cars. There was a surplus of five liters which, as our reserve cans were full, I proposed to give to a needy motorist. Jan would have none of my generosity. "*Benzine ist gelt,*" he observed and searched until he found a tin to hold the five liters. He yielded the contents of the hose to a motorcyclist, who was delighted.

Brzesc-nad-Bugiem (Brest-on-the-Bug, Brest Litovsk), an unpretentious but thriving town of about 45,000, is a crossroads of history. Here in 1794 the Russian General Suvorov, fresh from the bloody sack of Ismail in Bessarabia, inflicted a defeat on the Polish insurrectionists and went on to massacre the people of Warsaw. Here in 1918 representatives of the Central Powers met with a delegation of the Soviet Government headed by Trotsky and concluded the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk as a result of which the Germans were enabled to transfer two million men from the eastern to the western front. The town was to know new agonies in the war just begun, but on this day of our arrival it

stood serene.

Having established that the General Staff was lodged in the citadel on the edge of town, the Major headed north some five miles to Skoki Dwor, the estate of a Polish gentleman farmer, where American Vice Consul William Morton was known to be staying. He was one of the consular officers who had been sent out just before the start of war to take care of American citizens in remote Polish towns.

A robust sixty-two, Morton had been in the Service since 1907 but had never acquired striped pants manners, and if introduced to royalty would stick out his hand and say: "Glad to know you, King." With him as interpreter was Albert, the Polish count from whom I had sub-let an apartment two months earlier. Albert walked me across the fields to a stream called the Lesna River that flowed between Skoki Dwor and the town of Brzesc, where it linked with the Bug. Its chill waters took kindly to soap, and I enjoyed a long-overdue bath. I was to encounter the Lesna again a bit later under circumstances other than ablutionary.

Suburban rec post. Skoki Dwor, a sprawling two-storey mansion in an advancing stage of decay, was the residence of a self-effacing gentleman who appeared only at meal times and a genteel lady of indeterminate age who favored riding breeches and spoke only Polish and Russian. Communication with her was channeled through Mary, a plump American woman of middle age who had come to Europe with her Polish husband seventeen years previous. The husband, a farmer in a nearby village, had been mobilized and was somewhere in western Poland, and she was staying at Skoki with her two children as a combination friend and housekeeper.

Only the first storey of the barn-like house was used, a fire having gutted the second some years earlier. Bedrooms jutted off either side of the spacious living-dining room. In the kitchen across the hall, a barefoot peasant girl prepared meals amid stifling heat from a wood-burning stove and a blizzard of flies. Two storehouses flanked the house, and scattered about were barns, stables, chicken coops, and a class-conscious privy. Of the two compartments, one was kept locked, available only to the upper crust of Skoki society, the other open to the masses. The two were equally fouled. Back of the house lay an extensive garden and a walk covered by shade trees, but the garden lay neglected, the trees needed pruning, and the whole estate looked down on its luck and out-at-elbows.

Major Colbern said we would stay at Skoki indefinitely. The General Staff was in Brzesc, the telegraph line to Rumania and the United States still worked, Skoki lay distant from the target of the Brzesc citadel yet close enough to give ready access to the General Staff -- in sum, it was an ideal headquarters. It lacked only space. The Major had to share with me a room barely large enough to hold two bedsteads and wardrobe, and after we had dragged our bags in we could scarcely turn around.

German aircraft attacked the Brzesc fort that afternoon. From chairs on the verandah, the company at Skoki watched bombers circling over the citadel amid red tracer shells from anti-aircraft batteries. No hits were scored. Although Skoki lay some five miles distant,

the explosions set the windows of the house to rattling.

The Major proposed next day that he and Jan make a quick trip back to Warsaw. He wanted to get his uniforms and additional civilian clothing. I too needed clothes; with no heavy underwear, overcoat or gloves, and but one pair of shoes I was ill equipped for a Polish winter. Morton, who had not heard from Consul General Davis for a week, took a fancy to go along.

Before setting out, the Major thought it well to inquire whether they could enter Warsaw once they arrived. For that matter, he wanted to find out whether the trip was possible; perhaps the German forces had already blocked the roads. We all drove into Brzesc, Albert and I with Morton in his right-handed 1932 Ford, and visited the starostwo and the wojewod. Two alarms sounded while we were in town, but no planes showed up. I noted that the people did not heed the alarms as in Warsaw but continued to stroll on the streets. Morton said the town had never been bombed, the Germans concentrating on the citadel about a mile away.

This information cheered me until the Major came back from the wojewod empty-handed and said we would have to go to the citadel. During our hour's wait in the fortress grounds another alarm sounded, but still no bombers came. The Major returned with a decision that the trip was feasible, and he, Morton and Jan set off after lunch. It occurred to me after they had left that I had no instructions and would have no idea what to do if the Major did not come back.

Albert and I made some small purchases in town. In a stationer's shop we were waited on by a pretty girl, and I goggled at her smooth, brown legs when she climbed a ladder to reach a top shelf. The sirens sounded another alarm as we drove out of town, and this time planes came.

From our viewing point on the verandah we could see this was no routine raid. The attack lasted nearly an hour and was more intense than any I had heard in Warsaw. The explosions came like clockwork, a continuous *woomp, woomp, woomp*, and the windows rattled as if in a windstorm. To avoid ack-ack fire the planes came in low, but there was no fire. This raid was directed not against the citadel but the town, which seemingly was undefended.

The night that descended an hour after the raid brought with it clusters of townfolk. Many were relatives or friends of the proprietor of Skoki, more were beggars of shelter, all were refugees from the unhappy town of Brzesc. They told of devastation, of houses smashed, of people taken unawares because they had ignored the alarm, of people buried in the trenches they had dug for protection.

I drove with Albert into Brzesc early next day to look at the damage. The small air field just outside town lay furrowed by bombs, the hangars hung in shreds, and two planes stood charred. A crater had been torn at a road junction; I was shocked at its depth. Houses along the main street were smashed. A shoe shop we had entered the previous

day was demolished. The windows of the stationery shop were shattered, and I wondered how the girl with the smooth legs had fared. A hotel stood with its insides exposed, one wall shaved off. A burst water main had transformed a street into a pond.

Major Colbern's party returned from Warsaw that afternoon with suitcases and a tale of adventures. At Siedlce they had rooted face-in-dirt under a tree during a raid with bombs bursting in the branches. Morton said it was the most terrifying experience of an eventful life. Approaching Warsaw they became tangled in a jam of fugitives, troops, and vehicles through which it appeared impossible to move. Jan proved invaluable here. With commanding voice and husky shoulder, he cleared a road through the milling mess. They found Praga barricaded, the sidewalks torn up and piled into house-high ramparts through which one narrow opening was left for traffic. The Poniatowski Bridge still stood.

Arriving at the Chancery after midnight, they caused a sensation by pounding on the doors which, they saw after entering, were braced with half the furniture in the place piled behind them. Apparently every American, British, and French citizen left in the city was sleeping there without pretense at beds, the people lying about every which way. Among them were Miss Mikwitz and her aged Aunt. All the while the Poles in Praga were chucking shells at the Germans, and the Germans were chucking shells back, both sides firing over Warsaw.

The Major did not stay to watch this game of beanbag. He picked up my largest suitcase, dashed for his apartment and snatched some of his own stuff, and beat it out of town before the exit closed completely. On the return trip they traveled by a more northerly route that, although fifty kilometers longer, was clear of Polish troops and fugitives because it lay close to the German lines advancing from East Prussia.

At Skoki German planes dropped propaganda leaflets the morning of September 10, some of which fell in a field near the swimming hole in the Lesna. Albert translated one. It said that Marshal Pilsudski envisaged a union of Poland and Germany and on his deathbed entrusted the fulfillment of this ideal to the present Polish Government. But the Government had not carried out the Marshal's wishes because it wished to exploit the people for its own ends. If the people, said the leaflet, would throw off the yoke of the Government and join their brothers, the Germans, the dreadful, destructive conflict would be ended.

As the company sat around table after supper, a servant entered exclaiming that the son of the house was back from the war. I had thought of the lady of Skoki as cordial and correct but without tenderness or emotion. I revised my opinion when I saw the joy in her face as she helped her son enter and hovered over him at table. A heavy-set man with fair hair and moustache, he and a young officer companion had both been wounded. He had crawled close to an enemy tank and thrown a hand grenade into it. Supposing the occupants killed, he had stood up and been shot in the abdomen, but the bullet struck a pistol in his belt and knocked a fragment into his body without taking his life. He showed us the pistol with the chunk out of it. The boy with him had suffered a leg wound but could hobble with a stick. Both were to go into Brzesc on the morrow to be operated on.

Brzesc was bombed again the next day, but the two officers returned safely to Skoki.

That day, September 11, the Major decided to hit the road again, this time to establish communications with Ambassador Biddle and give him a message from Consul General Davis in Warsaw. He was not sure, however, where the Ambassador was. He told me he would first try the Ambassador's summer house at Pomerzhani, near Lwow, and if he had no luck there would swim east to Krzemieniec, which had been rumored to be the destination of the Polish Foreign Office. This time it was interpreter Albert who wanted to go along because he hoped to get word of his family from friends in the vicinity of Lwow. Morton let him go with reluctance, for with him and Jan gone the only communication Morton and I had with the Poles was through Mary, the American woman. Otherwise we had only my French and smattering of German, for Morton spoke nothing but Kansas.

Mary told us the Germans had dropped leaflets into Brzesc warning the burghers that the town would be destroyed at five that afternoon. Morton and I spent most of the day on the verandah watching out for planes and reading, Morton *Two Years Before the Mast* and I *The Woman in White*. Somehow I could not work up much interest in Wilkie Collins's attempts at suspense.

The Germans are coming! Shortly before 5:00 Morton and I walked to a hillock where we could stand clear of trees and see the devastation. Just as we started, there sounded a single *boom* that we assumed to be a bomb although it did not sound like the *woomp* of a bomb and we neither saw nor heard a plane. We sat on rocks and held a council.

Morton asked whether the Major had given me any instructions on what to do in an emergency. I said he had given me the keys to his 1938 Ford in case it should be necessary to get out. "Did he tell you when to get out?" asked Morton. He had not but had left it to my judgment.

"Suppose we should learn the Germans are getting near Brzesc," said Morton. "Would you stay on or would you try to leave before they get here?" I said I would try to leave. The codes were in the car, and I could not risk them.

Morton wanted to settle on a plan of action, for to him the situation seemed ominous. I too was uneasy. There was a rumble in the distance that perhaps was thunder and perhaps something else. And there was the strange explosion just as we left the house. Even as we talked, there came two more in succession, solid sounds, not at all like the quick bursts of bombs. "Big guns," said Morton. "Polish or German?" We did not know and waited for more explosions, but nothing more happened.

"Where will you go if we have to get out?" asked Morton. I said to Krzemieniec. As the Foreign Office was supposed to be there, the Ambassador and staff were probably there too. I would head the Major off, catching him before he set out on the return to Brzesc.

"But if the Ambassador's in Pomerzhani," objected Morton, "the Major won't go to

Krzemieniec, and you'll miss him." I said I would telegraph the Major at Pomerzhani. There would be danger of missing him no matter where we went, and I thought Krzemieniec the better risk. Morton agreed with this opinion. As dusk fell we returned to the house, each counseling the other to keep cool. The promised five-o'clock devastation of Brzesc had not come.

The gas gauge in the V-8 showed a full tank, and there were an additional thirty liters (7.5 U.S. gallons) in reserve cans in the trunk. I tried without success to get an English broadcast on the battery-powered radio set. Mary fixed us something to eat. We could see she was upset about something. She kept walking from one end of the house to the other, furiously busy but obviously accomplishing nothing, her mouth set, her brow knotted, her words incoherent.

We got out of her that the two young officers had received orders to leave the house at once, wounds or no wounds, and that a visiting priest had told her German tanks were in a village only twenty-five miles away. A relative returned from Brzesc with the news that a village twelve miles away was afire from bombs. These and other scraps of information reached us imperfectly, filtered through Mary's distressed and terse interpretations. Suddenly she let out what was bothering her. The Poles had blown up the bridges over the Lesna.

Two roads led from Skoki Dwor to Brzesc, each crossing the Lesna on a wooden bridge. If Mary's statement were correct, we were cut off from Brzesc and the road to southern Poland. "Why?" we demanded. "Why did the Poles blow up the bridges?" Mary did not know, but she surmised that the authorities wanted to keep local citizenry off the roads to keep them clear for troop movements. Hadn't we heard three strange explosions?

This reason seemed so thin I was reluctant to believe her, but a Polish colonel came in out of the darkness and confirmed the news. He brought additional cause for uneasiness. His purpose in calling was to say good-bye to Major Colbern, whom he had supposed was still at Skoki. By orders of the General Staff he was moving his men from their quarters in a neighboring hamlet.

The two wounded officers had arranged for their car to be pulled through the shallow Lesna by a team of horses. Just before they left, the son knelt to receive his mother's blessing. His mother touched him on the head with ineffable tenderness. He kissed her hand passionately. Abruptly both of them broke off and resumed their icy calm. The two officers went off into the night.

I questioned Mary as to roads out of Skoki. She confirmed that the sole route lay through Brzesc. To go east and south toward Krzmeniec one had to pass through the city. The only other road ran north, direct to the East Prussian lines. As we talked I was aware of a continued pounding, a faint, distant rumble that might have been thunder.

"Can we make arrangements to get across the stream?" Mary said the farmers who had driven the horses through the Lesna were still available. Of course there was no certainty

how long they would be around.

What made up our minds I can't pinpoint, but suddenly Morton was saying, "I don't know about you, pal, but I think we ought to get out tonight while the getting's good," and I was of the same mind. I did not like to leave without orders from my boss, but it seemed imprudent to stay. The codes were an important consideration. I thought of burning them, but without the codes we would be unable to read orders from Washington.

Mary urged us to leave while there was still time. Afterward, I wondered if we would have done the same had Albert been there to interpret. Mary's nervousness affected us. She scurried about with a catch in her breath and a sob in her voice, getting in her own way, carrying a dish from one end of the room to the other only to put it back two minutes later. "And me with two children!" she choked out, and again, "What are the British doing? Throwing paper!"

The quiet, unobtrusive master of Skoki Dwor also agreed that we ought to go. He sent off a man to arrange for the horses, and we set to work filling the cars. I had to decide what to leave behind. The Major had taken few of our things with him in the Chevrolet, and it was up to me to crowd all the remainder into the Ford V-8.

From the beginning of the trip we had cursed the great weight of the field safe. It had been brought to protect the codes, but as it had no combination lock and was fastened only with a padlock it provided little safety. I was happy to abandon it. I tied the code books with string and popped them into the trunk along with a jumble of anything else I could cram in, and piled the rear seat so high I could scarcely see out the back window.

At 10:30 p.m. we crawled in low gear across the fields behind a team of three horses. Mary came along to interpret. No lights, but at one point the fields were bathed in yellow glare from a huge fire a quarter of a mile away. Not houses, said Mary, haystacks. The farmers were abandoning their homes and wanted to leave nothing that might be useful to the Germans.

The fording place was right next to my swimming hole. As the farmers began hitching the horses to the front bumper of Morton's 1932 four-cylinder English Ford one of them said something to Mary. "He wants you to take out the battery," she translated. "Water will ruin it." This led to a debate among the three of us as to whether water would or would not ruin the battery. Decision: no one was sure, so Morton set about removing it from under the floorboard while I held the flashlight.

Morton took his place behind the wheel, I stationed myself beside the front bumper with the flashlight, Morton asked to have the light himself, I insisted that he could see better with me holding it out front, Morton said he could see better if he held it himself, I obdurately insisted on keeping it, and with Morton asking plaintively, "Why can't I have the flashlight?" the horses pulled, and the car rolled down the bank and was tugged through the knee-deep stream. Exactly why I wouldn't let the poor man have the flashlight I can't explain to this day.

At the opposite bank, the chain broke. Mended, it held only well enough to demonstrate that three horses could not pull the old car up the slippery bank. So with rear wheels in the water, Morton set about re-installing the battery. I timed the operation. It commenced at 10:45 and ended at 11:15. Most of the half hour passed in looking for nuts and bolts that dropped in the mud. When the battery was at last installed, the car started without trouble, the horses heaved, and the right-handed Ford made it to level ground.

Then came my turn, but with the battery installed high and dry under the hood rather than under the seat there was no need to remove it. The V-8 churned through the water under its own power, and only a short tug from the horses was needed to get it up the bank. Morton was for giving the peasants one hundred zloty from each of us, but as I had only ninety all told he cooled it down to twenty. Mary said they would have thought five generous.

We said good-bye to Mary, who was now weeping a cascade. She said she and her children would remain at Skoki. "Where can we go? We'd starve if we went away. Here there's a chance they'll leave us alone. But you, boy," she admonished me, "you got no business here. Go on home to the States and stay there." She gave each of us a kiss salted with tears, said one of the farmers would guide us to the road, and waved us off.

Keep moving! We set out with Morton in the lead, headlights dim behind blue cellophane, my car in darkness. At every crossroad Morton stopped and examined the signpost, tactics that drove me out of my mind but which undoubtedly kept us from taking a wrong road. Approaching Brzesc, we became snarled in a logjam of trucks, peasant carts, army wagons, private cars, military autos, troops on foot, troops on horseback, troops in taxies and buses -- all conceivable means of tangling traffic. Everybody who did not belong there (including me) helped clog the road, and the Polish officers seemed to stand by stupidly, permitting road hogs to drive on the wrong side without interference. The botch was appalling, and so were my feelings. For when you are active, even if only running in a circle, you feel you have a say in your destiny, but when you sit immobile for ten, fifteen, twenty minutes, then progress twenty yards only to sit again, you feel like a fly eyeing the approaching spider.

The jam stretched through the town and several miles beyond, and as time wore on the thought grew ever larger: "What happens if daylight comes while we are in this sheep pack?" What panic, chaos, mass hysteria if German bombers had come on that tangle! At one point we were stuck for five minutes in the middle of a bridge. When the left-hand roadway stood momentarily clear I lost my head and darted the Ford V-8 into it, only to be blocked by oncoming traffic before I could pass. Morton remonstrated with me, and I was ashamed. Luckily I was able to get back into the proper lane almost at once.

It was not until two in the morning that we emerged from the congestion and could take the dusty, ruddy highway for Kowel, one hundred kilometers to the southeast. The road swarmed with travelers afoot, in wagons, on horses, on bicycles, in motor conveyances of all descriptions, all of them shrouded in night. Surprisingly, there seemed to be an equal

number of persons journeying in the opposite direction, toward Brzesc. What with the darkness, the traffic, and the clouds of dust, we were lucky to go as fast as twenty-five miles per hour.

About 3:30 a.m., not having slept since 7:00 the preceding morning, I caught myself falling asleep at the wheel. I overtook Morton and persuaded him, with considerable argument, to catnap in the car beside the road. At 4:15 Morton woke me and insisted we get along. Soldiers were passing us in trucks, and he feared being caught in another traffic tangle. Daylight was now streaking the horizon, and with the sun in my eyes I had no trouble staying awake.

My thoughts as I drove were troubled:

1. If anything happened to me, the codes would fall into alien hands.
2. If Major Colbern came to Krzemienic, and if we got there at the same time, all would be well. If he did not come to Krzemienic, or if he left before we arrived, there was no telling how we would make connections. I had to send a telegram to Pomerzhani at the earliest chance to let him know we were proceeding to Krzemienic.
3. If the Ambassador and staff were at Krzemieniec, we would be among friends who could help us. But if the Ambassador were not there, we would be in a pickle. How would we find the Ambassador or the Major?
4. Most immediately, I worried about gasoline. The tank was full, and an extra thirty liters were in the trunk. But the thirty liters were of no use. The Ford's gasoline tank had a lock-cap, and none of the keys on the Major's ring fitted it. I had gasoline but couldn't pour it into the tank. As I drove, I kept calculating the remaining distance and the miles that a V-8 ought to go per gallon. I reckoned I would have just enough gas to reach Krzemieniec, but I was by no means sure.

With the coming of day, we stepped up speed on the rutted road to thirty-five miles per hour. Rolling into Kowel about 5:30 a.m., we promptly squabbled. Morton had not been able to see my point of view when I wanted to nap beside the road. Now I could not see his when he wanted to hole up in a hotel for half the day. I wanted to reach Krzemieniec before the Major set out on his return trip to Skoki. Morton wanted a bed and a cup of coffee.

We tried the railway station for coffee, but the restaurant was closed. On our way out, we were stopped by a young Polish aviation officer who inquired in French what our business was. "*C'est votre affaire, monsieur?*" I demanded, taking the high tone. The officer replied civilly that it was his duty to report strangers. He apologized when we produced identification cards, but the incident was cause for concern. We were two obvious foreigners in civilian clothes and ran risk of being taken for spies.

At a dilapidated hotel we obtained two glasses of tea for one zloty per glass, more than

double the usual price. Such overcharging was a criminal offense under Poland's war laws, but we decided not to prosecute. Morton again urged taking a room and again I objected. The debate swung in my favor when an alarm went off and bombers appeared. We beat it out of town, and five minutes down the road we heard the first *woomp* behind us. Halting, we pow-wowed beside the road. We had to have some sleep, that I could not deny.

We spread blankets in a grove of trees and lay down for a couple of hours. Neither of us slept, but the rest did us good, and we forged onward to Luck, pronounced Wootsk. A mile before the town, gesticulating pedestrians warned us that a raid was on, and we pulled up near a tiny village. Again we squabbled. The Major had stocked the trunk with a few cans of food, and Morton wanted to open them, whereas I felt they should be saved as a last resort. I walked back to the village store and bought six small loaves of bread, four bottles of beer, and some chocolate. Laden with these I returned to the cars expecting compliments and instead got a complaint. Why no sausage? The anxiety, lack of sleep, and uncertainty of our position were making the two of us unreasonable.

I said I simply had to send off a telegram from Luck. Morton asserted he would either take a hotel room in Luck or else, a new notion, go to the starostwo for a permit to buy gasoline. He admitted that the gas was not an absolute necessity but he had already poured his reserve cans into the tank and thought it would be prudent to refill them. The hotel, I said, was out. I had to beat the Major to Krzemieniec, and I intended to keep on as long as I could stay awake. Concerning gas, Morton surely had enough to reach Krzemieniec; couldn't he wait until he got there before approaching the starostwo? Why, Morton retorted, take the risk of running out? We could not agree, and we parted as we entered the town without making arrangements for meeting. I headed for the post office and Morton for the starostwo.

It took me some fifteen minutes to locate the post office, and there I was delayed while officials examined my papers. Before I could complete the transaction, an alarm went off, and I was herded into the cellar for some forty-five minutes. The telegram was finally accepted read:

FORCED LEAVE SKOKI PROCEEDING KRZEMIENIEC.

With an hour lost, I began looking for Morton. He was not waiting at the edge of town. I retraced the route along the main street but saw no right-hand drive Ford. Deciding that he had gone into a hotel, I headed down the road.

Between Luck and Dubno stretched an amazing twenty miles of mattress-surfaced asphalt. I could only speculate as to why the finest bit of highway in the country should be stuck out in eastern Poland where only peasant carts would use it. I ticked along holding the speedometer at forty because I remembered reading somewhere that high speeds use more gas.

From Dubno to Krzemieniec, twenty miles, I drove with one eye on the road and the

other on the gasoline gauge. The needle was rubbing zero as I reached journey's end. My worries were over. A young man pointed vaguely when I asked for the Ambassada Amerikanski. Soon I spotted Counselor North Winship walking in the street.

Mr. Winship said the Major had not yet appeared in Krzemieniec. Then, before I could tell my harrowing tale, he began a harrowing tale of his own. That morning (September 12) Krzemieniec had suffered its first bombing. Eleven days of war had passed without interruption to placid village life but at 11:00 a.m. on the twelfth came several planes. The town did not realize its danger until the first bomb struck. As we walked, Mr. Winship pointed out smashed houses and pits in the streets. No American had suffered hurt, but sixteen villagers had been killed and forty injured.

The Embassy had shrunk to a minimum staff, the girl clerks having moved to Rumania on September 9. Charles Moczynski seemed to be doing all the typing and coding formerly done by the four girls. "Things weren't so bad here until today," he said. "Quarters are cramped, and food is getting scarce, but we manage. But now that they've begun bombing, I just don't know."

He guided me to the community hall, in the basement of a school, where the diplomats of all nations dined together. Ambassador Biddle welcomed me warmly. Charles and I sat at the rude table with him, Mrs. Biddle, their daughter, and Okay, their huge mastiff. All, including Okay, dined off tea, black bread, and *kassa* (boiled buckwheat).

When Charles learned of my anxiety to head off Major Colbern, he suggested telephoning Pomerzhani to make sure the Major would not change plans and return direct to Brzesc. There was a telephone at the hotel. Charles placed the call and hung up to wait for it to go through. "When the phone rings, you answer it," he said, and went away. I lay down while waiting, for after thirty-six hours without sleep I was a bit weary. If the phone rang, I never heard it.

Gather at the river. Up at 6:00 a.m. next day, September 13, I was splashing in the tin washbasin when the door opened and there stood Major Colbern. He had arrived half an hour after I fell asleep and had already learned about the flight from Skoki. He was pleased, he said, that I had come along because he had been saved the trouble of traveling back to Brzesc. But as time went by he showed by tactful questions that he was puzzled at the decision to leave. He never offered any direct reproach but he could not seem to believe that the Germans were as close as twenty, or even forty, kilometers of Brzesc. History confirms that technically he was right. Shirer writes that on September 9 the left wing of Bock's Army Group North headed for Brest Litovsk and that Guderian's XIXth Corps reached it on the 14th and captured it two days later (Shirer, op. cit., p. 828). I had forded the Lesna at about 11:00 p.m. the night of September 11, so I guess I could have stayed at Skoki at least one more day and still got out.

Major Colbern set me to coding a telegram on which I worked three hours behind the locked door of my hotel room. During these three hours I became more frightened than at any time since the start of the war, and yet every minute was placid. For the thought

occurred that if bombers should come I would have to remain in the room because I could not leave the codes, and I got into such a state of nerves that when an auto started its engine under the window I nearly burst a gasket. I thought of Ambrose Bierce's story of the man who died from the "bite" of a toy snake. Courage is all in your head.

An alarm sounded as I entered the post office with the telegram. Business suspended until the raid was over. During this two-hour wait I witnessed my first case of demonstrated fear. A plump woman burst into tears and prayed aloud. The others in the room eyed her stolidly without comment. Going through an air raid is like going to the dentist. A pretty nurse can hold your hand, but you are strictly on your own. When the raid ended, the post office clerk disclosed that the cablegram would require much more money than I had brought, and I had to go back for more. On the way, I had a bad moment as five planes roared overhead while I flattened against a wall. Needlessly; they were Polish.

The sending of this telegram was typical of what went on without an interpreter. I had already made one trip. Returning with more money, I persuaded the clerk to show me the rate book. He was charging zloty 3.50 (70 cents) per word, the rate to the State of Washington. I got him to look under *Columbia Distrikt*, and he came down to zloty 2.50 (50 cents) per word, which I knew was still too high. I argued with my smattering of Polish that the message was *diplomacja* and produced identification card and official seal. To no avail; the clerk was adamant at zloty 2.50 per word. As the message would have cost nearly \$100.00, I could not send it. I had to walk back to the "Chancery" and get an interpreter to phone the clerk. After much palaver, the clerk consented to zloty 1.50 per word but said that as the office was closing in five minutes the telegram would have to wait till next day.

Third Secretary Burke Elbrick, who was afflicted with a painful throat abscess, left early that morning for Zaleszczyki on the Rumanian frontier, and it was expected that he would go on to Rumania for medical attention. The Embassy staff followed to Zaleszczyki piecemeal. Mr. Winship headed a detachment in the afternoon, and soon thereafter the Ambassador and family departed. Late that afternoon a staff member came in from the Ambassador's residence at Pomerzhani, where he had been staying alone. He had never received the telegram I had sent from Luck.

As with the exodus from Warsaw, the Major, Second Secretary Harrison, and I remained behind. A question that loomed ever larger as the day wore on was: Where is Morton?

The morning of the 14th I got off the telegram and on returning found Morton breakfasting with Harrison and the Major. I had not been able to locate him in Luck because he was in the starostwo asking for gasoline. Obtaining a permit after a two-hour wait, he set out for Krzemieniec but was slowed because the battery he had installed in the mud of the Lesna kept slipping loose. He stopped at Dubno for repairs and there passed the night, not in a hotel as he had hoped but in his car. Next morning he took a wrong turn and drove seventy-five kilometers out of his way to Rowne. Here he carried out his thwarted plan of taking a hotel room. Quitting Rowne at dawn, he retraced his steps and reached Krzemieniec in time for breakfast.

At noon Major Colbern decided to follow the Embassy. Between Tarnopol and Zaleszczyki we sighted a string of planes in the distance, and the Major stopped the cars for a look. While I headed for a ditch, he stood in the center of the road and counted nine bombers flying north. The last laid an egg at a spot which we found later was a railroad. The Major said several naughty words regarding their low altitude. They knew there was no ack-ack to be afraid of. His temper was not improved when, on arriving at Zaleszczyki, he found no accommodations ready although the Embassy had been there a full day. Charles told me the Ambassador and family had slept in their cars the first night. Charles, refusing to be a party to any such foolishness, had made himself a bed in a schoolhouse.

A great stone mansion had been rented, and the barest essentials of furniture were just now being unloaded before it, only a little before dark. When the Major learned that no provision had been made for the Military Attache group, he took prompt action and helped himself not only to a choice room but also to furniture from other rooms. "Don't stand there like a dope," he told me. "Get yourself a bed." I got myself a bed. The house in order, we stumbled through the blacked-out streets until we found a restaurant where we dined on tea, sardines, cheese and tomatoes.

The room chosen by the Major lay next door to the Ambassador's. He came in for a chat, part of which I overheard. The plan was to keep the Embassy at Zaleszczyki to maintain contact with the Polish Government and to drive once a day to Cernauti in Rumania to send telegrams to Washington.

When he had gone, I suggested to the Major it would be better to establish headquarters in Cernauti, where all could be comfortable, and make the daily trip back to Zaleszczyki. For in Zaleszczyki some twenty Americans were living in a house with two toilets, cold water, and no baths. Moreover, there was a food shortage because the town's population had swelled from 2,000 to 10,000, work had to cease at dark because of the blackout, and bombs would fall during the day. I expressed these views in the cunning hope that, no matter what the Embassy did, the Major might decide to move to Cernauti. I could look out the window of the house in warring Zaleszczyki and see peace across the Dniester only half a mile away, and the thought came that to catch a bomb in my lap in sight of safe haven would make me very unhappy. The Major changed the subject.

But next morning he told me to take our passports, including Jan's, to the Rumanian Embassy for visas just in case we should have to move rapidly. Mrs. Biddle, happening to learn where I was driving, asked to come along. I was thankful she chose to come. Had I been alone, the Rumanian Ambassador, whose office was besieged by visa seekers, would have let me wait for hours, but Mrs. Biddle was admitted at once.

Emboldened by this successful incident, I used the return drive to remark that all hands would be better off in comfortable Cernauti, which was just across the border within easy reach of Poland. Mrs. Biddle replied that it would not be diplomatically correct for the Ambassador to Poland to set up his embassy in another country. I stressed her personal comfort and that of her daughter. She answered that she would not leave her husband. My

subtle plan of inducing the Embassy to move to Rumania was failing like a bride's soufflé.

Two hours later I was amazed to hear that the Embassy would be shifting to Cernauti. Mrs. Biddle's maid had prepared lunch only to find that the Biddles had driven into Rumania. Would the Major care to dine? He would, and he told me to grab a chair. While we ate, the maid let fall that she had been instructed to pack the bags preparatory to another move. Mr. Winship supervised the passage across the Dniester bridge that afternoon. The Major went along but said he would be back the same day. Mr. Harrison and I remained, as did Morton and Albert. That night we heard the Germans declare over the radio that they had occupied Brzesc.

Major Colbern returned late that night but first thing next day (September 16) set out again for Cernauti from which point he was to accompany the Ambassador to Kutu, another frontier village, the most recent lighting place of the fleeing Polish Government. Disgusted that my plan for moving the Embassy had succeeded but without me, I spent the day working on accounts and washing socks and underwear. The Rumanian Embassy moved into a house across the street and was mobbed by visa applicants. The grapevine said that hundreds were turned away.

With so many contradictions, I was not astonished when on the following day (Sunday, September 17) Rumania dropped the barriers and admitted everybody and anybody, with visa or without. The Poles needed no urging. Automobiles whizzed past on the road to the Dniester bridge as if the Germans were entering the town. Zaleszczyki's few drozhka drivers enjoyed a boom carrying passengers and luggage as far as the river. Cyclists and hikers poured by in a steady flow. Polish planes, Polish fire fighting equipment, and busloads of soldiers crossed over to internment. I wondered how these refugees would fare. Here were these people, most afoot with no possessions save a suitcase or knapsack, and with nothing but zloty in their pockets. Polish money had depreciated from thirty Rumanian lei to the zloty to eight.

Morton, Albert and I strolled to the bridge to watch the crowds. The Polish customs and border officials made no inspections. One car driver who halted as a matter of course was bawled out for delaying traffic. We could not see the Rumanian officials from where we stood, but it was understood they were requiring some sort of formal registration.

We were crossing a field, walking away from the bridge, when an alarm sounded. Zaleszczyki had had several alarms but no planes. "Impossible to bomb Zaleszczyki," somebody said. "It's on a promontory that juts out so far the Germans couldn't fly over it without trespassing on Rumanian air space."

All the same, the three of us walked briskly by a common impulse to the shelter of trees. The drone of motors swelled in the air. Where are the planes? How many? My ears filed with a harsh whir, a horrid, rapid *chuk-chuk-chuk* of falling bombs. Somebody yelled, "Down," and I flung myself on my face. An eternity while the whirring sound continued. The *woomp* of the explosions came from the river. We got up and dusted off our fronts.

"They're coming back!" I moved closer to the tree. The roar of the motors grew nearer, we flopped well before the whirl of the falling bombs, and again I could not judge from the sound whether they were on top of us or yards away. Again the explosions came from afar, the motors died into the distance, and we rose and a second time dusted ourselves.

The unreliability of witnesses was displayed. Morton said fifty bombs fell. I estimated the number at ten, certainly not more than twenty. Albert thought between twenty and thirty. Later we heard that observers from the Rumanian side put the number at eighty. This bombing might have served as an international incident because the German planes not only flew over Rumanian territory but set fire to a Rumanian sugar factory. The objective, it was presumed, was the railway bridge over the Dniester which lay about one-eighth mile up river from the highway bridge. Both bridges remained intact.

As we stood in the center of town, a passing black Chevrolet caused us to shout at Major Colbern, returned from Kutuy. The bombing impressed him little; he had a more interesting tale to tell. En route from Kutuy, his car popped over the crest of a hill and found itself facing a column of tanks clanking along the highway. He could not determine the nationality and wondered if they might be French, for he had heard that France was shipping tanks to Poland. Then a tank stopped, the turret opened, and an officer emerged with hammer and sickle insignia on his cap. He demanded a look at the Major's papers but otherwise made no move to hinder him. Questioned by the Major in Polish, he said that the U.S.S.R. had declared war on Germany that morning, a statement that turned out to be false. The Major counted 110 tanks in the line.

Of more immediate importance to me, the Major said we were to move on to Cernauti. Harrison had already gone. Morton, with Albert as interpreter, was instructed to stay in Zaleszczyki as a last resort for American citizens, several of whom had already turned up.

Vice-Consul Morton had perhaps the most varied adventures of anyone on the Warsaw staff. Coincidence brought us together nearly two years later, in January 1941. Morton, stationed in Quebec, and I, temporarily in Washington, met by chance in the Pennsylvania Station in Manhattan and spent the day strolling about and chatting.

The day after Morton and Albert were left alone, the Russians occupied Zaleszczyki and closed the bridge to all travelers, including Morton, consular status or no consular status. Morton's repeated requests to proceed to Rumania elicited only the suggestion that he drive to the nearest branch of the Russian Foreign Office, which was at Kiev. Perforce he and Albert drove to Kiev and there remained twenty-one days, the Russians at Kiev insisting they had no authority to issue exit visas and recommending that Morton proceed to Moscow. This he refused to consider. Ultimately he established contact with the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, which obtained permission for him and Albert to travel to Bucharest by train. The Russians promised to ship Morton's car later, but it never reached him.

In Bucharest, Morton received orders to return to Warsaw. He bought a new car, drove to Berlin and thence to Warsaw, where he lived until March 1940, in which month Germany

ordered all foreign diplomatic and consular missions to leave German-held Poland. He returned to the States, was assigned to the Consulate in Quebec, and was traveling south on vacation when he bumped into me.

For his distinguished conduct during the Polish crisis, Morton was awarded a citation of merit by the Department of State.

While in Warsaw under the German occupation, Morton was visited by Mary of Skoki Dwor. The occupying forces, she told him, allowed the proprietor of Skoki to go on farming under their supervision, and life there was continuing as usual save that food and other supplies were markedly scarcer than in the old days. Mary had returned to her home, a village near Skoki. Her husband, a Polish officer, was in a concentration camp. Her purpose in visiting Morton was to return to him a camera and two books he had left behind. Clothing was scarce in eastern Poland that winter; Mary's feet were bound in rags. What became of her and hers when Germany invaded the Soviet Union and the full tide of war swept over Brzesc was never learned.

King Carol-land again. The Major, Jan, Romey the dog, and I crossed the Dniester as soon as I could get the office things together. A short distance beyond the frontier all the Polish soldiers who had crossed had been drawn up in a straggling line. Farther on, a row of Polish military cars was herded by Rumanian troops. A zealous sentry spotted the Major's uniform and ordered us into the line. The Major produced a sheaf of diplomatic papers, but the Rumanian-speaking sentry had his orders. "*La dreapta* (to the right)!" he cried with threatening moves of his rifle. We had to attract an officer's attention to pry ourselves loose.

In Cernauti it happened that Ambassador Biddle came out of the Hotel Schwarze Adler as the Major's car pulled up. He took the Major's arm and drew him into the center of the street where they chatted like an ad for distinguished whiskey, the Ambassador in one of the suits that won him the unsolicited title of best-dressed man in the diplomatic service, the Major tall and red-haired in uniform, while all Cernauti gawked.

I spotted Charles in the hotel lobby and had commenced chewing the fat when the Ambassador entered and summoned us. He said that, as his embassy was accredited to Poland, the Rumanian Government had asked him to leave Rumania at his prompt convenience. As a first step, he and his family were departing for Bucharest by train, and he was counting on Charles to round up the drivers and pilot them to Bucharest either that evening or next day. So once again as I entered a town the Embassy ran away. I had a chance to say hello to two of the Embassy girls before they dashed for the train, and then I watched Charles get the show on the road.

Rumania. An open-air restaurant in a garden, a gypsy orchestra, the waiters bossing the *piccolos* or apprentices who, on their side, summoned the waiters by making kissing noises, *cafea cu lapte cu frisca* (Vienna has no monopoly on whipped cream), and money in ridiculously enormous denominations. The room at the Adler that I shared with the Major had a real bath. Street lamps at night; the public square before the hotel glowed.

And groaned with trolley cars and autos, but for all that I slept as if hypnotized while the Major drove off to Kutu to help some friends out of Poland. I awoke when he returned at 3:00 a.m. and was pleased, as otherwise I would not have seen the columns of Rumanian infantry clumping through the square on their way to the northern frontier.

The question that morning (September 18, 1939) was whether there was still a General Staff in Poland. If there was, if the Poles were continuing the fight, it was the Major's duty to keep in touch as long as it existed. If as rumored the General Staff had fled the country, then the Major was out of a job.

Officers of the British Military Mission whom he had helped leave Kutu told him the General Staff had fled. The Major said he would like to get confirmation from General de Wiart before he would accept this statement, but he set me to coding a cablegram reporting that the General Staff had quit. He told me to hold this cablegram until he had obtained confirmation.

Major John P. Ratay, U.S. Military Attache to Rumania and my boss when I was in Bucharest, arrived in Cernauti that morning. His presence was helpful when I was told to send the cablegram at noon. An order had come from Bucharest that no telegrams for diplomats accredited to countries other than Rumania could be sent from Cernauti. I induced the clerk to direct me upstairs to an Important Personage and explained that Major Colbern was sending the wire with the permission of Major Ratay, America's duly accredited representative to Rumania. The I.P. made a concession; he would telegraph Bucharest for permission to accept the cablegram. I came back in two hours, was authorized to turn in the cablegram, but struck another snag. The clerk demanded 12,000 lei, and I had only half as much. I had to go back to the hotel for more money, and by the time I returned to the post office the clerk had refigured the message and got it down to 9,000 lei, at which price the damned thing ultimately went off.

The two Majors took a notion to drive to the frontier for a look at the Russians, who were reported to have occupied Zaleszczyki, and I was left to my own devices in Cernauti. As a reward for fighting with the Allies in World War I, Rumania was given the province of the Bukovina (and others) by the peace treaties of 1919-1920. Cernauti (Czernowitz, Chernovtsy) was the chief town of the region, which had been ceded in 1775 to Austria by Turkey. It was to be ceded to Russia in 1940, re-occupied by Rumania in 1941, occupied by the Russians in 1944, and formally ceded to Russia in 1947 when it was incorporated into the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. I wandered around the streets for a time looking at sights that meant nothing to me because I had no guidebook, and after lunch drifted into a movie, Robert Donat and Rosalind Russell in *The Citadel*, with soundtrack in English.

We set out for Bucharest on September 20, 1939, only twenty days after Germany had set out to overwhelm Poland. To decide whether roads in eastern Rumania were worse than roads in eastern Poland would be a topic for a college debate. Major Ratay told me that on a trip through Bessarabia he burst four tires, but Bessarabia is a strong candidate for the title of world's most neglected province. Not only was the road Cernauti-Botosani-

Focsani-Buzau incredibly pitted, rutted and dusty, it had sired numerous detours that outdid their parent. Stretching in single file before us most of the way were strings of Polish cars whose dust we ate, most driven by officers or soldiers. The Rumanians checked the numbers of these foreign cars at every town, and because our cars bore Polish tags and had to submit to this check too we became very wearied before the end of the day. We stopped for a picnic lunch in a field outside Bacau, and at dusk we enjoyed a full meal in a restaurant at Ploesti. From that point on, the highway was excellent, and we pulled into Bucharest about nine that night. We had telegraphed from Cernauti, and accommodations were waiting for us.

Two weeks slipped away buying clothes, calling on old friends, dining in Bucharest's bountiful restaurants, lounging at the Athenee Palace bar, and whooping it up in night spots. True to form, the Warsaw Embassy left shortly after I arrived, its members scattering to the points of the compass. Ambassador Biddle went to Paris and later established an embassy at Angers, Counselor Winship became Minister to South Africa, others went to Bern, Madrid, Istanbul, Lisbon. Charles Mosczynski went with the Ambassador to Angers but in a despondent mood. When war broke out, he had packed his Ph.D. dissertation in a suitcase ready for a quick getaway, but at departure he had picked up the wrong suitcase. Consequently his dissertation, the fruits of more than a year's labor, lay in the basement of the Warsaw chancery, and he feared he would never see it again. But the story has a happy ending. The dissertation was found and forwarded to him, he obtained his doctorate in due course, and in time became a professor of Slavic history at a prominent mid-western university.

A telegram from the War Department assigned Major Colbern temporarily to Bucharest, inquired about Miss Mikwitz, and ordered me to Budapest. A later telegram offered the Major the post of Military Attache to The Hague. In his accepting telegram, the Major asked that I be transferred to The Hague in the event that Miss Mikwitz should be unable or unwilling to go there.

War had not yet come to Bucharest, but it was not free from violence. On September 23 members of the fascist Iron Guard ambushed the car of Premier Armand Calinescu and murdered him and a companion. The killers rushed to the Bucharest radio station, shot a guard, and broadcast that Calinescu had been overthrown. Presumably they expected the country to rise in revolt, but instead they were seized by police. The day after the assassination they were driven to the scene of the killing and shot down one by one. The corpses were left in the street all day as a warning. Sunday the 24th was a day of national mourning. Streets were closed off, Calinescu's body was borne through the city with pomp, and throughout the day loudspeakers in the square before the royal palace blared the dead march from Chopin's Sonata no. 2. And on the following day Major Ratay got into his dress blues and went to pay his respects to Calinescu's successor.

Speculating on my next post, I decided I would prefer The Hague to Budapest because I would be able to hop over to Great Britain on weekends. From the standpoint of safety I had no preference. Holland was traditionally neutral. Hungary was Germany's pal and would not oppose the Germans but would probably allow them unrestricted transit in

return for Transylvania. I saw Rumania as a hot spot. The Germans needed Rumania's oil, and the British would try to keep Germany from getting the oil. Turkey was Britain's friend and would let the British send a force through the Bosporous to land in Eastern Rumania. The Germans would come in from the west, and Rumania would be a battleground. Somehow, my analysis of the situation completely ignored the Soviet Union, the most important piece on the chessboard.

Chapter 7  
Budapest  
(October 1939-September 1940)

"Hungary is a kingdom without a king, ruled by an admiral without a navy."

- contemporary saying

"Take of fresh rosemary in blossom, 4 pounds; fresh sage in blossom, 6 ounces; ginger in slices, 2 ounces; cut them in small pieces, mix, and add rectified spirit, 12 pounds, and common water, 2 pints. Let 11 pints distil by a gentle heat. This is Queen of Hungary's Water, employed principally as a toilet perfume but sometimes taken internally as a gently - stimulating liniment."

- said to be a recipe given a long-ago Queen of Hungary by a hermit.

Major Colbern and I drove from Bucharest to Budapest in two days, overnighing at Oradea Mare if you're speaking Rumanian, Nagyvarad if Hungarian, Grosswardein if German. Names are multiple in these regions. Before it became linked with Pesth, Buda was commonly known by its German name, which was Ofen.

The Major went onward to Berlin two days later in hopes of getting permission to return to Warsaw and arrange for shipment of office and personal effects to his new post, The Hague. Word having been received that Embassy staff members who had remained in Warsaw had come safely through the siege, he intended to offer Miss Mikwitz a choice of The Hague or Budapest. If she chose The Hague, I was to stay in Budapest. If Budapest, the Major would ask the War Department to transfer me to The Hague.

This uncertainty made me reluctant to sign a lease for permanent lodgings. Hotels being too expensive, I sub-let a furnished room in the flat of an overstuffed elderly lady. The house was modern and beautifully situated on the Danube close to the Margaret Island bridge, but I gave notice after only four days because of my landlady. Not that she was obnoxious; we just couldn't understand each other's point of view. A basic difficulty was lack of communications, for she spoke absolutely nothing but Magyar. Thus, when I found myself forbidden to take a bath on my first Sunday, I was unable to ask why.

Finding an interpreter a day or so later, I learned that the landlady's cousin from the provinces came to visit her on Sundays and was given rights of proprietorship on the bathtub, although why I could not use it after the cousin had finished was never made clear.

To compensate for Sundays, my landlady virtually insisted that I take a bath every week day. She would draw the water herself, hot as her hands could stand it, and fill the tub to the brim as if she wanted me to repeat the experiment of Archimedes. Then she would knock on my door, her fat face creased in smiles, and shoo me into the bathroom like a cowpuncher rounding up a stray. The awkward thing was that I could not complain

without seeming unreasonable. Had I not protested at being forbidden to use the bath?

Another problem was the electric light. It consisted of a chandelier with ten sockets resembling candlesticks, each supposed to hold a lightbulb. My landlady supplied just three, a little larger than Christmas tree bulbs. By signs I indicated that I wanted a reading lamp.

Next day I came home from work and found an old socket placed loosely in a candle holder with one bulb from the chandelier screwed into it. After I had told her through an interpreter that I was dissatisfied, she supplied a sure-enough reading lamp containing a thirty-watt bulb, but she removed another bulb from the chandelier. In the interpreter's opinion she was not miserly. She had spent her life in country surroundings and simply was not accustomed to electricity.

But these and other annoyances were too much, and I signed up -- inserting a one-month diplomatic clause in the lease to cover the contingency of transfer to The Hague -- for a two-room flat just off the great park, the Varosliget, complete with furniture and a maid-cook named Juliska who, like my former landlady, spoke only Hungarian. At first there was confusion, but a routine was soon established. An unknown tenant in a nearby flat had some English, and whenever I wanted to break the routine I would write a note which Juliska would carry to the tenant for translation. Juliska was a woman in her twenties who, too, had been raised in the provinces, with little schooling. On one occasion she tried to look up a word in my dictionary, starting with aard-vark and working her way page by page to zymurgy. Zymurgy is a chemical process having to do with brewing, as if you didn't know.

During my third week in Budapest, a letter from Major Colbern informed me that Miss Mikwitz had opted for The Hague. This lifted one uncertainty but replaced it with another. Because it was impossible to make separate shipments, my trunk and other goods were bundled with the Warsaw office effects and shipped to The Hague, from which point they would one day be trans-shipped to Budapest. I faced indefinite delay in recovering my clothes, blankets, and trinkets. As it turned out, the Netherlands were overrun within a few months, and my belongings became an infinitesimal part of the general loss.

Snug in my new flat, I was shaken when a telegram arrived from the War Department on November 17: OPPORTUNITY FOR THRASHER TO TRANSFER TO HELSINKI. WIRE HIS WISHES. I considered the matter briefly. Very. At my request, the Colonel wired back that Thrasher had no wish to go to Helsinki. For some days I was apprehensive that I might be ordered to go willy-nilly, but no further word arrived. On November 30, Finland was invaded by the Russians and Helsinki was bombed by the Red Air Force.

The Colonel, my new boss, was an affable gentleman who did not drown Washington in a flood of reports. Indeed, his most memorable act was to spend ten dollars of office funds on a cablegram to obtain an allocation of five dollars for toilet paper. Toward the

end of January 1940 the Colonel was disconcerted to receive a wire telling him he would be relieved effective March 1st because a German-speaking officer was considered essential.

Captain Richard C. Partridge, his replacement, arrived from a language-study assignment in Berlin on February 20 and set a strenuous pace from the moment of taking over. He soon became Major Partridge, served with distinction in the field after the United States entered the war, and retired as a brigadier general. He was the seventh army officer I had worked for during my two years in Europe.

The head of our Legation was John Flournoy Montgomery, who afterward published *Hungary the Unwilling Satellite* as a partial record of his 1933-1941 tenure as Minister. On his staff were two career vice-consuls, Milton Rewinkel and Outerbridge Horsey, later our Consul General in Bombay and our Ambassador to Prague, respectively. In a park before the Legation stood a statue of an American Army officer, General Harry H. Bandholtz, who was honored as a savior of Hungary's national treasures.

The Rumanians entered Budapest in 1919 and took advantage of Hungary's defeat to loot and destroy. They were on the point of sacking the Royal Palace when General Bandholtz, who was the American representative on the quadripartite Allied Military Mission, appeared in person at the Palace with his riding crop under his arm and awed the Rumanians into venting their destruction elsewhere. For this, and for saving the stores of the National Museum by sealing its doors in the name of the Allies, Bandholtz was commemorated by a statue. Alas, the statue did not long survive after a communist government was established following the Second World War.

Diversions pursued. I arrived in Budapest on October 5, 1939 and left on September 2, 1940. During these 331 days I attended at least 39 movies, 31 operas, and 19 concerts, made uncounted visits to not less than 21 beer joints, bars, restaurants and night clubs, attended private parties at homes of Legation staffers, played numerous games of tennis, rowed on the Danube and hiked in the mountains, and made trips to a number of tourist spots.

Throughout my stay, I was careful to cross the doors of no museum or art gallery, to read no serious work about Hungary or its people, and to avoid vigorously any activity hinting of intellectual pursuits. I typed the military attache reports and compiled the accounts with diligence, but after office hours I called on Budapest's resources to keep from being bored.

These were considerable. Although Austria had been absorbed into Germany, Czechoslovakia dismembered, and Poland rubbed off the map, Hungary was as yet little affected by the war. Sugar, motor fuel, and a few other items were rationed, but one could still sip *tejes kavet* (coffee with milk) on the Danube corso while watching the girls stroll by, savor *tournedo Rossini* in fine restaurants, slurp whiskey and cognac in the bars, and listen to Magyar Imre play his violin beneath his seven chins at the Hotel Hungaria. White-haired Magyar, whose recordings of gypsy music sold throughout Europe, died

the following year from a heart attack during a strenuous weight-losing regimen.

Budapest had two full-time symphony orchestras, at least three concert halls, and enough cash customers to draw such names as Mengelberg, Weingartner, Furtwangler, Szigetti, Emil Sauer, Edwin Fischer, and numerous local artists including Annie Fischer and Bela Bartok. I spent an excruciating hour one evening listening to an unhappy Bartok play a Beethoven concerto. The lead clarinet was tuned one-quarter interval above the piano, and try as they might the piano and clarinet could produce only agonizing discords. Although Bartok had a whispered consultation with the conductor between movements, nothing could be done except struggle gamely to the finish in a shower of sour notes.

Another home-grown product heard in concert at Budapest was a teenager who played Zoltan Kodaly's fiendishly difficult *Concerto for Unaccompanied Cello*. Predictions that this boy would have a great career were accurate. Years later Starker Janos settled in New York, lost all his hair, and gained an international reputation.

Although Budapest's opera house had not attained the repute of Vienna's Staatsoper or Milan's La Scala, it ranked as one of the world's best and had launched many renowned artists, among them Nemeth Maria, Pataky Koloman, Sved Sandor, and Szekely Mihail, all of whom sang at Covent Garden or the Metropolitan. In addition to the standard repertoire, the Budapest Opera gave *Hary Janos*, *Ritter Paszman*, *Khovantschina*, *Suor Angelica*, and others seldom performed in the United States.

When speaking Magyar, you have noted, one reverses the name order so that John Smith becomes Smith John. Magyar (pronounced Modyar) belongs to the Ugric group of the Finno-Ugric family of languages, which explains why the notion that the Finns and Hungarians can understand each other has no validity. Whether the Ostyaks and Voguls, who are the only other peoples with languages belonging to the Ugric group, can understand the Hungarians I'm unable to say. When last heard from, the Ostyaks and Voguls were living in Khanti-Mansi, northern Siberia, and I don't know anything about that either except that I suspect it's no winter resort. Magyar was not recognized as Hungary's official language until 1836, when it replaced not German as one might presume but Latin.

One of the opera performances might have led to romance as in a play by Molnar Ferenc, except that it didn't. Molnar's family name was Neumann, but he changed it legally in 1896 when it was fashionable to magyarize foreign family names in recognition of Hungary's thousandth anniversary (Ladislas Farago, *Strictly from Hungary*, Walker, New York, 1962. p. 22). I read the *Pester Lloyd*, printed in German, because I could not read the newspapers printed in Magyar. One day there appeared a classified ad in English:

"American girl, 21, studying singing in Budapest, wishes to find family which will exchange lodgings for English lessons."

Scrawny and shy, I had always depended on others to introduce me to girls, but loneliness overcame my timidity. After rehearsing the conversation while walking to and

fro before the telephone for ten minutes, I rang the number. Of course, the line was busy, and I had to work myself up to it all over again. I identified myself as a bachelor among a married set at the Legation. Because she was studying voice, I proposed an afternoon at the opera and offered to stand in the foyer reading an orange-backed book to let her size me up. The girl was dubious at first but let herself be talked into it.

I stood with the orange-backed book wondering whether she would come. If she did, I was sure she would at least stay to hear the opera. Any girl who took the trouble to doll up would go through with the date even if she were met by King Kong in a mudpack. At the last moment I had an appalling thought; what if she were six-foot-seven! She turned out to be the right size, dark of hair and eye, and quite pretty. We heard *The Violinmaker of Cremona* by Hungarian violinist-composer Hubay, an unpretentious piece that has had no success outside Hungary, and afterward we drank coffee and talked. Molnar would have made something of this situation, but I miffed it. We parted on a basis of "I'll give you a ring," and soon I developed other friends.

Night life. For instance, George. At the little Prince of Wales bar, a friend introduced me to a young man with fluent English, huge horn-rimmed glasses, and noisy self-assurance. Within a few moments George had told us he was a person of no integrity, knew every pretty girl in town, and had a large collection of jazz records. When I said I'd like to hear them, he invited me to a little party at weekend. I accepted at once and was taken aback to hear that the party was being given by someone else. My friend assured me it was considered *gentil* in Hungary to invite people to someone else's party.

George impressed me. He carried his personal brandy snifter from bar to bar, he had two packs of unobtainable American cigarettes, and after he had tired of bragging he ousted the piano player, who knew George of old, and made like Vincent Lopez. George had been trained as a classical pianist but opted for jazz, to his father's disgust. A wheeler and dealer, George always had a great deal of money to throw away in nightclubs, remarking vaguely now and then that he had done well in the market.

The weekend party fell through, but several weeks later George turned up in my office. After I had declined an offer of a carton of Lucky Strikes, he got down to the purpose of his visit. His father was an exporter-importer. A shipment from the States had been held up by the British. The key to the situation was held by an official at the British Consulate who was virtually unseeable. Could I arrange for George to see him? I could not; and I wondered aloud why George did not request an appointment. George hemmed, said it had been done, and began boasting about how he had bought a car from a Polish refugee for 1,500 pengo (\$250.00), how he had obtained an extra ration of gasoline, and how all girls found him irresistible. Curiously, I liked all this. Such posturings would have been offensive in most people, but I found them amusing in George.

I was gratified when he began including me in some of his nightclub rounds, crawling from pub to pub with the brandy snifter in hand, hollering not for cognac but for a drink made from plums called prunelle, replacing the piano player in band after band, and throwing money around as if he had his own printing press. When I protested that he was

being swindled, George said philosophically: "Why do we come to places like this except to be swindled?"

He was pals with all the nightclub hostesses but frequently took a girl named Bessie with him on his ramblings. She was about nineteen, with the type of dark beauty sometimes described as sultry but much fortified by cosmetics. Her eyes swam in a mascara sea, and her lips were coated with Crisco, but George was ga-ga over her. But not too ga-ga. He said Bessie wanted to marry him, but he didn't think he wanted to marry her, and he asked my advice on how he could keep her without matrimony. I passed. He had arranged a trip to Italy and was looking forward to spending five days with her. That he was able to get the two of them out of the country was an indicator of his wheeling-dealing, for officially all tourist trips abroad had been suspended.

I asked George if he played tennis. "Not since my accident," he said, and showed me a vicious scar on his wrist. He had gotten it in a small town in Yugoslavia. A local yokel had tried to muscle in on George's girl friend, and when George objected the man pulled a knife. "I am not strong" said George, "but I have studied jiu-jitsu. I stepped on his feet and at the same time I brought my hand hard under his chin. His head snapped back and he died, but first he gave me this scar. That was lucky because it helped me prove self-defense." I didn't know whether to believe him, but he did have a nasty scar.

When my twenty-fifth birthday came along George, back from Italy, bought me dinner at the Palatinus and said he had slept with Bessie twenty-seven times during their five days. It was good of him to keep score. We had a gay time drinking toasts to me in champagne at the Polo Bar, and I was aghast to hear afterward that George had ordered champagne for everybody in the house.

On April 8, 1940 the Germans occupied Denmark and began the invasion of Norway. News reports in Budapest were conflicting. The British were said to have captured the great German liner *Bremen* and to be mopping up the Germans in Norway. In an abrupt turnabout, the reports said that the *Bremen* had escaped untouched and the British had not even set foot in Norway. You believed the version you wanted to believe. History records that the action to that date had been limited to naval engagements, the *Bremen* had been spared by the British submarine *Salmon*, and the Germans had occupied the major Norwegian ports. But all sorts of rumors circulated, including the one that the Germans were about to enter Hungary. On April 22 the U.S. Legation put out a "routine notice" advising American citizens to leave the country. The Germans did indeed enter, but not Hungary.

The Germans invaded the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxemburg on May 10, 1940, and that evening came news that Winston S. Churchill had replaced Neville Chamberlain as British Prime Minister. Around the corner from my office were the French Travel Agency and, a block away, the German Travel Agency. People paid little attention to the dispirited bulletins posted by the French, but crowds pushed and jostled before the German Agency to read its posters and examine the display map showing daily changes in the battlefield.

Belgium surrendered on May 26, and two days later began the withdrawal of the British from Dunkerque. In later years this was acknowledged as an amazing military feat, but in Budapest at the time it was regarded as an ignominious rout. On June 10, Mussolini declared war against Great Britain and France, and Italian forces moved into southern France. Petain replaced Reynaud as head of the French Government six days later and asked the Germans for an armistice. It was signed at Compiègne on June 22, the French forces were disarmed, and three-fifths of France went under German control. According to the Budapest papers, the French blamed their downfall on England's failure to give them air support.

The nightclubs of Budapest carried on. Actually the Hungarian Government was under heavy pressure from Hitler all this time to join in a pact against Rumania, but the man in the street could only go about his daily routine and hope that the war would not spread to Hungary. I continued my appreciation of movies, opera, symphony, bars, and nightclubs, although the pinch began to be felt. Whiskey all but disappeared, and cognac became scarce and expensive, but one could keep one's chin up with Hungarian brandy, gin, and an apricot liqueur called *barack* (pronounced borotsck).

George may well have foreseen the collapse of the Low Countries and the resulting stringencies in Hungary. On April 29 he dropped by my office and announced in his usual braggart vein that he had obtained permission to travel to Spain. For the passage, however, he needed U.S. currency. Would I be so kind as to lend him U.S. currency? He had dollars in a bank in Genoa (or did he say Geneva?) that he would draw on after he was safely in Spain, and he would repay me within two weeks. I loaned him fifty dollars, just about all the green money I had stashed away. He offered to swap me pengo forthwith, but I was skittish at any suggestion of a black market deal and insisted on repayment in dollars.

Some weeks later I was told that George had arrived in neutral Barcelona and taken a job playing piano in a bar. That was the last I heard of him. Assuming that George were to acknowledge the debt and pay five per cent compound interest, he would now after fifty years owe me enough to buy a yacht. George! Where are you, boy? The rumor mills hinted that my fifty dollars was a drop in the bucket compared to the thousands of pengo he owed others in Budapest.

Excursions. In late March 1940 I traveled by train with a group to a town in eastern Slovakia, called Kaschau when it was in Austria-Hungary, Kosice when in Czechoslovakia, and Kassa since its assignment to Hungary in November, 1938. Although two battles were fought here during the 1848-1849 revolution against Austria, the place is noted principally as the locale of fifteen-plus churches, the most impressive of which is the cathedral of St. Elizabeth, built 1342-1382.

Grimly prejudiced against any public edifice, I suffered myself to be led through this magnificent Gothic structure but was impressed only with how cold it was inside. Did anybody in the Middle Ages escape the ague? If the people of Kassa were either glad or

mad at shifting from Czechoslovakia to Hungary, I saw no sign. I visited a neighboring village called Banko and hiked back through mud expressly to view a scenic panorama that turned out to be blanketed in mist. I drove in a rheumatic Praga auto to a monastery in Jaros, examined with interest some illuminated manuscripts in its magnificent mediaeval library, signed a register that had been started by the Emperor Franz Joseph, and rubbernecked in underground caverns that had the usual quota of stalactites and bats. The express train back to Budapest took about four hours to cover the 130 miles.

In May I went to Badacsony on Lake Balaton, fifty-five miles southwest of Budapest. I hiked in the hills, took a steamboat across the lake to a nondescript town from which I was glad to return, yelled at an echo that took ten seconds to yell back, and saw the small monastery room where King Charles (the I of Austria, the IV of Hungary) was held prisoner while the Horthy government, which had just kicked out the communist Bela Kun, made up its mind what to do with him.

Charles had returned to Hungary in March, 1921 and demanded that Admiral Horthy give up his powers as Regent. The national assembly had voted against restoration of the monarchy and sent Charles back to exile in Switzerland. In October, 1921 he tried again, this time with a small army. Horthy forces captured him and incarcerated him on Lake Balaton. He was ultimately consigned to Madeira, where he died the following year. Charles was the grand-nephew of Elizabeth, consort of Emperor Franz Joseph, whose son Rudolf died in a hunting lodge at Mayerling in 1889 and who herself was murdered by an anarchist at Geneva in 1898. Charles was also the nephew of that Archduke Franz Ferdinand whose assassination at Sarajevo set off the First World War.

Hungary abounds with lake and mountain resorts that give pleasure on weekend trips. You could chug by steamboat to Estergom, for example, and look at another cold cathedral. You could row on the Danube in a slender boat like a racing shell, tugging lazily or vigorously in accord with the esprit of your companions. You could hike in the mountains that rose on the Buda side of the river, or you could take the train to larger mountains near the Czech border and stay overnight in hostels. These excursions were glorious no matter what the weather.

On one such trip, the rain began to trickle as the train pulled out of Pest, and by the time Kismaros was reached the cats and dogs were falling. Everybody bundled up cheerfully in cloaks, rainwear, peasant kerchiefs, and newspapers, and we walked through rain and mud for some ten minutes to onward transportation. Nobody cared that this turned out to be an open farm cart drawn by two horses, and in this vehicle the party jolted through the rain for two hours while the water seeped through cracks in clothing, saturated the blankets on which we sat, and odorized the burlap sack that one man held over his head. The menu at the hostel offered only boiled beef and potatoes all three days, and the beds were hard as a bride's biscuits, but the sun shone the next two days, we walked on trails through pine-scented rocks and rills, we swarmed on the beef and potatoes like mosquitoes on a nudist, and we returned to Budapest bedraggled, happy and pooped.

Russia, which had been quietly busy on the sidelines, now drew attention to itself.

Having successfully concluded its invasion of Finland the preceding March, the Soviet Union occupied Latvia, Lithuania and Esthonia on June 17 and marched into Bessarabia on June 27. People in Budapest speculated as to the day when Germany and Russia would fight, for the non-aggression pact was not taken seriously. The joke of the moment was to ask, "Who will win the war, Germany or England?" and to reply, "Russia".

I recalled the prediction of my boss in Bucharest, Major John P. Ratay. Germany, Ratay had correctly foreseen, would use only a few troops to hold the Siegfried Line against France and would hurl her power against the Poles. With Poland out of the way, she would easily smash France because France was weak internally. The struggle with England would be long, but Germany would probably come out on top if England had to go it alone. With the western powers exhausted, Russia would step in and turn all of Europe into a communist land.

The possibility did not escape the Hungarians that the Germans moving east and the Russians moving west might meet on their soil, but because they could do little about it except engage in diplomatic maneuvers life continued with few restrictions. In November, 1939 Budapest had held practice blackouts and air raids, but they had actually been dimouts and had been observed only half-heartedly. As time went on, sugar was rationed to one kilogram per person per month, the serving of meat in restaurants was limited to five days per week, and gasoline was rationed to seventy liters per month.

In April, 1940 rumors circulated that city buses would have to suspend operations because of fuel shortage, but the suspension was postponed indefinitely. Air raid drills resumed in June, and troops were called up in progressive stages with an unanswered question whether the mobilization was for defense against an invader or for attack on neighboring Rumania. This was resolved by the award to Hungary of a substantial chunk of Transylvania on August 30 in response to persuasion exercised by Berlin and Rome. It was six days after this that King Carol and Elena Lupescu loaded all their goods into a train and fled into exile.

Even at the height of the Transylvania crisis, life in Budapest had few inconveniences. I remembered the preparations for combat in Warsaw, the practice total blackouts, the taping of windows, the digging of trenches. At the peak of the mobilization, all the Hungarians did was mount a few anti-aircraft guns on bridges and hills. The explanation may have been that the Hungarian Government counted on active German help in the event that Rumania resisted. Budapest was not to know the horrors of the Second World War until a few months before the end, but beginning in November 1944 the beautiful city was to suffer wanton destruction.

Home beckons. The invasion of the Low Countries, the entry of Italy into the war, and the fall and occupation of France not only killed thousands of combatants and non-combatants, destroyed millions in personal and industrial property, and caused immeasurable misery to thousands of persons made homeless and destitute, it also posed a personal dilemma. How was I to get back to the States?

I had contracted to complete two years in Europe from September, 1938. In May the War Department, recognizing that I had accumulated nearly two months' leave, authorized me to set out in July, but when I inquired at the Budapest office of the American Export Lines I received the alarming news that ships might no longer be running by that month. Two days later came an order from President Roosevelt for all American ships to clear the Mediterranean. This meant that the only American trans-Atlantic shipping available was out of Lisbon.

Surface transportation across Yugoslavia having been suspended, the route to Lisbon lay through Austria (which was to say Germany), either Italy or Switzerland, and France. Rail service across France had stopped. There was talk of bus service, subject to permission from the Germans, but no firm information as to routes or schedules. The most promising way was by air over Rome and thence to Barcelona, where train service was presumably available to Lisbon. The Rome-Barcelona flight had two drawbacks. No space was available until mid-August, and there was a risk that the plane might be shot down by aircraft from British fleets in the Mediterranean. I passed June, July and August in running down information on sailings and flights, getting visas, and making and changing plans.

Meanwhile I drove with one of our vice-consuls to Lillifured, an attractive mountain resort near Miskolc in northeastern Hungary. One of the major tourist spots, Lillifured had an expensive hotel, a lake of deep blue locked in by verdant mountains, and a waterfall partly contrived by human hands. We drove there and back, about six hours round trip, in a single day, which left us time barely to eat lunch and turn around, but to me the trip was particularly interesting because the road lay through Eger.

In my grandfather's front parlor, a room used only to entertain guests, hung a sepia drawing of virtually mural size in an enormous wooden frame with the title, *Wallensteins Zug nach Eger*. Why my grandfather, who came over from Ireland at age twelve, who spoke no German, and who manifested not the slightest interest in the Thirty Years War, had a picture of Wallenstein's procession to Eger is a question that has never been answered. As a child I used to eye Wallenstein -- an imposing gentleman in a sedan chair, his hand to his head as if he needed an aspirin, while obsequious peasants in the foreground watched the progress of a military array in the background -- and wonder what he was up to. Well, he was on his way to his doom.

Albrecht von Wallenstein, or Waldstein, won such great triumphs that Emperor (of the Holy Roman Empire) Ferdinand II had to make him Duke of Friedland and Duke of Mecklenburg. But Ferdinand became irked at Wallenstein's high and mighty ways and fired him after Wallenstein suffered a defeat at Stralsund, on the Baltic. But when Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden threatened to return the Emperor to the ranks of the unemployed, Ferdinand recalled Wallenstein, although much against his will.

Gustavus confronted Wallenstein at Eger and was forced to retreat to the Danube. In 1632 Gustavus fought Wallenstein again at Lutzen and this time won a victory but made the mistake of getting himself killed in the battle. With Gustavus gone, the Emperor was

easily persuaded to forget his need of Wallenstein, and early in 1634 he had him indicted for treason. Now you know why Wallenstein was holding his head in his hands. The picture in my grand- father's parlor showed him en route back to Eger. Here he holed up in hopes of obtaining assistance but was assassinated by officers who thought the Emperor might like to have him out of the way. Whether the Emperor ordered the murder is uncertain, but the officers were commended and rewarded.

My pleasure at seeing this little town that had figured in my childhood was only slightly diminished when a fundamental flaw was pointed out to me back in Budapest. It was the wrong Eger. This was the Eger which in German is called Erlau, on the Eger River which is also called Erlau, in northeast Hungary. The Eger where Wallenstein defeated Gustavus and later met his demise is called Eger in German and is on the Eger River (also called Eger) in northwest Bohemia. No matter. If you've seen one Eger, you've seen them all, and I stayed happy that I had revived this memory of my infancy.

The matter of language differences among east European nations has spawned many anecdotes, some of which may be true. It is said that in the thirties the foreign ministers of Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia met at the League of Nations to discuss concerted action against their mutual foe, Hungary. Because no one of them was willing to accept another's language, and they had no "world" tongue such as French or German in common, the meeting was on the point of collapse. The Czech minister saved the day by suggesting that they converse in Hungarian, a language in which all were fluent because they had all been Hungarians before the breakup of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Thus, they made common cause against the enemy by using the enemy's language.

Said to be factual is the story that when the Slovaks and Hungarians met on October 9, 1938 on a barge in mid-river to settle Hungary's claims to a part of eastern Czechoslovakia, Hungarian Prime Minister Imredy virtually assured the failure of the conference by insisting that the talks be conducted in French, although both delegations were fluent in Slovak and Hungarian. Communication proved so difficult that the talks were broken off and fighting began along the frontier. The conflict had to be settled by joint German and Italian intervention.

This same Bela Imredy is remembered in history as the prime minister who threw stones at his own glass house. Minister of Finance in the early thirties, he re-entered the government in March, 1938 and in the following month introduced the so-called First Jewish Law. This limited the number of persons of Jewish religion in the press, theater, law, medicine, engineering, and certain white-collar categories to twenty per cent of total employment in such professions. The law defined a Jew as a person adhering to the Jewish religion as of July 31, 1919 or thereafter.

In response to German pressure Imredy, who had become Prime Minister in May, 1938, introduced a more restrictive Second Jewish Law toward the end of the year. Passed in January, 1939, this law defined a Jew as any descendant of two Jewish, or one Jewish and one Christian, parents except children of mixed marriages whose parents had been

married as Christians before January 1, 1919. The percentage of Jews that could be employed in the professions was reduced from twenty to six, and a number of other limitations were imposed. Anti-Semitism had at times been strong in Hungary, but official policy toward Jewry had been relatively liberal since the grant of full rights of citizenship in 1862. It was recognized, moreover, that Jews played an important role in the country's professional, financial and commercial life.

During the summer of 1938, an investigation was begun of Imredy's family tree. He came of largely Swabian stock. His maternal great-grandfather had been named Zenger and had magyarized his name to Vajkay in 1948; his mother's grand-father had been a German Bohemian. But the investigators turned up a document showing that in 1814 one of Imredy's great-grandmothers had been baptized into the Catholic faith at age seven, and the conclusion was drawn that this little girl had been born a Jew.

Learning of the investigation, Imredy launched an investigation of his own that claimed to show the allegation was false. According to rumor, an expose was threatened unless Imredy would repeal the Jewish laws. When he refused, his opponents began in January, 1939 to distribute leaflets asserting his purported Jewish ancestry, and in rebuttal Imredy devoted most of a long speech on January 16 to expounding the details of his family tree. His detractors retaliated by turning their evidence over to the Regent, Admiral Nicholas Horthy, and at Imredy's request Horthy set afoot an official inquiry. The investigators came to the conclusion that Imredy's opponents were correct and that the little girl baptized in 1814 had been born of Jewish parents.

Although such remote ancestry did not define him as a Jew under his own Jewish laws, Imredy convoked a ministerial council on February 14, 1939 and produced a half-sheet of paper on which he had written out his resignation, giving as reason the discovery of the Jewish strain in his ancestry. He insisted on resigning in spite of his ministers' expostulations but was persuaded to conceal the true reason and merely state that he had lost the Regent's confidence. Within a few days, however, he revealed the true reason in a public address and became the butt of much ridicule.

His opponents gained a Pyrrhic victory. Imredy was no longer prime minister, but the Jewish laws were not repealed although they were not strictly enforced for some years. In March, 1944 German troops entered Hungary and compelled sternly oppressive measures against Jews. An attempt by Horthy to surrender the country to the Russians in August, 1944 was unsuccessful, and Hungary became a battleground. After the Germans were driven out, trials of war criminals were conducted during 1945 and 1946 by a People's Court in Budapest. Capital sentences were passed in 164 cases, of which 122 were carried out. Five of those executed were former prime ministers, one of them Bela Imredy [Source for sketch on Imredy not recorded. Sorry.].

Departure. On June 21 appeared a notice that a ship would be sent to Basra, at the head of the Persian Gulf, to evacuate Americans from central Europe. How the Americans were to get to Basra was up to them; something was said about a train to somewhere in South Turkey and a bus through the valley of the Euphrates. I also considered, but not seriously,

the trans-Siberian Railway and passage across the Pacific. A moment of cheer came from news that the Greeks intended to establish a regular service from The Piraeus to Lisbon, but all thoughts of this were dropped when I found out the sole ship would be a freighter built in 1890 that would take eleven days to get through the Mediterranean.

Meanwhile our Legation obtained visas for me from Yugoslavia (just in case), Spain, and Portugal, and filed applications with Germany and Italy. The Italians demanded six photographs and a birth certificate as proof that I was not a Jew. They kept the application three weeks and then, in response to an inquiry, revealed that they had not yet removed it from the in-basket. At the Legation's request, they forwarded it to Rome. To my knowledge, the Germans took no action whatever. The Government of France, being in a highly confused condition, declined even to accept an application.

Italy yielded the visa on August 30, but I still had no passage. The American Export Lines office, which had declined to reserve space until I had received the Italian visa, now asserted that all space was gone, and I began to wonder if I should have to go home on a belligerent ship, with attendant risk of being torpedoed. Of a sudden, things fell into place. American Export telephoned there was a chance I could have a mattress in a corridor. When I told them to wire acceptance to Lisbon, they warned that someone else had also requested it and might be put before me. No matter; I went ahead.

Our Embassy at Rome confirmed that space had been reserved on a plane Rome-Barcelona-Madrid-Lisbon. A seat on the plane Budapest-Rome was readily obtained, and from despair on August 30 I found myself departing from Budapest the morning of September 2nd. No confirmation having been received from American Export in Lisbon, the Budapest branch office issued me an open ticket with a reservation on a ship leaving Lisbon September 18, 1940 "providing space is available".

The tri-motored plane, on which I was the only passenger, lofted me over the mountains of Slovenia and put me down at Venice where customs inspectors were suspicious of (a) some glycerine pills, (b) my velvet smoking jacket, which they thought was a gift for a mistress, and (c) my passport, which being marked "Special" rather than "Diplomatic" was a breed they did not know. Their agitation lulled, they permitted me to resume the journey to Rome, lasting about two hours. I took a taxi to the U.S. Embassy. It was closed because of Labor Day, but the duty consul guided me to a hotel.

Installed in a comfortable room, I realized I had left my overcoat and photo bag at the airlines office. I asked the hotel to send for them and nonchalantly took a nap. Strolling past the airline office later on, I dropped in to see if my things had been recovered. They were still on the chair where I had left them, a great stroke of luck as the telephoto lens and other equipment had cost a pretty penny. The only inconvenience in Rome was the blackout. I dined well and had to pay only 50 lire or \$2.50 for a spacious room with bath.

Next day I called at the Military Attache office of the Embassy and was given a letter from the Italian Air Ministry. With this, I obtained a ticket from the airlines office at once as well as instructions to turn up for a bus at 6:40 the following morning.

Traveling companion. The flight to Lisbon was eventful in only one respect, which I shall come to in a moment. We flew over the rugged island of Corsica and reached Barcelona in about five hours. The Spanish immigration man took the trouble to tell me that my visa for Portugal was no longer valid because it was more than one month old. When I said I would continue all the same, he remarked cheerfully he was merely warning me I would have to make the trip back to Rome. We descended again at Madrid to have our Spanish visas canceled and arrived at Lisbon at 5:30 in the afternoon of September 4, 1940. The Portuguese accepted my visa without demur.

The event of the flight was Mr. Grady. Just before we got on the bus for the Rome airport, a reedy voice at my elbow asked if I were an American. On hearing a yes, Mr. Grady attached himself to me like a woodtick. At first I was annoyed, but when I realized that he was a very sick man I was glad he had found me. He had been steward on an American ship, had fallen ill, and had been left in hospital at Venice where he stayed for months, weak and virtually blind. Gradually his eyes recovered until he could distinguish large objects, but he could still see very little and was woefully feeble. Encouraged by British bombings and weary of hospital, he resolved to leave Venice and had traveled to Rome by day coach and somehow secured a Spanish visa and a reservation on the plane in one day. Barely able to walk, all but sightless, and speaking only Texan, he was happy to find a fellow American.

At Lisbon, after vain attempts at telephoning, I piled Mr. Grady and our bags into a taxi and drove to four hotels before locating a room. Here we lodged four days until the agent for Mr. Grady's steamship line could get him passage to the States. During these four days he nearly drove me into a straitjacket. The poor man had lain months in hospital unable to communicate. Because he couldn't speak the language, couldn't read, couldn't understand the Italian radio, he was full of pent-up talk, and the dam burst on me. Sadly, he gabbled without saying anything, set an all-time high for atrocious grammar, spoke in a nasal twang that jangled my nerves, chain-smoked in bed, burned a hole in the coverlet, in sum sorely tried my patience. But in one sense I was in his debt because while a double hotel room was hard to find a single room was all but impossible.

Mr. Grady had had smallpox, an operation for stomach ulcers, lice, blindness, and the heaves, and he described them all in detail. He had worked as a concession man in carnivals and as a cook in the army but chiefly as a steward in ships. He had divorced his wife but now that he was sick he intended to return to her. His knowledge of geography and politics was awe-inspiring. To him Venice was Venees, Genoa was Jenuerry, and The Piraeus was Pyorrhea. He identified a famous personage for me: "You know, that count feller, he was the king, Henry was his name, he married that woman from Boston." I was grateful when his company's representative put him aboard a Spanish freighter headed for New Orleans via Havana although I had serious doubts about his ability to survive twenty days at sea. Some weeks later, I was pleasantly surprised to receive in Washington a letter of thanks from him mailed from New Orleans.

As to myself, I was told that my steamship reservation was still not assured and I would

not know whether I should have my mattress in the corridor until sailing time fourteen days hence. The Pan American Clipper was said to be hopelessly overcrowded, but I stopped in anyway and learned that the reverse was true. Many would-be passengers were unable to qualify because of some quirk about documents.

When the man found my documents in order and said I could have a passage in seven days, I obtained a reimbursement from American Export Lines, paid a difference of \$163.00 to Pan-Am out of my own pocket, and duly took off in the huge flying boat. This early version of trans-Atlantic flying was something like an aerial Pullman car. Passengers sat around small tables, and slept in berths that let down from the walls.

We put down at the Azores for refueling and again the following morning in Bermuda for cornflakes and scrambled eggs. Then to New York, where U.S. Customs charged me \$40.00 to bring in personal effects, and by train to Washington. I was a nine hours' wonder with my friends because flying the Atlantic was a feat in those days.

Chapter 8  
Voyage  
(March 1941)

Polybius was a Greek-Roman soldier and historian who lived in the Third and Second Centuries, B. C. He took part in a number of Roman campaigns, among them the siege and destruction of Carthage in 146 B. C., but is remembered for his forty-volume (scroll?) history of the fifty-three years 220-168 B. C., of which Books i - v are extant and the rest are known from excerpts published by other writers (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, vol. 18, pp. 194 ff.).

In 1941 I was thirty-four days at sea traveling from New York to Cape Town in the Hog Island freighter *Polybius*.

When the United States began girding for World War I, Congress passed the Shipping Act of September 7, 1916 providing for the acquisition of an American-flag merchant fleet. Dozens of shipyards were set up under a tremendous ship-building program begun the following year, the largest of them at Hog Island below Philadelphia, with fifty shipways. The program had just attained full steam when the war ended in November, 1918, but work continued over the next three years. Altogether, 2,311 vessels were built, most of them steel cargo freighters (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, vol. 18, p. 665). Why one of them was named after an ancient Greek-Roman historian I leave to you.

Operation of this large fleet proving commercially unrewarding, most of the ships were mothballed during the '30s, but when the clouds of World War II began to move toward the United States the ships were pulled out of the cedar chest to meet the revived demand.

The reasons that sent me overseas again were three: the magnet of foreign service, the draft, and the discovery that everyone back home had managed very well without me while I was away. For when I called up old cronies and suggested a night on the town, I got a standard reply: "Geezie-peezie, old buddy, I sure would like to, but I sort of promised Mary Frances I'd take her to the bowling alley...." Two years earlier my friends had escorted girls for diversion; now they were escorting them for matrimony. As the song says, those wedding bells were breaking up that old gang of mine.

The tug of overseas places was acknowledged in letters to friends in Europe after I had been home a few months:

"It lures you, the service. I feel the pull as I ride to work in the bus and as I pound out my daily quota of work. It pays better than jobs here. If I stay in my present job three more years, I'll be making about as much as I started off with in the service. But aside from money, there's something about the life that calls one back. I've thought about it and about taking the exams for officer often. Matter of fact, I've gotten an application blank from the State Department to take the Foreign Service examinations next September...."

Sampling diplomatic life had made domestic life seem humdrum. I had loafed through

October 1940 enjoying accumulated leave and had not looked for a job until the day approached for separation from the War Department payroll. Unexpectedly the phone rang, and a friend asked if I wanted to work for three days. I said no, but when I realized he urgently needed stenographic help I condescended to lend a hand. At the end of the three days I was offered a temporary job at \$1,620 per year, and I decided to stay. The outfit was an institute of extremely erudite Ph.D.'s whose function was to award and distribute funds from foundations to competent scholars for research projects.

The work was challenging, the atmosphere was congenial, and after a few weeks the Big Boss called me in and tendered me a permanent position with a rise to \$1,800 at the turn of the fiscal year in July plus \$100 yearly increases there- after to a ceiling of \$3,000. My future was made, but I turned down the offer because I aspired to more than riches.

Nevertheless, they let me stay while I waited for responses to applications I had filed elsewhere, and meanwhile the military draft started looking in my direction. As of February, 1941 it appeared likely I would be called in June, but an unexpected notice to take a physical early in March, indicating probable induction about March 15, set me to making inquiries about prospects in the armed forces.

Unofficial opinions from War Department acquaintances confirmed the obvious. I was a clerk-stenographer with War Department experience. What more natural than that, once inducted, I should be set to doing exactly what I had done as a civilian, clerical work for the Army. Only this time I would be in uniform and drawing one-tenth my previous pay. I said that this made little sense, and the folks at the Department agreed. New military attache posts were being opened overseas, but ultimately the available vacancies narrowed to two, Santiago in Chile and Pretoria in South Africa. Because the former paid only \$1,520, I opted for Pretoria at \$2,000. Thus do we mortals try to shape our destinies. Thus did I find myself aboard the *Polybius* on March 18, 1941.

I persevered with my plan to take the Foreign Service examinations, for I knew they were given at diplomatic posts overseas as well as in the United States. But a friend from Embassy Moscow expressed doubt that I would be permitted to take the exams overseas. "State Department personnel only," said he. "Are you sure?" I asked. "No," said he, "but you'd better check before you start out." I hustled to the State, War and Navy Building and asked somebody in Personnel, or whatever it was called in those days. He admitted he didn't know and suggested I write a letter to the Hon., G. Howland Shaw, Assistant Secretary of State. This I did and had to sail from New York before a reply could be received.

To wind up this tale, some weeks after settling in Pretoria I got a letter from the Assistant Secretary:

"...As clerks to Military Attaches are not employees of the Department of State, you would not fall within the purview of the regulations of the Board of Examiners for the Foreign Service,... and I am sorry that it would not be possible, consequently, to arrange for you to take the written portion of the examination at your post and the oral test on the

occasion of your return to Washington."

The blow was not crippling. I doubted that I would have passed the writtens on first whack anyway, and I was not crushed by blighted hopes. I had put the matter out of mind when a second letter from the Assistant Secretary arrived some weeks later:

"Referring to my letter of March 14, I now take pleasure in informing you that at a meeting of the Foreign Service Personnel Board held on March 19 it was decided to permit you to take the written portion of the Foreign Service examination at your post in Pretoria, Union of South Africa...."

Many years later I was amused to read that the Foreign Service Personnel Board at that time consisted of three persons, Assistant Secretary Shaw, Assistant Secretary Adolph Berle, and Assistant Secretary Dean Acheson (Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, p. 14). My plea to take the exams had brought about an agonizing decision at the very top.

One of the requirements was that five letters of recommendation be submitted in support of the application. It was now May, 1941, and I was in South Africa, from which point a letter took twenty-one days to reach the States provided it caught an outbound ship the day it was mailed. Of course, there was no air service. I started writing to references, but because the exams were scheduled for September it was improbable that I could comply with all requirements before the deadline. No matter. I wanted to cram anyhow, and I told myself I would take the exams the following September, 1942. Plans gang aft agley. On December 7, 1941 Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, the United States entered the war, and the State Department suspended Foreign Service examinations for the duration. I put my study books back on the shelf.

But back to the *Polybius*. In Washington I had met my new boss, Colonel Breckinridge A. Day, and Administration had stipulated that both of us leave as soon as we were oriented. Having less to learn, I was sent ahead on the *Polybius*. The Colonel and his second, Major Florimond du S. Duke, were to follow on another freighter some ten days later. All of us could have traveled still later on the *City of New York*, the regular liner to Cape Town, which was scheduled to arrive earlier than the second freighter, but the objective was to depart earliest, not necessarily get there earliest.

The Captain of the *Polybius* was a squat, apple-cheeked Dane, built like a beach ball, whose conversation ran exclusively to cuss words with a Scandinavian accent. English being an acquired tongue, he cussed with concentration, as if expected of him, and hence was amusing rather than formidable. He thought up epithets for every piece of equipment, cried that the ship's top speed was one knot, and refused to quit New York harbor until the refrigerating mechanism was repaired. Because this meant procuring new parts, we sat in harbor twenty-four hours looking at the skyline, but no matter. The War Department orders allotted me \$4.00 per diem while aboard ship, and I was making money atop my pay just sitting still.

The day after we left harbor the bitter cold of winter disappeared, the waves calmed, and

we sailed on a millpond for more than a month. This was well, for the insides of the resurrected *Polybius* could not get used to the notion that they were supposed to chug-chug after a dozen years in cotton wool. The ship broke down four times, and on one occasion it drifted inert on the broad Atlantic for six hours.

Even with her engines marching correctly the ship could achieve but nine knots at full cry. Moreover, the repaired refrigerating mechanism refused to stay repaired. The Chief Engineer complained that he spent the entire voyage on his back under the refrigerator keeping its motor turning. But then all the officers and deck personnel complained. Because I was the only passenger and had plenty of time on my hands, they brought their complaints and tales of frustration to me. Not that they expected me to do anything. They just liked to hear themselves talk.

The First Mate was an ambitious man, not yet thirty, vexed at being assigned to a floating relic, and disdainful of the fogies he had to work with. He spent his off-duty hours withdrawn from the others. The Second was a sixty-year-old Norwegian, big enough to wrestle Tarzan and gentle enough to nurse a porcupine. The Third was a dazed executive from a New York Department store who, after nearly three decades, had been fired with two weeks' notice. Unable to get a job ashore, he had remembered a mate's ticket he had held as a youth. This had been renewed, and he found himself at sea for the first time in thirty years.

The Chief Engineer was one of those types who wears his trousers so low on his hips the crotch hangs to his knees. All hands disliked the Chief, and the Captain was openly contemptuous of him. Whether he ever did any work was moot. At all hours he was to be seen on deck, a cigarette pasted to his lower lip, a cup of coffee in his hand, and his pants at half staff. The First Engineer was a youngish man with a girl in every port and marital troubles at home, many of which he confided to me. The Second was perhaps the only "normal" man aboard, a quiet, hard-working type, regretfully separated from his family, and intent on getting ahead in his profession.

The Captain's distaste for the Chief was augmented by the frequent breakdown of the ship's engines and by the precarious situation of the fresh water supply. According to the Captain, the Chief had let more than 100 tons of water be pumped overboard while the ship sat in harbor and had failed to tell him about it until well at sea. Further, the Chief had taken no measure to conserve water, had allowed the crew to shower in fresh water until the Captain became aware of the situation, and had made no attempt to run the distiller in order to make fresh water for the boilers.

From the start, the drinking water had a suspicious taste, reminiscent of alum. The Captain made wisecracks about cement from newly-installed tanks and continued to drink it, but in an aside to me he acknowledged he had to. He could not admit to the crew that the water was bad. Nevertheless, the crew began to grumble, and the grumbles grew with the thickness of the sediment. By the twenty-fifth day at sea we were running seriously short, and on April 12 we made an unscheduled stop at St. Helena.

Officials from James's Town came aboard while a British destroyer cocked a wary eye on us. Water we could have, but we would not be allowed ashore, and I had to be content with wistful gazing from the ship's rail. Here one Fernando Lopez, a Portuguese in India who had been mutilated as punishment for crime by order of Affonso de Albuquerque, elected to be marooned in 1516 rather than return to Portugal. He was the island's first known permanent resident. Here astronomer Edmund Halley of Halley's Comet fame manned an observatory 1676-78 from which he accumulated data to draw up a catalog of the stars. Here vessels returning from India filled the harbor in the heyday of the British East India Company only to fade away with the age of steam. And here Napoleon I of France ended his days in exile.

St. Helena's greatest length is 10 1/2 miles, its greatest breadth 7 miles. It is 850 miles from the nearest land, Ascension Island, and nearly 1,000 miles west of the nearest point on the African continent. Thus, Napoleon's jailer was to all intents as much a prisoner as was Napoleon, and in many respects Sir Hudson Lowe's five years at St. Helena were as unpleasant as those of his renowned charge.

Sir Hudson has been accused of being excessively punctilious in carrying out his orders, but his was a heavy and disagreeable responsibility. Napoleon was not totally cut off from outside visitors, news filtered to St. Helena that Bonapartists in the United States were planning a rescue expedition, and there was the precedent of Napoleon's escape from Elba. Members of Napoleon's staff, not unaware of political advantage, made constant and well-publicized complaints of needlessly strict supervision. After Napoleon's death in May, 1821, Lowe returned to England and received the thanks of George IV. He devoted much of his time in later years to vindicating his stewardship in court actions and publications (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, *Encyclopedia Americana*, *Imperial Encyclopedia*).

Before we arrived at St. Helena the messboy began complaining of abdominal pains and asked the Captain for a dose of castor oil. The ship carried no doctor, but the Captain had a medicine chest. After a day the pains returned, and the boy asked for another dose. The Captain conferred with any officers or crew members who happened to be handy as to whether castor oil was the proper remedy. Nobody knew, so he ladled out another shot.

Two days later the pains had become severe. The normally mild-mannered messboy screamed at dinner: "Can't you give me something to get rid of this pain!" The Captain was sympathetic but did not know what to do. He would open the medicine chest, hold the bottles up to the light, and read the handy-dandy booklet of directions that came with the chest. Finally he decided to do nothing except persuade the boy to lie down, as we were by that time one day from St. Helena and a doctor.

At St. Helena a doctor came aboard and prescribed castor oil and bicarbonate of soda. This treatment worked for a day or so, after which the Captain administered two grains of calomel.

"Howe'er their patients may complain,

Of head, or heart, or nerve, or vein,  
Of fever high, or parch, or swell,  
The remedy is Calomel."

- (anon)

The boy took to his bunk and stayed there until we reached Cape Town, where he went into a segregated hospital. His trouble was diagnosed as stomach ulcers.

Thirty-four days at sea, with seven miles of water every direction you looked, and never a passing sail. I slept ten hours each night and two or three each afternoon, read *Gone With the Wind* for a second time, wrote some short stories that I soon threw away, and welcomed each call to the uninspired chow as the high points of the daily monotony. Only the Sparks had time for games, and as he stubbornly refused to learn my game, chess, I had to learn his, cribbage. I forgot it as soon as I left ship and have never played since.

On the thirty-fifth day the *Polybius* cast anchor in Table Bay and received word from the ship's agent that she could not berth for another twenty-four hours. Sympathetic to my eagerness to get ashore, the Captain had a line rigged to lower my trunk into the agent's boat, and in half an hour I was landed within the customs enclosure. Having stacked my trunk and bags on quayside, the agent buggered off and abandoned me to my own devices. I walked half a mile to the customs office, leaving my effects unguarded, and was allowed to call the U.S. Consulate. Although they had no advance notice, the Consulate arranged to send transport and have me lodged in a private hotel, which is South African for boarding house.

My instructions were to proceed to Pretoria and open the office, but the point had been overlooked that South Africa has three capitals, the judicial at Bloemfontein, the administrative at Pretoria, and the legislative at Cape Town. Parliament was in session, and diplomatic missions had moved to Cape Town. U.S. Minister Leo J. Keena recommended that I wait for Colonel Day to arrive rather than set out for Pretoria on my own, for there was no room for us in the Chancery, and I had no authority to lease offices. I settled in Cape Town for ten days.

"The discovery of America, and that of a passage to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope, are the two greatest and most important events recorded in the history of mankind."

- Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*

April 28, 1941

Dear T. R.:

Cape Town strings out along the coast at the base of famous Table Mountain. This

Mountain put on a gorgeous show the day I arrived. A great white cloud moved in from the sea and sat atop it with edges draping down the side like a snowy tablecloth. I took a trip to the summit, which is 3,549 feet, by a car hanging from cables. One gets a broad panorama of the town, the marine driveway, and the sea extending like a blue mirror to the horizon. The top of the mountain features tiny lizards that scurry from under your feet and a restaurant where everybody orders tea.

Cape Town is very staid, which is astonishing considering that it is a major seaport. The radio station leaves the air at eleven o'clock, there are no cinemas or bars or dance halls open on Sundays, neither are any public tennis courts or bowling greens or cricket fields - in short, laws are bluer than Philadelphia's. The vice-consul tells me that night spots in town (population approximately 300,000) are not allowed to serve liquor, although they will provide setups if you bring your own. Twenty miles outside town is a roadhouse that stays open till one o'clock on week nights and two on Saturdays, but 'tis said that if the Reformed Church has its way this too will have to shut down early like the bars in town. All after-dark places require evening dress, but it is not true (as the chaps on ship assured me) that you have to wear a tuxedo to go to the movies.

I got to talking with an English sailor in a bar. He was on liberty from an aircraft carrier that had come down from Malta. They had taken a terrific pasting from German bombers there, but in the nick of time R.A.F. planes showed up and drove the Germans away. "Decent of them to help out the Navy, wasn't it?" said the sailor. He was deadly serious.

Traffic keeps to the left, but many of the cars are American-made, although with right-hand drive. A new Ford, Chevrolet, or Plymouth costs \$1,400 or more, depending on the model, and used cars are correspondingly high. There are lots of U.S.-made shirts, cigarettes, phonograph records, typewriters, and electric razors on sale in the shops, but prices are considerably higher than back home.

The soda fountain has caught on here, but not the cafeteria. Neither has the continuous cinema; you have to reserve seats in advance, and the theater is cleared after each show. Prices of movies are high. The cheapest I've seen is about 50 cents, and most are around \$1.00. American films mostly are shown, although there are some British.

Scotch-and-soda dominates the bars, but Canadian Club and ginger ale can be had. No bourbon. The bartender will look only mildly surprised if you ask for ice in your drink as he has had previous experience with Americans.

Prices of foodstuffs seem reasonable, and there are presently no restrictions or rationing. However, beginning May 1 no more white bread or flour will be sold, only whole grain. There is a Woolworth's, but instead of five-and-ten it's called a "bazaar".

The rate at the sedate private hotel is about \$15 per day, including three meals and three teas. At seven each morning a native boy thumps on my door and hands me a cup of hot tea with milk in it. I don't think much of it as a drink, but it's not bad as a mouthwash. The meals consist of six courses of two forkfuls each, a sort of snatch fare that leaves you

wondering whether you're hungry or not. Tea and scones (baking powder biscuits) are served at 11:00 and again at 4:00. I'm told that shops and offices likewise arrange to serve tea at these hours, and there's the standing joke that the Army stops its battles at 11:00 and 4:00 for tea.

They tell me this is quite a sports country, with tennis, cricket, rugby, soccer, and of course hunting. The only sport I've seen so far is bowling, not in alleys but on the green, like Sir Francis Drake when the Armada came round the bend. I watched some elderly burghers at play yesterday. No pins are used. A white peg is stuck in the grass, and players try to roll the balls as close to the peg as possible, something like pitching horseshoes. Finesse rather than force is needed because if one rolls too strongly the ball ends up among the bulrushes. Chaps with large bay windows seem favored for this game. To watch them shuffle up to the line and place the ball down with a minimum of effort is not exactly spine-tingling, but then it's not a spectator sport. Blowing the ball would give them more exercise, but I suppose the essential is the companionship, fresh air, and chance to drink beer. Make that tea.

Last night I went to a symphony concert. The orchestra was only about forty instruments, many of them amateur, but it did not sound amateurish. The program notes, on the other hand, were distinctive. Speaking of Dvorak's *In der Natur* Overture, the notes said something like this:

"A poignant call sounds in the horns, thrilling and mysterious above the rustle of the strings. It is the call of Nature...."

Two days from now we take the Blue Train for Pretoria. The gauge is narrower than our standard, but it's a crack train for all that, with well appointed sleeping coaches, fine restaurant, and all comfort for the trip of 900-plus miles. One curious note: When I bought the sleeping-car ticket the clerk asked for ten pounds and then added: "Do you want bedding? It's three shillings more." I wonder if anybody ever says no and elects to sleep on the bare boards.

So here I go to the north like the Elephant's Child:

"He went from Graham's Town to Kimberley, and from Kimberley to Khama's Country, and from Khama's Country he went east by north, eating melons all the time, till at last he came to the banks of the great gray-green, greasy Limpopo River, all set about with fever trees, precisely as Kolokolo Bird had said...."

But I was never to see the Limpopo.

Chapter 9  
Pretoria  
(April 1941-May 1944)

"The odd thing is that the Afrikaners for the most part are such fine, decent people."

- C. L. Sulzberger (*A Long Row of Candles; Memoirs and Diaries (1934-1954)*). The Macmillan Company, New York: 1969. p. 831

Oom Paul. The first thing that took your eye when you walked out of the railway station into the Pretoria of 1941 was a statue of an elderly, bulb-nosed gentleman wearing a top hat and a loose-fitting suit in the style of Abraham Lincoln. Voortrekker, hunter, farmer, soldier, statesman, four times President of the South African Republic (Trans-vaal) 1884-1902, Stephanus Johannes Paulus (Uncle Paul) Kruger was a man of the people, a member of the Christeljk-Gereformeerde ("Dopper") Church whose congregation sang only Psalms, rejected modern fashions in dress (for some, even the use of buttons), and believed the Bible states that the world is flat.

At age 16, in accordance with Boer custom, Paul Kruger chose two farms for himself, one for grazing and one for sowing. Then, recognized as a man and a burgher with full rights, he dressed in Sunday black and set off to fetch his bride, Miss Maria du Plessis, who lived south of the Vaal. It was the time of rains; the river was in flood, and the ferryman refused to risk the boat. Dressed as he was, young Kruger plunged his horses into the dangerous waters and swam them across to reach his bride.

She died in childbirth a few years later. A lone man could not operate a farm, and within a year he married Miss Gezina Suzanna Frederika Wilhelmina du Plessis, a cousin of his first wife. This marriage lasted 54 years and was blessed with nine sons and seven daughters. It was Suzanna Kruger who asked the sculptor to make the top hat hollow so birds could drink from it.

When he was 20, Kruger had a hunting accident. Having wounded a rhinoceros, he dismounted to fire a second shot at close range and had the gun explode just where he held the barrel with his left hand and thumb. His hand was in a fearful state, bleeding profusely, the flesh hanging in strips, but he managed to dodge the charging beast, get back on his horse, and return to the camp where he and three companions had outspanned their wagons.

He bound the wound with bandages soaked in turpentine, renewing them frequently to "burn up the veins" and stop the bleeding. His friends wanted to get a doctor to amputate the hand, but Kruger would not let them. Two joints of the thumb had gone, but there was a piece of bone still to be removed. When Kruger drew his knife to cut it out the others took the knife away, but to no purpose. Later Kruger got the knife back and performed the operation himself. It was horribly painful. "I had no means by me to deaden the pain," he wrote in after years, "so I tried to persuade myself that the operation was on the hand which belonged to someone else."

The wound refused to heal. Kruger poured finely powdered sugar on it and from time to time pared away dead flesh with a knife. Nevertheless gangrene set in, and despite every known Boer remedy black marks rose as high as his shoulder. He resorted to a desperate measure. A goat was killed, and Kruger put his hand into its entrails while they were still hot. The hand showed improvement, and by the time the second goat was used the danger was much reduced. The wound took six months to heal. Kruger attributed the cure to the grace of God who had directed the goats to graze on medicinal herbs that grew near the Spekboom River. Spekboom means elephant food tree.

Tales of Kruger's unflinching courage in the face of pain are many, some of them incredible. It is related that while on a visit to Lisbon he was troubled by a violent toothache. "For a while he paced up and down the room seeking relief," wrote an observer. "Then he pulled out his knife and cut the tooth out of his jaw by patience and persistence." If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out. In 1866, en route to a session of the Volksraad at Potchefstroom, Kruger had to cross a hopelessly bogged sluit or ditch. He pushed his mules at full gallop, hoping to make them drag the cart through, but the cart came off the axle and fell on Kruger, breaking his leg at the knee. Helped only by a black child, Kruger raised the cart, set it back on the axle, caught the mules and drove home, broken leg and all. The leg took nine months to mend, and Kruger's left leg was a bit shorter than the right for the rest of his life. Such was the man who led the Boers against Great Britain in the wars of 1880 and 1899 (Anecdotes from Stuart Cloete, *African Portraits*. Collins, London: 1946. pp. 44, 51, 73, 431).

The name of the thoroughfare running south-north from the railway station had been changed from Karket to Paul Kruger Street, and Afrikaner organizations were urging that the statue be moved to the center of town. The government declined to fund the removal because of the demands of World War II, and it was not until 1954 that Kruger's statue was transferred to Church Square, where it is today.

In due course the U.S. Military Attache office was to settle on this same Church Square, but at the outset Colonel Day and I occupied a room in the Legation building, a comfortable but unimposing house in the Waterkloof suburb that served as combined chancery and residence.

Parliament still being in session, Minister Leo J. Keena was at the Cape, and the M. A. office could be accommodated in the chancery for a short time. Although this saved a scramble for office space, it was not without inconvenience. By car the Legation was but twenty minutes from the center of town, but by bus it was nearly an hour, plus a six-block walk. The solution was to buy a car, but wartime scarcity had heightened the demand, and the prices of new and used cars had risen sharply.

In the Minister's absence the staff consisted of Mrs. Hall, a white-haired lady with multitudinous duties, and Chief Petty Officer Charley Miller, a U.S. Navy radioman. Charley was information man for southern Africa. His job was to receive short-wave broadcasts of news items from the States in Morse, type up and run off stencils, and mail

the resulting news bulletins to other posts. In South Africa there were consulates at Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, and Johannesburg; in other countries there were posts at Lourenco Marques, Bulawayo, Salisbury, and elsewhere. Because of the time differential between South Africa and the United States, Charley went to work at 2:00 a.m. and slept during the day. Transportation had been a problem for him too until he had bought a car from a departing Legation officer.

As set up in Washington, the Military Attache office was to number three: Colonel Breckinridge A. Day, Major Florimond du S. Duke, and me. When Colonel Day and Major Duke arrived in Cape Town they were met with a cablegram ordering the Major to proceed immediately to Cairo. What a difference it makes when Personnel flips a punchcard! Major Duke set out in the expectation of writing intelligence reports from South Africa. Instead he and two other officers parachuted into Hungary in February 1944 to serve as U.S. representatives in accepting the Hungarian Government's surrender to the Allies. But Hitler invaded Hungary unexpectedly; Duke's party was seized and imprisoned, finally ending at a maximum security base called Colditz Castle. Their harrowing experiences and narrow escape from execution are related in *Name, Rank, and Serial Number*, published after Duke's death in 1969 (Florimond Duke, with Charles M. Swart, Meredith Press, New York: 1969).

On July 1st Colonel Day and I moved into two rooms in the South African Mutual Life Assurance Society Building, on the north side of Church Square. Earlier I had found a pleasant flat consisting of a sunny efficiency plus a small kitchen that doubled as a bar. A drawback was that I had to share a bath with two girls. Perhaps this statement should be amplified. The bath connected two efficiencies, the second of which was occupied by two young ladies who had equal rights on the tub. Doors were properly locked, of course, and there was no argument about scrubbing the tub as this was done by native (black) boys.

A second drawback was that one of the girls took voice lessons and was given to practicing "The Lass With the Delicate Air". The arrangement was greatly improved some weeks later when Charley Miller persuaded the girls to shift to another apartment and took over their efficiency, making a two-room, two-bar and bath flat. Charley Miller did not sing.

Nie-blankes. "It is a familiar criticism of the Union Government," stated a semi-official brochure, "that it does not permit Native Africans to vote. It only requires an impartial glance at the near-primitiveness of the bulk of the Native population in South Africa to reveal the impracticability of placing in the hands of the primitive African an instrument of Government which it has taken civilized man centuries to fashion" (*South African-American Survey 1947*. Edited by Henry M. Moolman Director, Union of South Africa Government Information Office, New York. South African-American Survey, New York: 1947, p. 100.)

South Africans observe February 6th as a day of mourning, the day in 1838 when Zulu chief Dingaan invited Piet Retief and 69 Boers to a feast and treacherously slaughtered them to a man. They recall black attacks on isolated farm houses. "...I remember," Mrs.

Paul Kruger said when the British occupied Pretoria in 1900, "how we women and children had to hide many a night in the reeds at the riverside, half in the water, hiding from bloodthirsty Kaffirs who would not hold back from the most atrocious deeds to white women,...." (Cloete, *African Portraits*, op. cit., pp. 370-371). They remember 22 January 1879 when Cetshwayo's Zulus killed 1,800 British, colonial, and black troops at Isandhlwana (Donald R. Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, Simon and Schuster, New York: 1965. p. 387).

In 1941 the "Bantu" or blacks in the Union numbered 7.7 million, the whites 2.3 million, a ratio of better than three to one. Fear of being overwhelmed was basic to government policy on race relations. Also fundamental was economic utilization. There were insufficient whites to operate the mines, factories, farms, transportation and communications of the country. Blacks were needed for labor, and to compel them to leave their kraals the government levied a head tax payable in currency. To earn currency the blacks had to work for the whites, but intermingling of black with white raised the spectre of being outnumbered. The answer was a system of strict controls. This is a greatly over-simplified statement of the situation, as actually the pass system had been created by the British nearly a century earlier.

The outward evidence of these controls to casual observers like me was the extreme subservience of black to white. I got used to being called "baas" and "mastah," to having blacks take off their hats to me, yield me the sidewalk, drop me a curtsy whenever an object passed hand-to-hand. I came to take for granted the separate waiting rooms in railway stations, just as I had accepted separate facilities without question in Jim Crow states back home.

The Miller-Thrasher flat was cleaned by a boy who was paid by the landlady but who expected a monthly tip. How much to tip? I knew I should not give too much because the other tenants would say I was spoiling the natives. The typical wage for houseboys was SAL5.00 per month (about \$20.00) out of which they had to buy their own food and personal clothing. In view of this low wage, Charley and I decided 10 shillings per month each (roughly \$2.00) would not be too much, and indeed we feared it would be too little. But Piet, our "boy" (aged at least 40), crowed to the landlady that the Americans had given him 10 shillings each, and the landlady descended on us like a Stuka. We should not over-indulge the boy; five shillings a month was quite enough.

I promised to restrain my generosity, but my conscience nagged. If St. Peter should bar me from heaven for with- holding \$1.00 from a black boy, I should never forgive myself. I gave Pete 10 shillings again the next month, plus strict instructions to keep his mouth shut. That I was also giving the boy a lesson in deception did not occur to me.

Charley and I began suspecting something was wrong as our stock of brandy got lower and lower while we were temporarily on the wagon. One day I came home out of hours and was reading quietly in an armchair when I heard the outer door open stealthily, followed by an ominous silence. Tiptoeing to the kitchen-bar I found Piet with a bottle to his lips. I was so mad I threatened to have him fired. My impulse was to bustle to the

landlady, but I simmered down and decided to consult with Miller before acting.

We agreed that firing Piet would be extreme, so settled on withholding his tips for the month. Piet did not believe we meant it, and he was emphatically displeased when his request for tips at month's end was turned down. He told the landlady he had been cleaning the bar and had been falsely accused of stealing. The landlady assigned him to work on other apartments. I was left to reflect on the perils confronting those with good intentions who try to interfere with an established way of doing things. I was like the bungling do-gooder in *A Passage to India*. I had been "generous" to Piet despite the landlady's warning; Piet had repaid with theft; now each was bitter at the other; I had even created a potential enemy. If you're going to "improve" a going system, make sure you have a workable substitute.

I recounted this episode to a pretty girl whom I had the good fortune to escort to a dance. She told me with all the assurance of her 19 years that Americans were foolish to treat their blacks so well. The South African system, said she, was much better. The blacks knew their place, they were content, and they received as much pay and consideration as they deserved. For after all, were they not creatures of a lower position on the ladder of evolution? I wondered if this was the typical South African attitude. Or was the doctrine of white supremacy Biblical in origin? "Cursed be Canaan. A hewer of wood and hauler of water shall he be..." I doubted that discrimination was consciously rationalized. Things *were*, and anyone who questioned them deserved censure. Fundamentally the situation in South Africa was the same as throughout history; one people had temporarily subjugated another. Mongols over Chinese, Romans over barbarians, Austrians over Slavs, Normans over Saxons; and often with passage of time the conquerors became the conquered. In South Africa Hottentots had subjugated Bushmen, Bantus Hottentots, Boers Bantus, British Boers, and the defeated Boers had triumphed over the British. Well, these historical musings may not be wholly accurate, but perhaps the basic argument may have some merit.

The jacaranda city. Pretoria in 1942 was a sausage seven miles long and fifteen blocks wide. Plump in the middle of the seven miles and fifteen blocks sat Church Square. You looked south eight blocks to the railway station, and you looked north seven blocks to a bend in the road that led to the zoo. All bus lines radiated from the Square, the principal taxi rank parked at its curbstone, the banks grouped around it, and all important shops and cinemas lay within three blocks.

Church Square split the city socially as well as geographically. To its east lived white collar workers, to the west artisans, as working men were called in South African. Government and professional workers grouped near the Union Buildings east of the Square, workers grouped near ISCOR, the plant of the Iron and Steel Corporation some five miles west. On the eastern and southeastern outskirts were Waterkloof, Muckleneuk, and other high-rent suburbs.

The principal east-west street running through Church Square was Church Street, or Kirk Straat, since all street names were posted in two languages. The two-language

requirement was carried to extremes. When a traffic light (robots, they were called) turned green it flashed two words, "Go" and "Ry," and when it turned red it flashed two words, "Stop" and "Stop," for stop is a word in both English and Afrikaans.

Roads running west from Church Street extended to Hartebeestport Dam, Rustenburg and Mafeking, that fabled dorp that launched the Jameson Raid and later on withstood a siege in the Second Boer War. Roads to the east led to the Kruger National Park wildlife reserve, Komatipoort, and Portuguese East Africa. Most of Pretoria's shops congregated around three blocks of Church Street, east and west, with those of the east catering to the white collar class. Pretorius Street, paralleling Church Street one block to the north, did have a few shops, but of apologetic mien, deferring to the splendors of Church Street. Pretorius Street, however, had Polley's, the city's main hotel.

In area Church Square was three morgen, which is an old Dutch measure equaling 2.1 acres. Fronting it on the south was the Raadsaal, for many years the meeting place of the Volksraad or legislative body of the South African Republic. On its west side was the Post Office, a sullen graystone pile housing the mails, telegraphs, radio licenses, telephone accounts, old-age pensions, and rationing of gasoline. On the north was the Palace of Justice with courtrooms for criminal trials and a prison in the basement.

Turning east you faced the Erasmus Building containing a small bank, the Pretoria office of the *Rand Daily Mail*, the Vice-Consulate of Portugal, and Cartwright's Tearoom. On the corner of Church Street East stood Barclay's Bank, Dominion, Colonial and Overseas, proud of being the newest office structure in town, and accommodating on the upper floors the Canadian High Commissioner, the Belgian Military Attache, the Free French delegation, and divers insurance and law firms.

The two main shopping blocks were arcaded in the manner of British colonial movie sets, plebeian pillars supporting tin roofs that sheltered the sidewalks. Walking east you passed Davis's Furniture Store, Lalache's modiste shop, the Century Radio Store, and Boerstra's cake and pastry bakery. Crossing St. Andries Street you arrived at the Black Cat Team Room offering bonbons, toffees, fruit lunches, cold meats, and finest fruits in season. Under local ordinance all shops had to close at 5:30, but one could do business nights and Sundays by setting up two or three tables and styling the establishment a tea room.

Next were a flower shop, the Chinese Tea Agency, Hepworth's Outfitters with branches all over South Africa, and Van Schaik's Bookstore. The last-named (pronounced Van Skike) made an indelible impression when I asked for a copy of *The Bible Designed to be Read as Living Literature* and the salesgirl asked: "Who wrote it?" Beckett Murray's "bazaar" and the Paramount department store completed the second block.

The arcade ended here. More shops lay beyond, but they were "coolie," run by Indians and therefore beyond the pale, although Europeans patronized them freely. Across from them on the south side of Church Street was an open air market. Turning your back on this and heading again toward Church Square you reviewed the remainder of the main shopping district. First the Central News Agency, where you had to go if you wanted

newspapers delivered to your office. Then bazaars -- Woolworth's, C.T.C. (Cape to Cairo), and the O.K. -- with sundry jewelry, radio and clothing shops interspersed. Crossing back on St. Andries you came to Hamilton's, the nearest thing to a true department store. Dating from pre-Boer War days, Hamilton's still used overhead pulleys and cables to transport money from salesman to cashier.

Farther along was Polliack-MacKay's (rhymes with skies: incidentally in South Africa one did not say "the real McCoy" but "the real McKay"), purveyors of radios, refrigerators, electrical appliances and classical phonograph -- excuse it, gramophone -- records. Then more jewelry and men's shops until you arrived at Garlick's, the swank store for ladies' apparel. On a side street was a clothier called Pickle's. At the corner of Church Square stood Cuthbert's shoe store, also with branches all over South Africa. Such was my shopping domain for the next three years.

Otherwise Pretoria was a town of government edifices, broad tree-lined streets, and parks and sports grounds. Apartment houses seldom rose above three storeys. Most residences were one-storey with corrugated iron roofs painted rust-red that soon faded in the sun. The city became beautiful in October when the spring rains brought out the soft mauve blooms of the jacaranda trees that lined the older streets, but after this two-week spectacle it subsided into unpretentious, comfortable hospitality. The rains continued throughout the summer months, but in showers timed to catch homeward-bound government workers rather than in Sadie Thompson torrents. Occasionally there were intense hailstorms that damaged property and threatened one's person. During one of these Charley Miller was rendered unconscious by a hailstone the size of a hen's egg, very hard-boiled.

Government centered in the Union Buildings, a graceful structure in pale red stone perched on a height approximately one mile east of Church Square. The design of this building was so contemporary and its stone so unweathered I was astonished to learn it dated from 1913. Extensive lawns and flower gardens spread out at its feet, with long flights of steps leading up to broad terraces, a beautiful and practical sight. Practical because the vista was especially glamorous after dusk, and if you sat with your date on the heights looking over the lights of the town, the romantic view worked in your favor.

Pretoria civilians, male and female, tended to conservatism in dress, preferring comfort to high fashion and favoring sweaters and tweeds winter and summer. Now and then you saw farmers in wide-brimmed felts and soiled jeans. Blacks wore blouses and skirts or trousers, but every so often there would be natives straight from the kraal in blanket and brass bangles. Most white males and some females were in uniform; those with the "orange flash" on their shoulders had volunteered to serve anywhere in Africa (Descriptive section of Pretoria based on personal notes supplemented by *The Transvaal Official Guide*, Transvaal Provincial Council. R. Beerman Publishers, Cape Town: 1955. pp. 95-107).

The war. The Union of South Africa involved itself deeply in the war and at the same time stood apart from it. The Government declared war on the Axis powers but because of internal conflicts did not conscript its citizens. Its armed forces were entirely

volunteer, and these volunteers had the option of serving anywhere in Africa or only in Africa south of the equator. The Government moved slowly in imposing restrictions on home consumption, and although it interned a number of subversives suspected of violence it permitted members of the opposition in Parliament to support the German cause openly. If it ever armed the blacks in the forces with anything more lethal than assegais (spears), it did so "up north" and never acknowledged such armament at home.

The year 1838 is earmarked as the beginning of the mass-movement Great Trek of the Boers away from British dominion over Cape Province. By the Sand River Convention of 1852 Great Britain recognized Boer independence north of the Vaal, and by the Bloemfontein Convention of 1854 it recognized independence of the territory between the Vaal and the Orange. Although the self-reliant Boers were one in opposing the British, they were divided when it came to governing themselves. Thus, there was an Orange Free State south of the Vaal and a South African Republic north of it. Indeed for awhile there were four tiny republics in the Transvaal, and when the South African Republic readied for the First Boer War in 1880 it was headed by a triumvirate rather than a single leader. Paul Kruger did not become president until 1883.

The discovery of diamonds in the Orange Free State, the growth of unrest among the blacks, and the desirability of uniting the provinces of South Africa led Britain to abrogate the Sand River Convention. Supported by only twenty-five soldiers, British consul Sir Theophilus Shepstone annexed the Transvaal peacefully with a promise of responsible government, although he admitted a written protest presented by Paul Kruger's followers. The protest gathered supporters. Kruger journeyed twice to England to present the Boer case, and when these representations were rejected the protesters resorted to arms. The British suffered defeats at Laing's Nek, Ingogo, and Majuba Hill. In April 1881 Great Britain recognized the independence of the South African Republic although still insisting on British suzerainty.

The opening of goldfields on the Witwatersrand in 1885 added new economic pressures to a situation that had been complicated by the appearance of Germany as a colonial power in Southwest and East Africa the previous year. Unable to persuade Kruger to endorse his policies for trade and utilization of resources, Cecil Rhodes, then Prime Minister of Cape Province, had British Bechuanaland annexed to Cape Province for the asserted reason of extending a railway north from Mafeking to the Rhodesias. In 1895 the Jameson Raid, a British attempt to foment a revolution by an armed expedition from Mafeking to Johannesburg, was defeated by the Boers at Krugersdorp.

British-Boer tension heightened. In 1899 a conference at Bloemfontein on rights of British subjects resident in the Transvaal failed to reach an agreement. The British insistence on suzerainty led the Boers to believe that Great Britain intended once again to annex the Transvaal. War broke out October 12, 1899.

Great Britain expended an estimated £20 million, had as many as 200,000 men in the field by 1902, committed some 450,000 in all, and lost 22,000, two-thirds of them by non-combat causes. The Boers used 60,000 men of whom but one-fourth were in the field

at any given time. There is no agreement on Boer losses; one claim is that they numbered 24,000 of whom 20,000 were women and children in concentration camps (Rayne Kruger, *Good-Bye Dolly Gray; The Story of the Boer War*, J. B. Lippincott, Philadelphia: 1960, p. 482. Also Langer, *An Encyclopedia of World History*, p. 857, and *1970 World Almanac*). Despite the expenditure of men and materiel, the conquering British Government not only agreed in the peace settlement to pay L3 million war damages but in 1907 granted responsible government to the Transvaal, virtually restoring the situation that existed before the war began. The four self-governing provinces of South Africa joined in a new Union in 1910. General Louis Botha became Prime Minister, with Jan Christian Smuts as his Minister of Interior and Minister of Education.

Industrial unrest in the Rand mines during 1913 and 1914 was fanned by Afrikaner elements and by Germans in Southwest Africa into armed revolt that was put down by armed forces directed by Smuts. Botha and Smuts then led expeditions against the Germans in Southwest Africa and East Africa.

Persons and organizations that were to play leading roles during World War II had already taken their places on stage in World War I. Outstanding among them was Jan Christian Smuts, a man unable to read or write at age twelve who at age twenty-four took both Parts I and II of the Law Tripos at Cambridge University and was placed first in the first class of each. The leader of a commando against the British during the Boer War, Smuts joined with Louis Botha in amalgamating the four provinces into the Union of South Africa, helped create the League of Nations, served as Prime Minister of the Union 1919-1924, was leader of the opposition for eight years, and in 1933 merged his followers with those of Hertzog to form the United Party.

James Barry Munnik Hertzog, also a commando officer during the Boer War, was Minister of Justice under Botha until 1912. Organizing the Afrikaner Nationalist Party in 1914, he defeated Smuts in 1924 and headed the government until the formation of the United Party in 1933, when he continued as Prime Minister with Smuts as Deputy Prime Minister.

Dr. Daniel Francois Malan, born in the same village as Smuts (Riebeeck West) but four years younger, was a *predikant* of the Dutch Reformed Church until he gave up the ministry for politics. Becoming leader of the Cape branch of the Afrikaner Nationalist Party, he founded *Die Burger* in 1915, a newspaper that was to be virulently pro-German in World War II. In 1934 Malan broke with Hertzog to form the Purified Nationalist Party.

Oswald Pirow was elected to Parliament in 1915 as a Hertzog candidate from the Rand. At various times Minister of Justice, of Railways, and of Defence under Hertzog, he became increasingly pro-German and formed a pro-Nazi New Order Party in World War II.

A secret organization called the Broederbond (League of Brothers) was formed in 1918 to work for a Boer Republic -- "one folk, one land, one tongue". Originally limited to

3,500 members, the Broederbond was made up of cells, somewhat on the style of communist organizations, with members knowing only the personnel of their own cells. For years people knew of the Bond without altogether knowing who were the Bond. Malan was believed to be a broeder, Hertzog not.

Other pro-Afrikaner organizations included the Reddingsdaadbond, an economic group to help Afrikaners compete with English and Jewish interests in banking, insurance and investment, and the Federation for Afrikaner Cultural Organizations. Both were thought to have Broederbond backing.

In 1938 ox wagons trekked from the Cape all the way to Pretoria (roughly equivalent Washington to Chicago) to mark the centennial of the Great Trek, and a foundation stone was laid for a monument to the Voortrekker on a height near the capital. An organization called the Ossewa Brandwag (Ox Wagon Sentinels) was formed in October to perpetuate the Great Trek. Many Afrikaners joined in sympathy with its apparent cultural aims. Within a year it had developed into a militant group of storm troopers wearing the swastika and giving the Nazi salute.

At a 1938 congress Dr. Malan's Purified Nationalist Party adopted anti-Semitism as a part of its official program and passed a resolution congratulating the Sudetens on their return to Germany. As Minister of Defence, Oswald Pirow had snubbed London on a trip to Europe but had visited Lisbon, Madrid and Berlin and had been received by Hitler with honors. When Hitler threatened Poland on August 25, 1939 first Pirow and then Malan urged Prime Minister Hertzog to proclaim South Africa's neutrality. Smuts recommended support of Great Britain.

Hertzog could have dissolved Parliament and held a general election, but thinking he could win a vote of confidence with the support of Pirow's and Malan's groups he turned to the House of Assembly. He told the House there was no proof that Hitler intended world domination, declared "This is not South Africa's war," and submitted a motion for neutrality. In his response Smuts cited Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland. Hertzog's motion for neutrality was defeated, 67 Ayes to 80 Noes. Hertzog resigned. Smuts formed a cabinet, assuming the Ministry of Defence in addition to the office of Prime Minister, just as Winston Churchill was to do some eight months later. South Africa declared war on Germany on September 6th, three days after Great Britain.

Although the new Government issued emergency regulations under which it detained Nazi agents, it left the members of the opposition free to agitate against the war effort. It also passed the War Measures Act giving the Government power to suspend acts of Parliament by proclamation but reaffirming provisions of the Defence Act that no one in the armed forces could be compelled to serve north of the equator.

A curious stigma developed. Non-volunteers wore their civilian clothes without shame. Within the Army, on the other hand, were two groups, those who refused to serve north of the equator and those who volunteered for service anywhere in Africa. The latter wore the "orange flash," a sort of red badge of courage. Cocktail conversation had it that Smuts

had conceived the orange flash as a form of pressure on men to opt for unrestricted service. Rumor said that some of the riots shaking South Africa stemmed not from pro-war versus anti-war but to orange flash personnel taunting their "cowardly" brethren in uniform.

Riots were numerous in the early days of the war, including bombings, disruptions of communications, and attacks on Jews and on men in uniform. As he had done during World War I, Smuts moved gradually and deliberately to suppress violence. Opposition continued to be voiced openly in Parliament. Hertzog tabled a peace motion, declaring that Germany was being encircled and crushed while fighting to regain living space. Malan told Parliament that Hitler's seizure of the naval bases of Flanders was a legitimate act. The Ossewa Brandwag was openly aggressive.

On September 13, 1940 O. B. leader Lt. Colonel J. C. C. Laas dropped the fiction that the O. B. was a cultural society and announced that its aim was to take over political leadership. Smuts responded with police raids on offices and houses of O. B. leaders in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Pretoria and Bloemfontein in which explosives, arms, ammunition, secret documents and lists claiming membership of 170,000 were seized. When a wave of bombings ensued, hundreds of Ossewa Brandwag were sent to internment camps at Leeuwkops, Bavianspoort and Andalusia.

Oswald Pirow proclaimed the New Order for South Africa toward the close of 1940, projecting the establishment of a South African Christian White National Socialist Republic, separated from the British Empire and based on state authority and national discipline. His program called for nationalization of gold mines, capitalistic enterprises and banks, for expropriation of all property holdings acquired for purposes of speculation, for state control of press, radio, theater, cinema, propaganda and education, for a white trusteeship based on the principle of complete segregation and National Socialism race theory, and for expulsion of all Jews and "undesirable persons".

Malan, who had taken over leadership of the opposition from Hertzog in May 1940, absorbed many of Hertzog's supporters into a Herenigde (re-united) Nasionale Party and announced conclusion of an agreement for coordination with the Ossewa Brandwag. In April 1941, a month before I took up residence in Pretoria, a commission of inquiry estimated that the strength of the Ossewa Brandwag had increased to 350,000.

The government claimed that of 300,000 white, able-bodied men fit for military service 200,000 volunteered. South Africa kept two full-strength army divisions in the field as well as a small air force and navy. After Italy declared war in June 1940 South African forces joined with British and other allied troops in a campaign against Eritrea and Ethiopia. Mogadiscio was taken in February 1941, Addis Ababa in April, and all Italian East Africa by November. South Africans also took part in the ebb and flow in north Africa where Wavell swept the Italians back early in 1941, Rommel recovered the ground in April, Auchinleck pushed Rommel off briefly before being forced back into Egypt in May 1942, and Alexander and Montgomery finally achieved victory beginning at El Alamein in October 1942.

Two days after Pearl Harbor the South African Government declared war on Japan. During that same month of December 1941 the advance of Auchinleck and relief of Tobruk, which had been under siege for eight months, persuaded a number of prominent Nationalists to switch to Smuts, but the Opposition made much of a statement by Smuts in the Senate early in 1942: "Before the Japanese take this country I will see to it that every colored man and every native who can be armed, will be armed.... I will train and arm any non-European prepared to help defend South Africa...." There were then an estimated 60,000 blacks in the South African Army, all in non-combatant roles. The suggestion that weapons might be put in their hands was a matter of grave concern to many Afrikaners.

Nevertheless the Smuts Government was strong enough to weather the disaster of June 21, 1942 when Rommel's troops captured an entire South African division of 15,000 men at Tobruk. Smuts rallied the country with a statement:

"The fall of Tobruk has involved the capture by the enemy of substantial numbers of the South African forces in Egypt.... While we should not minimize the seriousness of the losses, there remains in the field a strong, well-equipped and experienced fighting force, the larger part of the total South African forces sent to Egypt. These units together with reinforcements which South Africa will now provide will play a vital part in the defense of Egypt and in the ultimate wresting of Libya from the Axis. South Africa can take it, and South Africa will seek retribution."

To send the promised reinforcements Smuts launched a new recruiting campaign. South African units helped the Allied forces break through the Germans at El Alamein in October 1942. In the previous month South African and British forces had secured the great island of Madagascar against possible occupation by Axis or Japanese forces. These and subsequent successes strengthened Smuts's hand. In July 1943 he proposed and obtained parliamentary authorization to send South African troops anywhere in the world. Although he could have extended the life of Parliament by legislation, as had been done in Great Britain, he decided on a general election and won by a substantial margin, 107 pro-war candidates to 43 anti-war. The 16 seats held by Pirow's New Order were wiped out. The Ossewa Brandwag, which had urged boycott of the elections, rapidly declined as a political force.

With the driving of Axis forces from North Africa and the checkmating of the Japanese threat in the east, South Africa began to be remote from the war, especially when the threat of submarines to Allied shipping rounding the Cape of Good Hope had been mastered. Dr. Malan consolidated the opposition and was returned as head of government when elections came again in 1948 after the war. Jan Smuts died in 1950 in his eightieth year (Rene Krauss, *Old Master; The Life of Jan Christian Smuts*. E. P. Dutton, New York: 1944. F. S. Crawford, *Jan Smuts; a Biography*. Doubleday, Doran, Garden City, New York: 1944. Sarah Gertrude Millin, *The People of South Africa*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York: 1954. Leo Marquard, *A Short History of South Africa*. Frederick A. Praeger, New York: 1968. Also various encyclopedia articles. Tom Hopkinson (and the Editors of

LIFE) *South Africa*. Time Incorporated, New York: 1964. David Annan "Nationalist Secret Societies" in *Secret Societies*, edited by Norman MacKenzie. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York: 1967).

Another day, another shilling. For us people in Pretoria the war was far away, almost unreal. Newspapers described campaigns "up north" and bombing outrages in the Union, but the man at home saw none of these things and continued his daily routine as usual. Men (and a few women) wore uniforms, speeches were made urging citizens to participate in the war effort, once in awhile there was a parade or patriotic rally, but in the aggregate there was no sense of urgency, no enemy breathing down your neck. Government staffers worked 8:30 to 4:30 with an hour and fifteen minutes for lunch and fifteen-minute recesses morning and afternoon for tea. Measures restricting consumption at home were applied with reluctance.

South Africa declared war on September 6, 1939, but it was not until May 1941 that the Government took its first step to cut down on civilian consumption. Commercial bakeries were limited to producing a "standard loaf" made of whole grain, the idea being to stretch the supply of wheat because white flour used only 60 per cent of the grain. Housewives, however, could still obtain white flour in limited quantities for home baking.

Although the country was wholly dependent on imports for supplies of petroleum products, rationing of gasoline for private use was not introduced until January 1942 and then was limited to 400 miles per car per month. If you owned two cars, one big and one little, you got enough gasoline to do 400 miles in each, and there was nothing to stop you from using the big car ration in the little car.

Sales of gasoline were forbidden on Saturday afternoons or Sundays to reduce week-end travel. Because of the resultant rush to fill up on Saturday mornings, service stations refused to check tires, water or batteries on the grounds that such services would use up time and prevent people from getting gas. That the Government wanted to prevent people from getting gas was apparently of no consequence.

In August 1942 the ration was reduced to 300 miles per month and in March 1943 to 200 miles per month. Well-to-do people continued to drive as much as they wished by maintaining several cards. A businessman told me he had used the threat of buying a second car to get an extra ration. He wrote a letter to the authorities stating he would buy another car unless they gave him more gasoline (excuse it, petrol), and they kicked in with a ration for another 100 miles. About this time I received a letter from a friend in Washington. Unable to get gas for his car, he was keeping it on the road with methyl alcohol and moth balls.

Foodstuffs continued plentiful throughout the war except for a few items such as tea; and with Rhodesia next door there was no shortage of tobacco. Scarcities developed in household goods and gadgets, but the government remained reluctant to impose rationing and instead left it to the shops to apportion supplies among their customers. Sales of soap were limited to a shilling a time, but there was no reason why you couldn't go from shop

to shop or come back to the same shop with another shilling. Shops did, however, require customers to register a week in advance for each roll of toilet paper.

Shops were also forbidden to wrap any purchases except foodstuffs, but if you instructed a shop to deliver your purchase to your home it would arrive wrapped. A government regulation instructed dealers to sell only 25 per cent of their stocks of light bulbs. Supplies in the cities became tight, but you could usually get what you needed by driving to nearby dorps (villages) where the low demand had not exhausted the 25 per cent.

Eventually a system of permits was established for extremely scarce manufactures such as electrical fixtures and components. Once I tried to buy ten feet of wire (called flex) to repair a lamp. A sign informed me that permits were required to buy flex, and I asked the salesgirl where one got permits. "What," she asked, "do you want to buy?"

"Ten feet of flex," I said.

"What kind of flex do you want?"

I hadn't known there was more than one kind, so she produced three samples. I selected two. "Either of these would do."

"We haven't got one of those," said she. "and we don't have the kind you don't want either. But we do have this third kind."

"That's fine," I said. I was getting bewildered. "Give me ten feet of that."

"Sorry," said the girl. "You have to have a permit." Which brought me back to where I came in.

"Where do I apply for a permit?" I asked.

"Right here," said she, and I decided I was going nuts. She filled in the number and amount of the wire, and gave me three copies to complete. When I had signed I handed them back to her.

"Now," said she, "you must have these approved by the controller."

Happily the controller's office was only a block away. I took the forms there, had them stamped on the corners, in the middle and on the back, and then returned to the shop. It had closed for the day, but I got the wire next morning.

Alcohol, the drinkable kind, was always available. Whiskey became scarce, although if you were a long-standing customer of a "bottle store" you could usually arrange to have a bottle or two reserved for you whenever a convoy brought in a supply. Cape Province brandy could always be had, and though it was said that the better grades were exported one could make do with what remained. The same was true of South African wines.

There was never any shortage of the top-notch South African beer, and if you wanted to pay a bit extra you could supplement this with German-type beer from Windhoek, Southwest Africa.

South Africa, with a white population of less than three million, and that divided in opinions, made a significant contribution to the war in combat and in providing supplies to the Allied effort. Its distance from the conflict, the effectiveness of the campaigns to thwart the Italian menace in mid-Africa and the potential Japanese threat to Madagascar, the firmness with which Smuts moved to put down militants at home, and the bountifulness of its own resources combined to insulate it from the horrors and privations of the war. I wrote home:

"I can't get over the feeling that South Africa is a summer resort -- the heat, people in shorts, tennis courts, bowling greens, cricket fields, swimming pools, the dust, the dark glasses, all contribute to the atmosphere. And the easy-going life. Nobody ever seems to do anything in a hurry, and everybody is oh, so sunburned."

People. I arrived in Pretoria expecting to meet with British reserve and Afrikaner taciturnity. I found warm friends. South Africans are more formal than Americans, but they are easy to meet, convivial of temperament, and amused and attracted by American speech and mannerisms. At the hotel where Charley and I usually dined I became acquainted with Fred a government clerk of serious mien, John another clerk who fancied himself a socialist now that Russia was an ally, and Miss Beal who had lost her fiancé in the war. These acquaintances led to others: Alec an accountant with a collapsed lung, Aukje his Dutch girlfriend from the Frisian Islands who enjoyed confusing Dutch-speakers with Fries (a language I had never heard of but was said to be the missing link between Teutonic languages and English), Patty a slender girl of great beauty who thought deep thoughts and sat smiling and observing other people, Molly a redhead with whom I believed myself in love for a time, Leonard a brilliant youngster who had vague goals and characterized himself as an ardent Amerophile (I had to look it up), Sven a bank employee who had undergone every bodily operation conceived by the medicos and now existed on brains and nerves, Cynthia a sophisticated girl of intelligence and good looks who wanted to accomplish something but was not sure what, Cynthia's quiet girl friend Riekie (pronounced Ree-kee) who was unable to escape my attentions, and others.

Language was no barrier. Although many of these people customarily spoke Afrikaans, they were at home in English and used the two interchangeably, switching from one to the other without conscious thought in mid-sentence. This bilinguality was not typical of South Africans in general; most people spoke either English or Afrikaans and showed no interest in learning the other language.

To my surprise, few white South Africans spoke one or more of the black languages. On reflection, I wonder why I was surprised; after all, neither I nor many other Americans speak Choctaw or Navajo. Aside from those Europeans who specialized in educating and administering the blacks, there was no popular effort to acquire Zulu, Xhosa, Sesuto, or any other of the 60-odd native languages/dialects spoken in the Union. Among bi-lingual Europeans, the custom was to speak to blacks in Afrikaans, rarely in English.

I elected not to learn Afrikaans, just as I had elected not to learn Rumanian or Hungarian. If I had intended to remain permanently in South Africa I would certainly have studied Afrikaans, but instead I concentrated on French and German as "world" languages. I thought it short-sighted of South Africans to stick obstinately to one language, but there were many people who did not share my opinion; and that would be true of French vs. English in Canada, Celtic vs. English in Ireland, Ukrainian vs. Russian in the USSR, Finnish vs. Swedish in Finland, and innumerable others.

I did learn to modify my English. A traffic light became a robot, a cream pitcher a milk jug, wood alcohol methylated spirits. Instead of *gee whiz* I said *crumbs*, I called an auto horn a hooter, and I learned that bloody is a cuss word. In restaurants I found that a request for scones would bring baking powder biscuits, a request for biscuits would bring crackers, and a request for crackers would bring blank stares. I also found that when I asked for a napkin I was asking for a diaper; the preferred word is serviette. I learned to ask for an electric torch although the carton might be labeled flashlight. When a salesgirl assured me the shop had no such thing as a can opener, I got what I wanted by asking for a tin opener.

Some terms remained elusive, for example, pasteurized milk. Ordering a glass of milk in a restaurant, I asked if it was pasteurized. "No," said the waitress, "this is fresh milk." When I arranged with a dairy for delivery of a daily pint to my flat I asked again if the milk were pasteurized. "No," said the dairyman, "it's pure milk." At another dairy I was pleased when the salesgirl handed me a pint cardboard carton labeled "pasteurized milk" but was disturbed when, on going back the following day for another pint, the girl filled a carton with a dipper out of a milk can. She still insisted the milk was pasteurized.

On a typical day I would breakfast on fruit, toast and milk, saunter a mile under the jacaranda trees to my office on Church Square, and at noon lunch with a friend at a teahouse. After office I took a bus to the swimming bath near my flat, put on my swimming costume with top (trunks-only were not permitted), and splashed around with Charley, John, or fairer companion. After dinner at the Hotel Hellenic I might study French or German (I had signed up with tutors for both) but more often would go to a movie, party, or dance, or would enjoy a concert of phonograph records. Most of my friends were fond of music, and a circle was formed that revolved from home to home listening to each other's record collections with the help of Cape Province brandy.

Prices of new automobiles had risen like yeast, and the used cars offered for sale had seen service at El Alamein. But persistent search located a 1939 Ford V-8 for L150.00 (\$600.00) that had emerged unscathed. Long weekend drives, however, proved disillusioning, even in the days when the gasoline allotment was 400 miles per month, because of the vast distances. You had to drive at least a day all the way to the lowveld near Portuguese East to get a change of country from the rolling hills, sparse grass, lonely trees, and all-enveloping dust. Nor were the bright lights of Johannesburg much of a lure. Less than forty miles away, Johannesburg should have been a magnet to a sprightly gallant with a car, but two or three trips soon wore out the attractions of its shops and

movies, and I stayed in the hospitable atmosphere of Pretoria. In this I was one with President Paul Kruger, who equated Johannesburg with Sodom and Gomorrah. That Johannesburg might have museums, galleries, educational institutions, industrial exhibits, never occurred to me.

Personnel. Minister Leo J. Keena retired from government service in August 1942 and was replaced by Lincoln MacVeagh, founder of Dial Press and son of a U.S. ambassador to Japan in the Coolidge administration. Mr. MacVeagh forsook publishing for diplomacy in 1933 when President Roosevelt named him Minister to Greece. After Greece fell to the Germans in 1941 he was sent to Iceland and in 1942 to South Africa. Following the defeat of the Axis in Africa, Mr. MacVeagh went to Cairo as Ambassador to the exiled governments of Yugoslavia and Greece, and when the Germans were cleared from Greece he accompanied the Greek Government back to Athens. Transferred to Portugal in 1948, he became Ambassador to Spain in 1952 and retired in 1953. He died in 1972 at age 82.

Whereas the Pretoria Legation had had only one officer under Minister Keena, the staff expanded under Minister MacVeagh because of reassignment of personnel from other posts that had been closed by the war. Prominent among the officers were Edward Groth afterwards consul general at Nairobi, Arthur L. Richards who in later years attracted newspaper reports as Ambassador to Addis Ababa when he hopped nimbly through a window to evade revolutionaries storming the royal palace, and Harlan Clark who carried out a mission on camelback into Yemen and later became consul general at Alexandria.

In the Military Attache office, Major Sterling Loop Larrabee arrived as Assistant Military Attache in November 1941 as replacement for Major Duke, the officer who had been transferred to Cairo as soon as he arrived in Cape Town. "Loopy," as he encouraged people to call him, was to be a great friend to me in later years and was to help me immeasurably with the Foreign Service. Ambassador MacVeagh requested that Larrabee, by then Lieutenant Colonel, go along with him as Military Attache when he moved to Cairo in 1943.

Captain Dalton Hayes joined the office as Assistant Military Attache in October 1942. An oil company executive of drive, ability and personality, he added much to the good fellowship of the office, and also to the clerical burden on me. Tragically Hayes developed "minor" stomach trouble that after the war was diagnosed as cancer. He underwent two severe operations only to succumb in his early forties.

Well before the new Captain arrived, Colonel Day had cabled to the War Department for another civilian clerk familiar with codes, finance and Army paper work. Washington cabled back that a warrant officer was being sent "for the duties outlined". This reply made me uneasy. We had received a mimeographed circular saying that the Department intended to send warrant officers to certain military attache offices to relieve the military attache of routine by managing the office for him. It looked to me as if Washington was sending another Chief whereas what was needed was another Indian.

Warrant Officer Roy entered one day in November without advance notice. I thought unhappily of that day in October 1938 when I was led into Colonel Faymonville in Moscow with the introduction, "Colonel, here's your new clerk," and the Colonel said, "What new clerk?" Roy's orders stated that he was to report to the Military Attache at Pretoria for duty as office manager. He was hit between the eyes with the news that the Colonel had not asked for a manager.

With this welcome it is small wonder that Roy was never enthusiastic about Pretoria. Assigned to G-2, he himself had selected Pretoria as a post and had been told he was to take over Colonel Day's office. No one had said anything about Pretoria's request for help or about Washington's reply. His previous job had been to run an office with a score of typists-clerks and forty filing cabinets. In Pretoria he found one clerk and one filing cabinet.

Roy requested a transfer in fewer than five months. His request was approved after three more months, and in October 1943, nearly one year after being wrongly assigned, he departed for north Africa. He was replaced by Miss Lucille Proulx, a petite girl of French-Canadian descent with a knack of making typewriters, codes, filing cabinets, and accounts sit up and beg. It happened that shortly after her arrival Lt. Colonel Larrabee departed for Cairo and was not replaced, obviating the need for two clerks, but these are the problems that give administrators headaches.

The reduced office load opened a new avenue for my talents, thanks to Lucille. She asked one day why I had never sent in any reports over my own signature, and when I said I hadn't known it was permitted she said many senior clerks in M. A. offices regularly sent in reports. Good-natured Colonel Day said he had no objection provided the office routine got done, and I began researching and writing small pieces on my own. This initiative was to score brownie points for me in the oral exams for Foreign Service Officer at a later date.

Mammaries and mammals. Henk, brother of Riekie, the quiet girl I was pursuing, agreed on a long-weekend trip to the Kruger National Park, about 260 miles from Pretoria. To hold expenses to not more than L5.00 apiece (\$20.00) we loaded Henk's little car to the Plimsole line with canned goods, frying pan, saucepan, teapot and firewood.

With a two-cycle motor of two cylinders hitched direct to the front wheels, the D.K.W. kept up a steady 40 m.p.h. over hill and rill and got better than 40 miles to the (imperial) gallon. The D.K.W. was said to have but sixteen moving parts, and Henk was in tune with all sixteen. Thirty-five miles out of Pretoria he began muttering about something not sounding right, abruptly stopped to disassemble the air cleaner and pour oil into the carburetor, and hurried on another 30 miles to Middelburg. During a pause here to visit his sister Margarete (called Didi), Henk drained and refilled the radiator to make sure his land-motorboat (for the two-cycle engine sounded like an outboard) was fit for the coming mountains. We overnighted with his brother Adriaan (called Janus) at Belfast forty miles farther on, the highest (6,463 feet) and coldest point on the Pretoria-Lourenco Marques road.

At this placid dorp with fewer than 1,000 population had occurred one of the last engagements of the Second Boer War. Lord Roberts's troops had occupied Pretoria and forced President Paul Kruger to move his government down the railway toward Portuguese East Africa. General Louis Botha positioned 5,000 Boers over a fifty-mile arc in the hills east of Belfast to meet the 20,000 British advancing under Roberts. A second British army under General Buller, coming up from Natal, broke through the Boer position at Bergendal, a whistle stop just beyond Belfast. Botha had to retreat to Lydenburg, Roberts proclaimed the annexation of the Transvaal on September 10, 1900, and on September 11 President Kruger crossed into Portuguese East. But guerrilla warfare dragged on another 18 months, until May 13, 1902.

But in the year 1942 Henk and I were not interested in battles but in the grating noise that developed in the D.K.W. shortly after Belfast. Henk pried off all the hubcaps in a vain search for the cause, drove another hundred yards, stopped again, and took off a rear wheel. A pebble dropped out, and we putt-putted onward. The dry, rolling hills became a gloomy brown as we proceeded and gave way to rugged mountains through which the D.K.W. struggled in lower gears. We stopped several times during the 71 miles between Machadodorp and Nelspruit to let the motor cool, to wash in a stream, and to cook ourselves a lunch of beans and tea.

From Nelspruit the highway continues to Komatipoort and Lourenco Marques, but we turned northeast to White River and the game reserve. Now we were in the semi-tropical lowveld, and we began to see thatched huts inhabited by black ladies who had never heard of Maidenform, just like the pictures in *National Geographic*. As soon as we passed the Park gate (fee L1.00) we met wildebeest (gnu) and zebra (in South Africa you say zebbra). The Park stretches some 200 by 50 miles, and the game seems to realize they are in a protected area and to stay within its boundaries. Those in the know say that numbers of animals do roam into adjoining territory but that since the shooting season is short they have a good chance of straying back into the Park again.

The greater part of the game reserve lies in malarial country and was opened only during the dry season, June to mid-October, when the pools that breed mosquitoes have evaporated. This was relaxed years afterward when malaria control became more effective. During the summer rains tourists are allowed only as far as Pretorius Kop, the first rest camp, which is on relatively high ground and free of malaria, but Henk had made special arrangements with Jules, a ranger friend. Jules took us in his car from Pretorius Kop to his own station at Skukuza, some thirty miles farther, fed us, and put us up overnight (In later years malaria has been controlled and the Park is open the year around, although visitors are counseled to take malaria pills.).

Young Jules and wife Ivy spent agreeable but monotonous days in their bungalow with a garden where they raised pineapples, pawpaws, bananas and mangoes. Life was brisk during the tourist season, but when the Park closed down they had little social variety. Poor Ivy, who was very pregnant, sighed for a swimming pool. The Sabie River was close by, but she was timid about using it because of occasional crocodiles. A rich man

had willed a sum of money to be expended on the Skukuza Camp, but instead of building a swimming pool the authorities had decided to put up a clock. Yes, a clock. It stood in the approach to the camp, a twenty-five foot stone tower surmounted by a four-face, illuminated clock that went *bong* like a feeble Big Ben midst chatter of monkeys and roar of lions. Ivy's only escape from the intense heat of summer was to take four or five showers a day.

But was not Skukuza in malarial country? Why yes, said Ivy. And did she not fear malaria? Why no, said Ivy. She had had malaria three times and supposed she would come down with it again, but the risk didn't worry her. Malaria was not so bad; it was dangerous only when it turned into blackwater fever and attacked the kidneys. Besides, the house was sprayed every day, and in summertime everybody remained indoors after 5:30. She hadn't had a malaria attack for the past year.

The reason one goes to Kruger Park is to see wild animals in their natural habitat, but in this Henk and I were only moderately successful. During the day outside Skukuza's fences (for tourists must stay in camp at night) we saw antelope, zebra, gnu, baboons and monkeys in plenty, but we had only tantalizing glimpses of lions, hippos, ostriches and giraffes. Our one score was a ringside seat at a fight between two buck impalas over a cluster of does that continued to graze calmly while their lords battled for their favors. The two bucks faced each other with heads lowered warily, there was much feinting and dodging, and then the two would bump horns with a resounding *crack*. Although neither seemed to be hurting the other in the least, apparently one was beginning to think the ladies weren't so attractive after all because he kept retreating until they both had disappeared into the bush. As soon as they had gone, a third buck came up and quietly herded the does in the opposite direction.

Henk and I took a rondawel (round hut) back at Pretorius Kop on our second night and really roughed it. A black boy named Ahmos presented himself at the door. We gave him a shilling, and from then on it was "Ahmos, bring us water,"; "Ahmos, cook us breakfast,"; "Ahmos, wash the dishes." We gave him another 1s. 6d. when we left, 30 cents for a day's work. The hut had electricity and beds but no bedding; you either rented bedding or brought your own. Nearby was a community lavatory with hot and cold running water, tubs, showers, and flush toilets. If you did not bring your own food you could take your meals at a restaurant, and there was a general store for souvenir hunters.

We drove back to Pretoria in one day. The total cost to each was L4/15/0, and we had an assortment of canned food left over. This goes to show what spartan living and strict economy can do, provided one freeloards on Jules and on relatives at Middelburg and Belfast.

A matter of weight. Henk, who stood over six feet, had been slender to the point of emaciation as a youth but had developed into a well-set-up lad. The secret, he said, was a homeopath. Now, I am one of those freaks who can diet on cake, pie, candy and milk shakes and still be mistaken for a soda straw, and I decided to give the man a try after looking up homeopath in the Oxford dictionary. The homeopath, who practiced in a town

ten miles from Pretoria, was so popular his office was always full of patients, and Henk got us started at 6:00 in the morning to avoid a long queue.

Actually there were two, father and son, both M.D.'s from German universities but practicing homeopathic medicine by preference. I got the son. The same method of diagnosis was used for everyone. The doctor put on a reflector pierced with an eyehole and gazed into my eyes. A slight touch of gastritis, he said, hardly worth mentioning, plus a bit of nervousness that might be a contributing cause to the failure to assimilate food. In four or five weeks, he asserted, I would be at least fifteen pounds heavier. He prescribed a regimen.

At 7:00 a.m. pills no. 70. Before breakfast blood tonic. After breakfast just-plain tonic and pills F. At 10:00 pills no. 72. Blood tonic before lunch and just-plain tonic and pills F after lunch. At 3:00 pills no. 7. At 6:00 pills no. 28. The pills were unrecognizable; the blood tonic reeked of cod liver oil and was the consistency of lightly frapped mud; the just-plain tonic tasted of cod liver oil and pepsin. The medicines were bolstered by a tablespoon of a whitish powder containing vitamin D (in South Africa you say vittamin) three times a day.

Supplementing the medicine I was supposed to absorb the following each day: Three quarts of milk (imperial quarts, equivalent to 3 1/2 American quarts). Half a pint of cream (this had to be foregone because the Government had forbidden sales of cream as a war measure). Three plates of porridge, any kind. All of these foodstuffs were to be taken in addition to regular meals. The surprising thing was that I had no difficulty doing so. Because of the pills and tonics I actually felt hungry for each meal.

Final instructions: Play tennis at least three hours each week (I had revealed that tennis is my sport). Drink one or two pints of stout every night before bed. Because South African stout is substantially stronger than U.S. beer, I went to sleep gloriously smashed every night, all in the interests of science.

The homeopath charged no fee, being forbidden to charge for services under South African law. In all, I paid him less than L5/0/0 (\$20.00) for medicines and tonics.

Patient, good-humored Colonel Day merely smiled and assented when I asked permission to bring vials of medicine and bottles of milk to the office. Within six weeks I had gained seventeen pounds, mostly on my pot in my opinion, most on my butt in Charley's, although there was also a suggestion that I was developing a lovely pair of bosoms. Two more weeks and I had gained twenty pounds and was pointing for twenty-five, but I began to find there are drawbacks to weight.

There were the inconvenience and expense of letting out my clothes. More serious were the expense and pain of the dentist, who filled two cavities and warned that three more were developing. The pills and powders were largely predigested sugars, and these were playing hob with my teeth. And abruptly the South African Government decreed as a war measure that milk bottles could no longer be left with consumers and instead all milk

must be "decanted" at the door by the milkman. Even assuming I could have provided containers other than brandy bottles, I did not welcome the idea of milk being "decanted" on my doorstep by a boy fresh from the kraal. I decided to be content with a gain of twenty pounds and stopped the regimen. Straightway I lost seven pounds in ten days but won back two of them and remained with a net gain of fifteen. Colonel Day said nary a word, but I had the notion he was just as glad to have the milk-drinking out of the office.

The social institution  
Whereby men and women  
Are joined in a special kind  
Of social and legal dependence  
For the purpose  
Of founding and maintaining a Family

Aged twenty-seven years and growing older and uglier every day, I decided it was high time to marry. After nine months of courtship, I lassoed Riekie's finger with an engagement ring, and nine months later stood beside her at the altar, an impetuous American whirlwind by South African standards. This was in January 1943. The young couple settled into a new flat in downtown Pretoria behind Polley's Hotel, three blocks from Church Square.

Charley Miller, who had been going steady with an attractive English girl named Gwen, also committed matrimony one month later. And only three months after that Charley received orders to return to the United States. Followed then a mad scramble to obtain transportation, get out of the lease he had just contracted, unload furniture and, most important, arrange to take Gwen with him. Here he faced a double problem: as a Navy career man he had to wangle Navy permission for his wife's travel, and as an American married to an alien he had to get her a visa. All things fell into place at the last moment, and they departed early in July 1943 on a ship from Cape Town. Charley was assigned to sea duty for the remainder of the war, retired in due course, and settled down with Gwen in Florida.

An elderly civilian radioman arrived in Pretoria as replacement just before Charley's departure. Mindful of his own problems concerning night-time transportation to the Legation, Charley sold the new man his car at cost although war scarcities had pushed the market value considerably higher. The replacement promptly disappeared and was not located for some two weeks. When finally found he was in an inebriated condition with disreputable companions, and the decision was made to ship him home immediately. He promptly sold the car for \$200.00 more than he had paid Charley; thus was Charley's consideration rewarded.

Charley's sudden transfer struck home to me. What if Riekie and I should have to separate? The possibility had seemed remote when I married, but now I had clear evidence it could happen. To start wheels turning, I visited the Consulate General in Johannesburg and filled out forms to obtain a visa for her entry into the United States. In August 1943 the War Department forwarded to us a memorandum enclosing a notice

from my draft board saying my exemption had been extended until January 1944. The memorandum said the Department would ask for a further extension at that time provided it was permitted to do so under the Selective Service Act.

The possibility of being drafted posed a dilemma. Assuming that a visa was received and transportation for Riekie could be arranged, would it be wise for her to go with me to the States? If I had to go into the armed forces, she would be left alone in a strange land, whereas if she remained in South Africa she would have relatives and friends. For Riekie there was never any doubt. She would be closer to me in America than in South Africa, and she said unhesitatingly that she would come with me. Well, no sense in crossing the bridge until it was reached.

The domestic hearth. If you had put a direct question, I would have assured you that Riekie and I were a staid, decorous, secluded pair who seldom left their fireside except for an occasional trip to Middelburg to see Riekie's mother and sister. On an impulse I totted up our social outings from the engagement calendar after a year of marriage and was aghast to find I was positively dissolute. 55 times to the movies and 4 to the theater. 57 dinners, cocktail parties and gossip fests at home. 51 sociables at others' homes. 14 musical evenings. 77 evenings of chess. 4 dances. 2 wedding receptions (counting our own). 8 trips to Middelburg. I wondered how this record would compare with that of other newlyweds.

The two-hour drive to Middelburg did not lie through inspiring scenery, but the road was good and the spaces great and open. A few miles east of Pretoria you climbed through a modest pass onto a dry, brush-covered plain studded with anthills. The first dorp, after 37 miles, was Bronkhorstspuit (4,079 feet), with a flour mill, a general store, a few houses, and as many churches. It was an adequate spot to start a war.

President Paul Kruger's two trips to London to protest the British annexation of the Transvaal had proved unavailing. An incident led to exchange of shots at Potchefstroom on December 9, 1880. The Boers took up arms, and commandos invested the British forces at Pretoria and other points. Foreseeing trouble, British Colonel Sir Owen Lanyon, commanding at Pretoria, ordered Colonel P. Anstruther to bring reinforcements from Lydenburg some 160 miles northeast of Pretoria, but Anstruther delayed eight days while requisitioning 30 wagons to carry families and baggage. By December 15 Anstruther had traveled only about 70 miles, to Middelburg, and he tarried there another two days.

Here he received a message from Lanyon warning him to beware of ambush, but he set out with 235 regulars of the 94th Regiment of Foot and with medical corps men, wives and children riding in the wagons. Meanwhile a commando of about 200 Boers under Frans Joubert rode to intercept him at Bronkhorstspuit.

Only a few scattered farm buildings existed at that date. Anstruther's force reached the site a little before one o'clock on December 20. Despite the warning of ambush, the column was strung out more than a mile with a band playing and the men singing and munching peaches they had bought at the last halt. As they approached the spruit (creek;

literally sprout or branch) Anstruther caught sight of Joubert's force and called a halt. A burgher carrying a white flag rode up and delivered a message instructing him to remain where he was until Colonel Lanyon had replied to demands made by the Boer provisional government. Anstruther answered that he had orders to march to Pretoria and intended to carry them out. What happened next is a matter of disagreement.

Pro-British writers claim that Anstruther told the messenger to take the reply to Joubert and inform him of the response. The pro-Boer contention is that fair warning had been given and rejected, without commitment for further parley. The burghers began closing in and working around to the British rear. Anstruther shouted commands to extend in skirmishing order, but before his men could comply the Boers opened fire. Within a few minutes Anstruther himself was hit several times and 120 British dead and wounded lay on the road. The Boers lost two killed and five wounded.

This was the opening engagement of the First Boer War. The British were to go on to three more disasters. At Laing's Nek they had 150 casualties against 14 killed and 27 wounded for the Boers. At Ingogo they suffered nearly 130 casualties against 8 killed and 10 wounded. At Majuba Hill they took 280 casualties, including the loss of their commander Major General Sir George Colley, against 1 killed and 5 wounded. Astonishingly, 19 years later they committed the same types of tactical errors at Colenso and Spion Kop in the Second Boer War and again suffered severe defeats.

Legend has it that the peaches in the pockets of the British buried at Bronkhorstspuit grew into a fine grove of fruit trees (Oliver Ransford, *The Battle of Majuba Hill: The First Boer War*. Thomas Y. Crowel Company, New York: 1968, pp. 25-29. Also Cloete, *African Portraits* op. cit., p. 142.).

Thirty-three miles east of Bronkhorstspuit is Witbank (5,322 feet) where the spur from Johannesburg joins the Pretoria-Delagoa Bay Railway. Thirty-two collieries in the Witbank district produce two-thirds of the coal mined in South Africa. Piles of cinders can be seen from the highway as you approach the town, man-made hills that smolder perpetually and glow in the dark. The story is that Winston Churchill hid in a mine shaft near Witbank during his flight from a Boer prison in Pretoria to the British Consulate at Lourenco Marques in 1899. With a population of about 20,000, approximately one-third of it white, Witbank was the industrial and commercial metropolis of the region.

A farther 19 miles east is Middelburg (4,971 feet), white population 1,000, originally a gathering point for *nagmaal* called Nazareth, afterward renamed for a town in the Netherlands. It was an established custom in the Reformed Church of 17th Century Holland to observe *nagmaal* or communion four times a year, and the custom was continued in South Africa. Farmers and their families and servants traveled to the meeting place in their wagons, arriving on Thursday and leaving on Monday, for though religious in source *nagmaal* gatherings developed social and business aspects. Farmers would sell produce at the Thursday and Friday markets. Relatives and friends long-separated by the distances of the veld would get together. Social affairs would be arranged. Religious services would begin Friday afternoons, baptisms would be

solemnized, bans proclaimed, marriages plighted.

Here young people might become acquainted, and when they were back on their farms the young man would mount his horse and ride to the girl's house. Her parents would invite him to stay for dinner, and afterward when the young couple was left alone the girl would light a candle. If it was a long candle the young man was encouraged, for the tradition was that he was welcome as long as the candle burned. Usually at early meetings the candle was neither too long to be unseemly nor too short to be discouraging. By following up with more visits the young man could learn how the girl felt about him.

For a few days Middelburg had been the scene of key dramas in the Second Boer War. Paul Kruger had strongly endorsed the construction of the railway from Pretoria to Delagoa Bay (opened in 1895) because it gave the Transvaal an outlet to the sea through non-British territory. Lord Roberts had thought the war won when he occupied Pretoria on June 5, 1900, but President Kruger put his government in a railway car and moved up the line, first to Middelburg, then to Machadodorp in July, and finally to Portuguese East Africa in September. British and Boers died in skirmishes around Middelburg, and today you can visit the little Middelburg cemetery and look at the tombstones of the British buried on one side of the aisle and those of the Boers on the other, separated in death as in life.

Guerrilla warfare continued after the departure of Paul Kruger. Lord Kitchener, who replaced Roberts, persuaded Boer General Louis Botha to meet him February 18, 1901 at Middelburg to discuss terms of peace. He proposed a general amnesty for the Boers, return of prisoners of war from abroad (6,000 Boers had been sent to St. Helena, others to Ceylon), self government as soon as possible, assistance to farmers, teaching of both English and Afrikaans in schools, and limited franchise for non-whites as enjoyed in the Cape Province. The negotiations foundered on the question of preserving Boer independence, which Kitchener refused to discuss. In days immediately following the talks the Boers achieved several minor successes, and on March 16 Botha wrote to Kitchener breaking off negotiations without giving any reasons. The war went on for more than a year.

Middelburg was a pleasant country town. Sprawling in a valley beside the Klein Olifants River, its houses were scattered so widely it took you a good thirty minutes to walk from end to end despite the small population. There was a modest shopping center, a hotel, several churches, and two high schools that drew boarding students from miles around. The principal recreation feature was the dam, a man-made lake where you could go swimming, boating and fishing. For Riekie and me the major attractions were her mother, who lived in a rambling old house on a quarter-acre in the center of town, and her sister Didi and family, who on every visit stuffed us as if we had never had a meal in our lives.

Arms and the man. In January 1944 came grapevine news that 14 civilian clerks stationed overseas in military attache offices had been ordered into the Army. Some had been pulled back to the States and some had been inducted while still abroad. Reportedly, one chap in Australia was put into uniform and then assigned right back to his clerical job in

the M. A. office. While I waited for the War Department to get around to me, I celebrated our first anniversary and worried over my wife:

"If I am called I can't squawk. I've had it easy for nearly three years while other guys were grubbing at latrines and serving as targets for the Japanese. I do wish, however, that the situation regarding Riekie were clearer. To leave her here or to bring her back home with me? If she stays she has friends, relatives and a job, and I could send her money from the States. Then there is the risk of crossing the ocean. It would be my duty to take that risk, but have I any right to subject her to it? On the other hand, under South African law she has lost her citizenship by marrying an alien, and she can't start acquiring U.S. citizenship until she sets foot on U.S. soil. If I left her behind she might run into such a mess of red-tape it would be years before she could come to the United States. Then there's always the chance that I'll be put to clerical work in some Army post in the States. It would be ironic if I left her in South Africa when she might have been with me all the time. It's hard to decide what to do, and of course emotion is a strong force, for we want to be together. But it would be a gamble..."

Early in February 1944 came a War Department cablegram stating that the draft board had refused to extend my deferment and ordering me to undergo a physical examination. Colonel Day arranged for me to be examined at a South African Army camp. The doctor seemed mildly surprised that any organization should be interested in such a bag of bones -- for even with my gain in weight I scaled at only 135 pounds -- but certified that, such as it was, it was physically sound. The examination results were duly forwarded to Washington, and I took Riekie for a second honeymoon back to Wilderness, which is a resort on the Indian Ocean near George, which is near Mossel Bay, which is about half-way between Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. During this interlude the decision was reached that Riekie would come along, risks or no risks. Shortly after we got back to Pretoria in March a cablegram ordered me to return for induction at the earliest possible time. We began selling furniture and household effects preparatory to departure.

A few months earlier Colonel Day had been called back to Washington for consultation and had made the one-way journey in the incredibly short time of six days, traveling by South African military aircraft to Accra and thence by U.S. aircraft to Ascension Island, Recife in Brazil, and the States. But air travel being restricted to military personnel in uniform, the young couple would have to go by sea. A complication was that all movements of shipping were classified information. The submarine threat had been reduced but not eradicated, and the scheduling of convoys was closely held in the interests of security. This meant that Riekie and I had to shift to a hotel and live from day to day, ready to set out for either Durban or Cape Town at short notice.

This situation dragged on for six weeks, during which we drove to Middelburg every weekend and said good-bye to the family for the "last" time so often we were ashamed to admit we were still on hand. In mid-May came word to proceed to Cape Town within three days for a ship direct to the States. One day before we were to leave the orders were withdrawn, and we resumed waiting.

Abruptly came word of a convoy leaving from Durban the last week in May carrying numerous civilians including wives and children. It seemed ideal transport except for one thing; it was going the wrong way, to Egypt. The official opinion, nevertheless, was that it offered the best means of getting home. Shipping direct to the States was extremely scarce from South Africa but was relatively plentiful from the mid-east. The Mediterranean had been all but cleared, and we should be able to get passage from Egypt either all the way home or to an intermediate point such as Algiers, Gibraltar, or even Great Britain, when we could make arrangements for onward transport. We took the train for Durban on May 23, 1944, a large crowd of friends turning out to see us off from the Pretoria station. Little birds continued to drink from the top hat of Paul Kruger's statue.

Chapter 10  
Convoy  
(June-July 1944)

"Sail to the East, and the West will be Found."

- Misquoted from Arthur Hugh Clough, *Columbus*

Ship. Sunday in Durban and offices were closed, but the U.S. Naval Liaison Officer responded to a phone call and sent a car, the U.S. Consul came from the tennis court to give us our duly stamped passports, and the British Shipping office stood open to confirm passage.

Correction: only one of us had a passport. By marrying me, an alien, Riekie had lost South African citizenship. Instead of a passport the South African Government issued her a sheet of paper headed: "To Whom It May Concern":

"The holder of this certificate, Mrs. HENDERIKA ELIZABETH THRASHER, states that she was born in the UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA, but has lost her nationality of origin through marriage to MR. EDWARD JAMES THRASHER an AMERICAN CITIZEN.

"She is, however, unable to obtain a United States passport as she did not acquire American Nationality through marriage owing to the Act relative to the Naturalization and Citizenship of married women, No. 346 of the 67th Congress, approved by the President of the United States on the 22nd day of September, 1922.

"This certificate has, therefore, been issued to enable the holder to travel to BRAZIL, the ARGENTINE, & the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

"Valid for 12 MONTHS from date hereof...."

Perhaps Riekie could have obtained a British passport; we never thought to inquire. As it was there were two ways she could regain membership in the world community: (a) proceed to the United States and complete the formalities for U.S. citizenship; or (b) liquidate her husband, for if the marriage to an alien were dissolved she would get her South African citizenship back. Her plan at this stage in our relations was to follow course (a).

We had intended to leave our baggage on ship and return ashore for a wild farewell fling (a difficult thing to contrive on a South African Sunday), but once on ship we were refused permission to get off. Among the passengers clambering aboard we noticed a red-headed woman who had obviously not been balked in a last fling; a ship's officer held her up on one side and a twelve-year-old girl on the other. We voyagers grew accustomed to seeing her stagger about the decks supported matter-of-factly by her daughter. The wife of an oil man, she had spent years at isolated desert posts and had let the bottle become her steady companion.

We were assigned a small cabin on the second deck with two berths, a Lilliput wardrobe, and water that ran an hour in the morning and an hour in the evening. It was good fortune to be together, for we had been warned the ship would be divided, starboard for men, port for women.

The S. S. *Kosciusko*, formerly of the Amerika-Gdynia Line, was an ancient coal-burner that had been taken into Allied service. Unlike most vessels in wartime, she still had her lounge, bar, and promenade deck. Her officers and crew were Polish, her cooks and stewards lascars. Air conditioning there was none, but whenever you felt sorry for yourself in the tropical sun you looked down through the ventilator at the stokers dehydrating in their twenty-four hour inferno and reflected that you weren't so bad off after all.

The ship carried a number of detached Polish and British army officers, several British Government civilians, two starched British *dames formidables* along with assorted other women and their children, ten WRENS (equivalents of U.S. WAVES), two British actresses for whom each day was a series of tableaux, and a cluster of South African officers in charge of a detail of troops who were assigned to guard some 1,000 Italian prisoners of war stowed in the hold. Nights when we stifled in our cabin, the ship's choice accommodation, I wondered how it must have been for the prisoners stuffed into their hammocks below. The Italians were transferred to another ship at Suez and sailed on to an unannounced destination.

Seafaring. There were four ships in the convoy, shepherded by two destroyer-escorts. Submarines did not threaten once during the 26 days from Durban to Port Tufiq, and we had to contend only with the food, heat and boredom. Greasy soup, fat pork and ship's biscuit were the diet until some wise soul persuaded the chef to serve salads of raw cabbage and onion. A ration of one orange every other day plus purchases of tinned fruits in the canteen helped keep appetites subdued and bowels open.

To fight ennui we read, played cards or chess, and gossiped. The bar served only soft drinks because of a ruling, attributed to General Eisenhower, that all jointly operated Allied ships had to be dry, but actually the only dry spot on the *Kosciusko* was this same bar. The Polish officers were glad to give you a drink in their cabins, and the stewards were not unwilling to sell brandy from the ship's stores. Each descent of night transformed the topside deck into one large, plastered party.

First you carried glasses of ginger beer or soda from the bar into the blackout on deck. While companions nursed these you descended to your cabin and poured out a tumblerful of brandy. Not to be blatant, you brought the booze to the deck concealed in your life jacket. This was the pleasantest way of observing the happy hour. Parties were also held in cabins, but each cabin was so small you sat in each other's laps, and in the tropics you sweated a pint for each nip you drank.

After Mombasa the cabin became so stifling we slept on the top deck in the open for

coolness' sake. This was not so glamorous as it sounds. You had to lug bedding and also your life jacket and complete kit of clothing to be prepared for emergency. And because you woke drenched with dew and covered with soot from the smokestack, and you had to scramble out of the way at six to let the crew wash the deck, you chose topside as the lesser of evils. Curiously the Red Sea area, which we had expected to be intensely hot, turned relatively cool, and we were glad to go back to the cabin.

Perhaps the Red Sea seemed cool because we experienced Aden. "The town of Aden is in an indescribably barren district," says an encyclopedia. "The heat is intense." What an understatement! If Aden is not the dreariest place in the world, it is a strong contender for the title, a ring of seared hills baking endlessly in merciless sun. Somebody said it rains every seven years at Aden, but I think he over-estimated. Denied permission to go aboard, we passengers sat two days in harbor while the ship took on coal. Barges anchored alongside, breech-clouted Arabs lugged gunnysacks to the hold in a living chain, above them an Arab foreman squatted on a rail and screamed commands and exhortations, and over all a fog of coal dust enveloped the ship, caked the sweating bodies of the porters, and sifted into passengers' hair, clothes and food.

Everybody aboard had tales of war experiences, especially the Poles. Virtually all had escaped from the Germans or Russians or both. One Pole who had reached England and joined the British merchant service was assigned to a ship whose captain he came to detest. Arrived at Durban, he requested permission to remain ashore for transfer to another vessel and was summarily refused. Desperate, he decided to have himself hospitalized, and since he had no illness he feigned abdominal distress and requested an appendectomy. The ruse worked. He was operated on, the ship sailed without him, and he achieved a transfer to the *Kosciusko* at the cost of one appendix.

I was particularly interested in a tale narrated by a Pole named Stanley, short for Stanislaus, an officer in the British Army. He had commanded a Polish company near the Rumanian border during the early days of the war. On September 17, 1939 he spotted a column of Russian tanks parked on the road near Sniatyn. Posting his men in readiness, he went forward for a talk. The Russian commander told him Russia had declared war on Germany that very morning. That this could be a true statement seemed most unlikely, but Captain Stanley felt constrained to accept it in the absence of any hostile demonstration from the Russians.

A black Chevrolet sedan drove up as he was walking back to his troops. From it stepped a tall, red-headed officer in U.S. Army uniform who spoke to him in ragged German. Stanley told him what the Russian commander had said, and he could see that the American found it hard to believe. Thus had Captain Stanislaus had a brief encounter with my former boss, Major Colbern, during that period when we were waiting at Zaleszczyki before crossing into Rumania.

Whether the Russian officer lied deliberately or whether he had truly been told he was to make war on Germany is not known. In any event, Russian planes came over two hours later and strafed Stanley's men. Five more hours, and he fell into a German ambush and

was taken prisoner. He escaped two days afterward, swam the Dniester to Rumania, made his way to France, and joined the French Army. After France's collapse he escaped to England, was commissioned a captain in the British Army, served two years in equatorial West Africa, and now was on his way to Egypt to rejoin the Polish Army. He had been decorated four times.

Egypt. We were off-loaded at Port Tufiq on the 26th day and began our acquaintance with the ways of the inscrutable east by proceeding through Egyptian quarantine and customs. Ordered to report for medical inspection, we entered a building so dilapidated it was astonished to find itself still in use, sat at a moth-eaten table, and filled out a printed form containing not a word about disease or injury. An inspector rubber-stamped the form and demanded 15 piasters (60 cents) apiece. We awaited medical examination in vain and were waved on to make room for the next invalid with 15 piasters.

In customs it was discovered that I had a portable typewriter, and the official said I must pay 160 piasters duty (\$6.40). I protested that I was only passing through the country and that I was an important diplomat. The customs man neither affirmed nor denied these arguments but insisted on payment all the same. Saying that he had no choice but to levy the duty, he remarked that it was only a gesture, and surely I wouldn't mind gesturing. Besides, I would be given a receipt which I could present to the customs authorities at port of exit and claim a refund.

To collect the duty the inspector filled out an elaborate form and told me to take it and 160 piasters to the cashier at the other end of the shed. The cashier rubber-stamped the form and told me to take it back to the inspector. The inspector filled out another form and told me to take it back to the cashier. On these trips back and forth across the customs floor I was escorted by a "guide," a self-appointed helper as useful as a dog that winds its leash around your legs. The cashier accepted the printed form and told to give this parasite five piasters (20 cents). I obeyed. All activity ceased. The transaction was apparently at an end.

"What about the receipt?" I asked. The cashier wrote out a receipt and laid it on the counter, behind bars. "The receipt," said he, "costs three piasters." I protested that I had just given five piasters to the parasite. "That is true," said the cashier., "But that was to him, not to me." "But it was you," I pointed out, "who told me to pay him." "That is also true," said the cashier. "And now you must pay three piasters to me."

I snorted fire and brimstone, and he drew on his own reserves of sulfur in return. I resorted to the ultimate in international relations, brute force. "I gave that man," meaning the parasite, "five piasters. Get your three piasters from him!" During the argument I had observed that the receipt lay within reach, and I stuck my hand between the bars and grabbed it. Music to my ears as I walked away was the hot dispute that commenced between cashier and parasite.

The receipt was written in French and Arabic. When I deciphered it I learned I would have to give the port authorities "ample notice" to obtain a refund. Doubting that the ship

would delay its sailing while the Egyptian customs deliberated the return of duty on my typewriter, I chalked up 160 piasters to tuition in the college of experience. But there was a sequel. Over drinks at Shepherd's I recounted the episode to John Barkham, Pretoria branch manager of the *Rand Daily Mail* who had come to Cairo as a correspondent for *Time*. John at once offered to buy the little portable and gladly gave me L10/0 Egyptian (about \$40.00) for it although it had cost only \$25.00 new. The tale, accordingly, had a happy ending for me, but not alas for John. Three days after we left Cairo somebody stole the typewriter from his hotel room.

Cairo. The train from Tufiq dumped us into the maelstrom of the Cairo station after a three-hour ride. Because the powers on ship had refused to let me radio from Aden, the only advance notice I was able to send the Military Attache was a wire from Port Tufiq. As usual we had arrived on a Sunday, and though this meant nothing to Moslem Cairo it meant that the M. A. office was closed. We were not met, and we stood amidst milling humanity without the slightest idea where we would spend the night. I tried to phone Colonel Larrabee at his office, for I had no other address. An attempt to cope with the Egyptian telephone failed dismally. I filled it with coins, but it never deigned even to acknowledge that I was there.

Then an urchin showed me a trick. Don't try it; it won't work with American phones. I was calling 7438. The urchin lifted the receiver and, without dropping a coin, jiggled the hook seven times, four times, three times, eight times. The phone at the other end rang, an objective I had been unable to achieve on my own, but the M. A. office was closed and there was no answer. Comprehending that I wanted to call hotels, the urchin took us to the station master, who let us use his phone gratis. The Egyptian deity in charge of innkeepers was in a good humor or I should never have found lodgings. Shepherd's was full, but at their suggestion I rang the Metropolitan and was accepted. This was phenomenal good luck, especially on a week-end in a city full of troops.

The following day Colonel Larrabee started the machinery rolling for passage to the States. Informed that there would be an indefinite delay, Riekie and I commenced a routine of killing the days as best we could and making merry nights. Captain Stanley and others from the ship were quartered nearby, and we ran into an astonishing number of acquaintances from South Africa. To meet people in Cairo you simply sat on the terrace of Shepherd's and sooner or later somebody you knew came along.

Drinks were rationed, but from 6:00 to 6:30 you could get Scotch without restriction at Shepherd's, and from 6:30 to 7:00 Canadian Club or rye. When whiskey-time was almost up the waiter would take orders for several drinks at once, so as 7:00 approached you lined up glasses for the next hour. Otherwise you had to fall back on Egyptian rum, not too bad, or in extremity on Egyptian whiskey and gin, which were guaranteed to eat through your tummy in 48 hours.

We window-shopped, toured the *mousky* or native bazaar, went to the movies, lunched at restaurants and clubs, and danced at night spots. We dutifully visited the Pyramids, but after we had fought off proffers of guides, of photo-

graphs, of Roman coins, and of rides on camels, and after we had paid extra for a man to light a "radium flare" to see the interior of a tomb (he struck a match) we had no heart to visit other monuments. We killed time, and we disliked Cairo.

We disliked the flies, the beggars, the children covered with sores, the brazen demands for *bakshish*, the insistence that we accept and pay for services we did not want, and of course the heat, the smells and the dirt. Cairo in wartime was crammed with people from all walks of life, and where people have to live in poverty they cannot be faulted for trying to scrape a living whatever legitimate way they can.

Onward! Army Transportation Corps said there was no hope of a ship for at least two weeks. On the thirteenth day I called again and was informed we would have to wait at least another ten days. That was Friday morning. On Saturday morning I received a hurryup call to come to the A.T.C. at once and there was told we must leave Cairo that evening. We were to report to the War Shipping Administration in Port Said by 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, and the morning train would get us in too late. I pointed out that the Saturday evening train would land us in Port Said at midnight but was assured it had to be.

We packed hastily, telephoned our farewells, and caught the 6:45 p.m. train for Port Said. First, though, I had the good sense to arrange for American Express to meet us in Said and get us a hotel room. How we would have fared on our own in the grubby, thick-skinned east Mediterranean port at midnight in a blackout is beyond speculation. As it was, we were housed in a pension crawling with drunks and prostitutes, but we were glad to be off the streets.

The hasty scramble to Port Said was unnecessary. War Shipping did not want us until Monday. I had worked up a dislike for Cairo but I conceived a passionate loathing for Said. Surely man is not a reasonable animal. At Mombasa and Aden I had griped because we had to stay aboard ship; at Port Said I griped because we had to stay ashore. We leaped at the chance to go aboard on Monday although the ship was not to sail until Tuesday.

Convoy again. The S. S. *Pierre la Clede* was a Liberty freighter, one of a convoy of 40 ships. We were the only passengers and Riekie the only woman. The cabin was bright and spacious, the food substantial, and there was plenty of hot water for showers. I was apprehensive about traversing the Mediterranean, but the strong escort of a dozen destroyers and D-E's that joined us at Bizerte was reassuring. The ship itself had a five-pounder aft and two ack-ack guns forward. A practice shoot for the five-pounder was arranged in the Atlantic. The recoil threatened to knock the stern off, and no hit was scored on the aircraft-towed target. Never mind; there was not a single submarine or air alert throughout our 25 days at sea.

We read most of the time, played chess, and paddled in a canvas swimming pool that the men rigged on the mid-deck. Evenings we played Monopoly, a game the ship's company took so seriously they threatened blows when the Boardwalk went up for sale, but this was only youthful enthusiasm. We landed at Newport News and entrained for

Washington, thanking God for excellent weather, preservation from perils of war, and good health and morale throughout the 60 days we were en route, from Durban through the Mozambique Channel to Aden, through the Red Sea to Port Tufiq, Cairo, and Point Said, through the Mediterranean to Gibraltar, and across the Atlantic to Newport News and Washington.

Chapter 11  
Aux Armes!  
(March 1945-July 1949)

"At the captain's forequarters they said he would pass. They'd train him up well in the infantry class. So they've grafted him into the Army."

- Henry Clay Work (Yes, grafted, presumably in the sense of "to join one thing to another by or as if by grafting". Someone who has the time and inclination might investigate the shift to drafted. Henry Clay Work (author of "Marching Through Georgia" and "Grandfather's Clock") died in 1884

When my Draft Board denied that it had sent for me, and let me see for myself that the file had no induction notice, I asked an acquaintance at the Pentagon, that newly completed eighth wonder of the world, to ferret out how it was that Riekie and I had been brought clean around Africa for no reason.

In the War Department was an outfit called the Deferment Diet, or some such title. My local Draft Board had informed Department Personnel it intended to reclassify me 1-A unless the Department requested an extension of my deferment. Personnel turned this over to the Deferment Diet which, in accordance with new policy to cease asking for deferments on clerks overseas, cabled the Military Attache at Pretoria to have me take a physical examination. The results of the examination were sent to the Draft Board with a statement that Diet would await the Board's decision on whether I should be recalled. No reply was ever received, but Diet directed Personnel to order me home all the same, presumably because clerks all around the world were being ordered home. Man proposes, but the punched card disposes. Well, there was a war on, and you can be sure mine was not the only instance of snafu (a word born in World War II) in personnel arrangements.

Although the War Department's only obligation was to pay my passage home, which it had done, it offered to keep me on the payroll as a temporary stenographer pending further word from the Draft Board. The understanding was that if the Board decided not to call me, I would either have to go overseas or be fired, for I had no status in homeside civil service.

But I was tired of beating a typewriter. My college degree proved good for something after all, and I obtained the civil service rating of P-1, the lowest slot in "professional" status, and became a researcher in the International Who's Who Division. Having lived in Europe and South Africa, I was naturally put in the Latin America section; able to read a little Spanish, I was naturally set to covering Brazil. I was pleased at breaking out of clerical bonds, although the new job -- extracting information from field reports, typing it on file cards, and composing summaries for a weekly report -- was still essentially clerical. The slow progress up the career ladder led me to cast about for jobs outside government, but employers were looking for men exempt from the military draft, and I continued in research. Riekie and I finagled a three-room apartment in war-crowded Washington by buying the furniture of the outgoing tenant, and as 1944 gave way to 1945

hope grew that the Western Allies could win the war without putting me into uniform.

The hope died when the age ceiling on draftees was raised from 26 to 37 in January 1945 and I was directed to report to Baltimore for physical examination. Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin met at Yalta on February 7; a few days later came notice to present myself for duty; and on March 1 I was sworn into the Navy. That did it. Germany surrendered on May 8.

On that date I was still in boot camp at Bainbridge, Maryland, on the banks of the Susquehanna. Riekie, large with child, was alone in our Washington flat. Scheduled to complete the training course and go to sea within ten days, I found a compassionate chief petty officer who signed me on as a member of "ship's company" ashore at Bainbridge until the baby should be born. Mornings I stuffed IBM cards into top pigeonholes; afternoons I stuffed them into bottom pigeonholes. My fellow salts and I did go on the Susquehanna one day in a rowboat; we were supposed to go a second time, but the water was considered too rough. On week-end liberties I took the two-hour train trip to Washington. The night of August 14, 1945, Riekie and I were sitting on the porch of my mother's home when people began running through the streets shouting for joy. Japan had surrendered, and peace had come. I had to take the midnight train back to the base, and three hours after I had left, Riekie's labor pains began. A telephone message the following afternoon told me we were the parents of a daughter named Karen.

With Japan's surrender the need for sea duty dwindled, and I continued to stuff cards into pigeonholes. I moved my family to Middle River, Maryland, a housing development five miles north of Baltimore put up by the Martin Aircraft Company that stood half-empty because of the wind-down of war production. Middle River was about an hour from Bainbridge by car, and I hitch-hiked whenever I could get liberty, standing knee-deep in snow beside U.S. 40 thumbing rides. I was promoted to Seaman First Class (equivalent to corporal) and was gung ho on the exams for petty officer when I discovered that, with the end of hostilities, all petty officers had been ordered held in the Navy indefinitely. Forthwith I desisted all effort at advancement and waited for discharge. This came in March, 1946, after just one year of service.

The notion having seized me to make a career in advertising, I took a correspondence course while in the Navy, and after discharge traveled to New York to become rich and affluent in the advertising business. A veterans' employment office sent me to a small advertising agency, and I was taken on as a stenographer and administrative assistant before you can say: "If you build a better mousetrap than your neighbor, the world will make a beaten path to your door," which is a quotation from Ralph Waldo Emerson that sneaks into any speech given by any advertising man. Only thing is, there is no record that Emerson ever said any such thing, any more than there is a record that any advertising man has ever read Emerson.

The agency was called Kennedy Sinclair, Inc., after its president, and I wish at this point to express deep gratitude to that extremely courteous and forbearing gentleman for putting up with me for three years. I had signed on as a stenographer, but I wanted to

"advance". Mr. Sinclair encouraged me to advance, but to him advancement meant becoming a top-notch salesman (which he himself was), for what is advertising but one step in the process of moving goods and services from producer to consumer? To me advancement meant being an EXECUTIVE, which I interpreted as putting my feet on a desk and dictating letters to a pretty secretary, but leaving to someone else the sordid matter of bringing in new business. Only the Sphinx can say why Mr. Sinclair didn't fire me out of hand, and it declines to tell.

Lodgings in New York being as scarce as yurts, I was glad to put my family in a two-room k & b apartment on Staten Island and commute to Manhattan. This entailed a walk to the Staten Island Railway (five minutes), a wait for the train (five minutes if lucky), a ride to the docks (fifteen minutes), a wait for the ferry (five minutes if lucky), a cruise across New York harbor (twenty minutes), a wait for the subway (five minutes if lucky), a ride underground (ten minutes), a dash to the Nedick's stand for coffee and doughnuts (1.5 minutes), and a five-minute run to the office. The trip took 75 to 90 minutes, and in the evenings I did it all over again. The odd thing is that thousands, nay millions, of otherwise perfectly sane people go through this routine all their lives because they never leave the groove. People move to New York and then pass all their days trying to earn enough money to move out of New York.

Kennedy Sinclair, Inc., gave me periodic raises until at the end of three years I was earning half again as much as I had in foreign service, but I saw nothing of the big money in advertising that one read about in *The Hucksters*, a best-selling novel of the time. Nor did my bosses. The firm created advertising exclusively for banks and trust companies. It fared prosperously but not sensationally; and it is still in business as I write this fifty years afterward. I made attempts to join agencies that advertised hair tonic, industrial chemicals, and wares for Latin America, but could locate no job as good as the one I had. I kept telling my patient wife I wasn't appreciated at Kennedy Sinclair, Inc., and would shake them to the foundations by turning in my resignation, but I knew I didn't dare, and I would probably have stayed with them for life or drifted into some routine government job if circumstances had not willed otherwise.

## Responsions

"That pass examination did so well for me  
That now I am the ruler of the Queen's Navee."

- H.M.S. Pinafore

These circumstances were that I had never quite given up on foreign service. When I came home from South Africa in 1944 and found the draft board did not immediately want me, I applied for appointment as officer in the Foreign Service Auxiliary, a wartime expedient. The Foreign Service had made no attempt to obtain deferments for its officers, and many had gone into the military. Realizing that it had insufficient personnel to carry out diplomatic assignments, the Department created the Auxiliary and made temporary appointments to fill the gap. It was this organization that I tried to enter, but my application was not even considered. Regulations required that officers and their wives be American citizens, and poor Riekie (distressed to think she might be hampering my advancement) had not yet been naturalized. The matter was academic, for even if appointed I would still have been subject to military draft.

In January 1947 Riekie became an American citizen, and later that year she went off to Pretoria to visit her mother and exhibit the new baby. While she was away I applied to take the examinations for Foreign Service Officer, the first general exams offered since 1940. In September 1947 I struggled through four days of written examinations, given in lower Manhattan, and in October received notification I had failed the foreign language section by one point. In November, however, notice arrived that I had passed the main portion of the exams by a goodish margin and was entitled to take the French section again the following March. This I did and squeaked through with a mark of 73, passing being 70. Two items of note were that the French examination in March was identical with that of September and both times I thought it ridiculously easy. To this day I don't know how it was that I barely made out.

Two months later I went to Washington at my own expense for the oral examination and for an hour fended off questions put by a panel of examiners from State, Commerce, Agriculture and the Civil Service Commission, somewhat on the order of a university examination for the doctorate. I was asked about personal achievements and tastes, my views on life in the foreign service, and about politics, history and economics ranging from the ports of the United States to the Thirty Years' War. The subject matter was changed frequently and abruptly; obviously the examiners were interested not so much in what I answered as how, in whether I became flustered at an inadequate answer or kept my cool. As former Ambassador Henry S. Villard has written:

"...How a candidate conducted himself even if he did not know the correct answer, how he impressed the Board of Examiners in his person, how he handled himself in comparison with others, were often the criteria of success or failure; letters of recommendation, the security agent's report, fluency in additional languages, and, at length, the results of a detailed physical examination, were all weighed in the dossier's

balance..." (Henry S. Villard, *Affairs at State*. Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York: 1965. p. 153)

That I had been trying to enter the Foreign Service since 1941 was a point in my favor. Two other things seemed to impress the examiners: I had written reports on my own initiative while in South Africa; I had a strong sponsor, for Colonel Larrabee had given unstinting support to my application.

Returning some hours later, I was called in by the chief examiner and told I had passed. I was elated and honored but not surprised, for I sensed I had made a good impression. All the same, I knew I had crossed a threshold. Back in 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt and Secretary of State Elihu Root placed the diplomatic and consular services under Civil Service. For the first Civil Service examination for service abroad there were 38 candidates, of whom 13 passed, or 34 per cent. Requirements became much more stringent after the Foreign Service was established as a system apart from Civil Service in 1924, the annual average of those accepted running around five per cent. I was one of approximately 1,200 who filed to take the written examination in September 1947. In the next 15 years interest in the Foreign Service as a career was to intensify until 10,340 applied to take the written examination in 1965. Of these, 6,232 actually took the examination and 1,552 passed; 819 decided to go on to the oral examination, 407 passed, and ultimately 359 took up appointments, or approximately 5.7 per cent (John P. Leacacos, *Fires in the In-Basket*. The World Publishing Company, New York: 1968. P. 403. Also Villard, op. cit., p. 151).

Confucius say: examinations are great things. Appointments to government positions in ancient China were made according to knowledge of the classics, as determined by examination. Now, 2,000 years later, I had qualified for mandarin status by application of this Confucian precept. Having made the grade, I agreed with Mr. Confucius emphatically; indeed I was for handing out all worldly awards according to examination. The fairy queen in the operetta had the right idea:

"Titles shall ennoble then  
All the common councilmen.  
Peers shall team in Christendom,  
And a Duke's exalted station  
Be attainable by competitive examination."

- Gilbert and Sullivan, *Iolanthe*, finale to Act I

But it was one thing to pass an examination and another to get a job. Here I faced the same predicament as one of our national holidays:

"Thanksgiving, like ambassadors, cabinet officers and others smeared with political ointment, Depends for its existence on Presidential appointment.

- Ogden Nash, "A Short Outline of Thanksgiving"

Although appointments were made by the President, funds were appropriated by the Congress. I passed the oral examination in May 1948, but it was not until July 1949 that the State Department budget could afford my \$4,730 salary. Thus, those candidates who passed the written examination in September 1947 waited nearly two years before taking up their duties. The Department of State helped some of them find temporary government jobs until the appointments should come through, but I went back to commuting by ferryboat. I was too dumb to realize I would have done well to take a Department job and learn how Washington wheels go around.

At that time the Department of State was beginning to be racked by growing pains. The foundations of today's Foreign Service were laid by Representative John Jacob Rogers of Massachusetts, whose efforts culminated in 1924 with Presidential signature of the Act that is known by his name. Until the Rogers Act there was no career service. Most U.S. diplomats regarded their appointments as temporary, and most consular officials performed their duties as sidelines to the commercial occupations that took them to foreign ports. The Rogers Act, which consolidated the diplomatic and consular branches into one Foreign Service, provided that new appointments were to be made on the basis of competitive examination and that officers were to be promoted on the basis of their performance records. Candidates for the first Foreign Service examination under the Act, offered in January 1925, numbered only 172, and at that time there were only 633 officers all told.

The year 1946 saw changes in the precepts laid down in 1924. The Foreign Service Manpower Bill of July 3, 1946 authorized the appointment of 250 commissioned personnel of the Armed Forces as Foreign Service Officers at varying grades appropriate to their ages and qualifications. Thus did the camel of "lateral entry" poke its nose into the tent, a major move toward negating the principle of promotion from the bottom established by the Rogers Act.

A second law, the Foreign Service Act of August 13, 1946, made it possible for guys like me, without private means, to afford working in the diplomatic service. This Act increased officers' salaries (the new range was from \$3,300 to a top of \$13,500), raised cost of living and housing allowances, and created allowances to meet costs of establishing a residence overseas and expenses of hospitalization for illness or injury incurred in line of duty. It also added two elements of uncertainty.

First, the Act established the Foreign Service Reserve, to which persons could be appointed for tours of duty of up to four years at grades for which they were qualified. Such appointees received the same salaries, allowances and perquisites of Foreign Service Officers but had no career status. The reasons for establishing the Reserve were unassailable; the United States Government should not in time of need be denied the services of professionally or technically qualified personnel merely because they had not passed an entrance examination. The unfortunate thing, from the view of the Foreign Service Officer, was that the Act also permitted Reserve Officers to become officers of career by direct commission from the President, and with passage of years this proviso

was used more and more frequently to reward the politically faithful. FSO's have never voiced hurrah's for this arrangement. The man who comes in at the bottom and hauls himself hand-over-hand up the promotion ladder is not pleased to find the slots at the top occupied by outsiders who obtained their positions by political pull.

Secondly, the Act of 1946 introduced, or rather adopted from the U.S. Navy, the concept of "promotion up or selection out" by empowering the Secretary of State to discharge officers who had remained in class without promotion for whatever maximum period he might prescribe by regulation. At the start, officers in Class 6 (the lowest) were released if they were passed over by two yearly selection boards, officers of Classes 5 through 2 if passed over by eight yearly selection boards, but these in-class periods were changed from year to year by the administrators.

I had known of selection-out when I applied to take the examinations but gave it not a thought. After all, if you went to work for the Amalgamated Ashcan Company, you could be fired at any time. Job security existed only in the Civil Service and could be tenuous even there. The ten classes, plus two probationary or "unclassified" classes, previously existing had been reduced by the Act of 1946 to six. I cared only that I had to achieve promotion from the probationary Class 6 within two years, and beyond that hurdle I did not look.

The Department of State and the Foreign Service expanded over the years along with the rest of the government. Departmental personnel increased from 963 in 1938 to 3,648 in 1948, and overseas personnel from 3,749 to 12,294, including officers, U.S. staff, and non-American staff. In February 1947 the Department moved from the gingerbread State-War-Navy Building on Pennsylvania Avenue to "New State" at 21st and Virginia Avenue and immediately began to plan for growth of the building into what was to become "New New State". Dean Acheson, who had been an Assistant Secretary 1941-45, Under Secretary 1945-47, and had dropped out of full-time government service for two years, was named Secretary of State in January 1949. Public Law 73 of May 26, 1949 re-structured the Department by authorizing, in addition to the Secretary and Under Secretary, ten Assistant Secretaries, a Counselor, and a Legal Adviser. Two of the Assistant Secretaries were designated Deputy Under Secretaries, and at the time I began service in July 1949 one of them was named Dean Rusk. In June 1949 one Bao Dai was designated emperor in a place called Vietnam, but few Americans had heard of that area and fewer cared what went on there (Sources used in preparing the foregoing section included Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*. The Macmillan Company, New York: 1948; Graham H. Stuart, *American Diplomatic and Consular Practice*. Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York: 1952; Vincent M. Barnett, Jr. (editor), *The Representation of the United States Abroad*. Frederick A. Praeger, New York: 1965. This contains Vincent M. Barnett, Jr., "Introduction: Changing Aspects of the Conduct of Public Business Overseas"; Lincoln Gordon, "The Growth of American Representation Overseas"; Lincoln Gordon, "The Coordination of Overseas Representation"; Henry S. Villard, *Affairs at State*. Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York: 1965; R. Smith Simpson, *Anatomy of the State Department*. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston: 1967.; John P. Leacacos, *Fires in the In-Basket: The ABC's of the State Department*. The World

Publishing Company, Cleveland: 1968; Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department*. W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York: 1969; John Franklin Campbell, *The Foreign Affairs Fudge Factory*. Basic Books, Inc., New York: 1971).

Chapter 12  
Bern, Capital of Switzerland  
(October 1949-December 1951)

"'Tis with our judgment as our watches, none  
Go just alike, yet each believes his own."

- Alexander Pope, *Essay on Criticism*

"The Canton of Berne is the single republic in Europe which has amassed any considerable treasure."

- Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*

Orientation. When you exit the Bern railway station and walk to your right until you come to Bubenberg Platz, you contemplate a statue of Adrian von Bubenberg (1431? - 1479), as great a hero to the Swiss as William Tell, only there are those who say William Tell never existed whereas everybody acknowledges von Bubenberg. He was magistrate for Bern three times, but his name is linked with Murten, or Morat if you are speaking French.

Charles the Bold (le Temeraire), Duke of Burgundy (Bourgogne) dreamed of restoring the Kingdom of Lotharingia (of course you remember Lotharingia) and was doing pretty well at annexing Lorraine and parts of Alsace when he bumped into the non-cooperative Swiss, first at Grandson and later at Murat. Von Bubenberg led the Swiss contingent that put the final crunch to Bold Charles's plans at Murten, and for this he enjoys acclaim among the Swiss. Because he didn't have a Schiller writing a drama about him, though, he doesn't share the international audience of the legendary William Tell. In any event, von Bubenberg didn't get to savor his victory for long. The battle of Murten was in June 1476 and von B. died of some sort of bug only two years later.

The forces of Charles the Bold marched north from Lausanne, but Riekie, Karen, and Ed entrained east from Paris, invading the Bern Bahnhof on October 8, 1949. Because of a mixup we were not met, and I installed the family in the hotel across the street on the theory that any hotel near the railway station must be economy class. This was an error. The Schweizerhof is arguably the most posh in town, and we faced a staggering \$21 a night. But next day the Legation directed us to the Silvahof, a pension that gave us a small suite at a price within our three-month allowance while looking for lodgings.

Somewhere in the protocol books there is an explanation of the difference between a legation and an embassy, and one of these days I'm going to look it up. The dictionary is no help as it says a legation is an embassy. In any event, in diplomatic circles it's considered more prestigious to be an ambassador than a minister, no matter how plenipotentiary. The Swiss, however, declined to maintain embassies in or to receive embassies from other countries. This modesty was popularly attributed to Swiss ideals of democracy and equality of mankind. The French, having their own set of ideals, insisted

that their envoy have the rank of ambassador, but they were the only ones in town to take this stance, and all others maintained legations. In later years, a United States political appointee spent much of his tenure in the post pressuring for "advancement" to ambassador. Eventually Switzerland acceded and changed its practice to sending and receiving ambassadors. Too late, alas, for the American minister. His political party lost the election, and the rank of ambassador went to his successor.

The niceties of diplomatic procedure entail ceremony. Once a year the diplomatic missions tendered their respects to the President of Switzerland. Because of the large number of diplomats, each mission sent only a few to call. Representing the United States were Minister John Carter Vincent, Counselor Morris N. Hughes, and a First Secretary, only we didn't have a First Secretary at the time so a senior Second Secretary substituted.

The drill called for the representatives to go in to the President one at a time, say a few words, and exit pronto. The costume, prescribed to avoid gold-crusted diplomatic uniforms in accordance with Swiss notions of no ostentation, consisted of tails but with a black vest and black tie, along with a top hat. Problem: only Mr. Hughes possessed a top hat. Since the hat was not worn, merely carried, the matter of headfit was of no concern. The Minister carried the hat under his arm, entered and voiced his respects, handed the hat to the Counselor on his way out, who in turn passed it to the Second Secretary. Hats can be tricky. One recalls that the Duke of Alba graciously removed his hat when accorded audience with the Duchess of Parma, although he was entitled to keep it on. And there was the incident when the British Ambassador refused to remove his hat for the Russian Tsar, whereon Ivan the Terrible had it nailed to his head. The diplomatic service can be precarious to your health.

The chancery or offices of the Legation lay in six buildings, mansions scattered here and there in the Elfenau quarter of Bern. The principal mansion, on Jubiläumstrasse, housed the Minister, Counselor, administrative officers, and political secretaries. My own berth was in the office of Economic Counselor George Canty, up the hill and around the corner on Elfenstrasse. The service attaches, the accounting offices, and the spooks (CIA) occupied separate buildings, and the consular offices were in the heart of downtown. Eventually all segments were clumped under one roof, but that took place long after our two years in Bern.

The job. My first task was to write a paper describing the banking system of Switzerland. Given that hundreds of articles and treatises have been written on this topic, I suspect Mr. Canty gave it to me as a sort of test. At any rate, the result was said to have been forwarded to Washington, and I entered on my duties, chiefly commercial reporting. We had neither commercial nor agricultural attache at Bern but depended on State Department personnel to muddle through. Complying with Department of Commerce schedules, I prepared reports on pulp and paper, motion pictures, flavors and essences, highways, and miscellaneous aspects of Swiss industry, such as the making of horsebean flour. Mine not to reason why, but I was puzzled at some of the requirements, for instance, quarterly reports, plus a summary annual report, on the Swiss oil industry, which consisted of one refinery that got all its oil from barges tugged up the Rhine. The

Department of Commerce kindly inflated my ego by publishing some of the reports under my own by-line in its World Trade in Commodities series--for example, "Motion Picture Industry in Switzerland, 1949"; "Pulp and Paper Developments in Switzerland, 1949". The public was permitted to buy these reports at five cents apiece.

Formality was on the wane. When I had been in the Moscow Embassy ten years earlier, tradition required every report--only they were despatches then--to begin with the words: "To the Honorable The Secretary of State: I have the honor to report that...." Now at Bern you just wrote a report and sent it in under cover of a memo. If you were upper echelon brass you rarely wrote a report. The Department of State had discovered electric communications.

To get information for the reports I traveled to Basel or Zurich or smaller towns to consult people in the industries or secretaries of trade associations. But first I would usually talk to government sources to make sure of complying with the Swiss "commercial espionage" law. Language was no barrier as virtually all contacts spoke English. Receptions varied from extreme cordiality to downright suspicion. In one instance I was faced by a committee and asked if the information I sought would be made available to competitors. In another, I met near hostility and was asked if the information would be published. When I answered that there was a good possibility of publication and showed samples of commerce documents, the atmosphere thawed. Apparently, in the distant past there had been a misunderstanding that information would be kept confidential, but my frank declaration cleared the air. I don't imply that my probing unearthed trade secrets, merely that in most instances I was able to obtain the generalized sort of information on production, consumption, prices, imports, exports that customarily appears in industry reports.

The excursions took me to sites scattered throughout French and German Switzerland--Basel, Biel, Moutier, Grenchen, Zurich, Winterthur, Zug, Schwyz, Altdorf, Aarau, Neuchatel, Fribourg, hop, skip and jump according to Washington's requirements. I saw remarkable things, an arc lamp with a brilliance double that of the sun, a pH meter for measuring acidity, a welding machine for joining rails, a machine for recording the tick of a watch, a factory for hot water bottles and other rubber items in the town where William Tell shot the apple. I remember particularly a machine about the size of an upright piano. The demonstrator punched a button, and the machine wheezed and hiccupped and whirred and groaned for 90 seconds and gave birth to a piece of metal about the size of a fly's leg which under a magnifying glass became a tiny screw for use in a watch. The Swiss had some 200 factories each of which specialized in one or two types of machine tools, as automatic screw machines, grinders and burnishers, machines used in hobbing (cutting) gears. Some of the enterprises I visited were in single basement rooms or old houses, making hair driers or glass electrodes, and some were in buildings scattered over hundreds of acres with thousands of people making cranes, diesel engines, locomotives.

One two-week assignment was to acquire a consultant sent out by Washington to do a survey on electronics items. In the course of the survey we visited the Zurich branch of

the International Telephone and Telegraph Company and were included in a luncheon given by the branch manager to honor Colonel Sosthenes Behn, the head honcho for the company and a legend in the business world. Behn founded ITT in 1920 and built it into a conglomerate that at its peak operated 331 branches and 708 subsidiaries in 93 countries. I felt I was really moving in big time; I was also greatly amused because I knew my consultant had been invited only because he was thought to be a potential source of large government orders and I had been invited only because I was supposed to be a part of the consultant, like the tail on a cow. So I had myself a fine time.

But this was not all. Also present was retired Admiral Bull Halsey, hero of the Pacific, and an honorary member of the board of ITT. Meeting him thus, I would never have imagined I was talking to the "We'll go where we damn please" old sea dog of World War II. Nearly 70, he was in poor health, partly because of an accident aboard ship that required a serious abdominal operation. His eyes, too, were inflamed with cysts, and he had to wear glasses with thick lenses. After the main course the president of the Zurich branch made a little speech referring to the distinguished guests, Admiral Halsey, Colonel Behn, consultant Mr. Stevenson, and Mr. Thrasher, and I could barely suppress a giggle at being named in the same breath with such distinguished company.

My duties also included responding to routine trade inquiries, most of which could be answered by looking up data in directories. Occasionally there were those out of the ordinary, such as the American who wanted a music box that played "Everybody Loves My Baby But My Baby Don't Love Nobody But Me". I remember particularly a correspondent in Istanbul who wanted the address of a Chicago manufacturer of chastity belts. He wrote enthusiastically: "Man, I could make a fortune here!" I bucked that one to Washington.

Accommodations. Back in the umptiolithic age, the River Aare cut a horseshoe-shaped gorge varying in depth from 50 to 200 feet. As time went on, the gorge widened until there were banks the width of Park Avenue on each side. The founders of Bern camped inside the horseshoe, at first on the banks and gradually working up onto the heights. In modern times the settlers spilled outside the horseshoe and across the river, lining the heights all around. You have, therefore, the medieval town enclosed in the horseshoe as a center embracing the business and shopping district, with the residential and industrial parts of town across the river. From the environs you cross the gorge on high flung spans that afford postcard views, or you can walk in the Rosengarten and view the city spread out below you like an illustration from Grimm Brothers.

Not far from Bern is the Gurten, a mountain tall enough to ski on, and the Aare goes winding off into the horizon at its foot. Everywhere you turn your eye you are pleased; there is a happy combination of natural location and man-made improvements, and when you add the green of the moist grass and the snow peaks of the Alps some 40 miles away at Interlaken you have a picture that never palls.

After two months of sporadic searching, we began 1950 in a four-room, balcony, k & b apartment across the street from the Rose Garden that looks down on the inner city from

the Altenburg Hill. The Swiss, or at least Bernese, custom is that the tenant buys and installs the light fixtures, but Colonel Mike Williams from our Army Attache's office saved us trouble and expense by putting them in himself. The 220-volt electrical system had three elements: regular current for the lights, current for hot water operating only from 10:00 at night to 7:00 in the morning, and current for the kitchen stove. The last two were supplied at cheaper rates than the first. We had to buy miscellaneous items such as rugs and drapes to supplement the furniture shipped from the States.

There was a bit of money left over from our lodgings allowance, and I was pleased to learn from the finance officer that the surplus could be used to rent furniture. Accordingly, we rented a dining room suite, paying monthly. As the end of our two years approached, I was notified by the shop that our regular payments had satisfied the contract terms and we were entitled to keep the suite. This tied a Gordian knot. Under U.S. Government regulations I was given an allowance to rent lodgings and furnishings but not to buy them. On the other hand, I had acquired title to the furniture with government funds. Ergo, the furniture belonged to the government. When I told our finance officer I was turning a dining room set over to him, he responded emphatically that I was doing no such thing. He was not about to accept equipment that had not been acquired as specified in regulations. Probably I could have kept the set without complications, but as our first President said: "I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy." Besides, we didn't really like the set. We sent it back to the shop.

Our 1950 model Ford four door arrived direct from the factory, a privilege accorded those in overseas service. The privilege did not include extension of credit. In the era before plastic cards, you had to arrange terms with your bank. During my advertising agency days I had bought a U.S. Treasury bond, and this served as collateral for the \$1,350 I had to pay Detroit. The car required several changes to meet Bernese laws. The sealed beams were replaced with headlights of lesser intensity. The blinker lights were made red, the speedometer was changed from miles to kilometers, the two-tone horn was equipped with separate buttons since it was illegal to honk with both tones at once. Insurance with a Swiss firm was compulsory, and I had to take a man-to-man examination about rules of the road. I had trouble in German but passed in French. On learning that if I started to drive on December 29 I would have to pay insurance for all of December, whereas if I started on December 30 I would get two days for free, I waited until December 30.

The garage delivered the car to the Elfenstrasse office, and the staff *oohed* at my shiny toy. I opened the driver's door, and the horn began to toot, two tones in defiance of regulations. The mechanic had to rip out the wires to stop the noise. Within two hours after I picked up the car on December 31 the blinkers quit, and for awhile the engine refused to idle. But these were growing pains, and the Ford gave us beautiful service for the next four years.

In April 1950 we entered Karen in kindergarten, where she had no trouble getting along in *Schweizerdeutsch*, the Bern version of German. The school being near the Legation, I

drove her there each day in the shiny new car, and a colleague brought her home at noon.

Whether or not *Schweitzerdeutsch* is a language or a dialect is a matter for discussion, but there's no denying that Germans have difficulty understanding it and that its grammatical structure has a number of differences from German. I'm told it's a retention of mediaeval forms that died out in Germany when Martin Luther in his translation of the Bible laid the basis for the High German of today. Curiously, it is not a written language. Books are written in it, true, but there is no common agreement on spelling, and a *Schweitzerdeutsch* book will show marked variations depending on the home base of the writer. For there are dialectical differences between *Bernerdeutsch* and *Baslerdeutsch* and *Zurcherdeutsch*, and while a Bernese can converse fluently with a person from Zurich each has no trouble identifying the other's home town. Street signs and most newspapers are in standard German.

People. Like us, Cora and Colonel Mike Williams were new arrivals staying at the Silvahof while looking for regular housing. They took a shine to four-year-old Karen, perhaps in part because they had lost their own infant son. Moreover, we had common interests; Mike had a bottle of bourbon and I had a bottle of Calvados, Calvados being the rage of the moment because it was favored by the characters in a best seller, *Arch of Triumph*. Before our car arrived they carried us along on trips to Biel, Neuchatel, Fribourg, and other nearby points in their red Plymouth. After they occupied a huge house the other side of the Kornhaus Bridge and stocked the cellar with Gevrey Chambertin we spent much time with them. Mike was an electronics engineer and a combat veteran of North Africa. We kept in touch with them for some twenty years, seeing them briefly in Washington and Norfolk and exchanging letters when they settled in Arizona.

One reward of the Foreign Service is that you meet lots of fine people; one disappointment is that you lose track of many of them when you move on. We were particularly lucky at Bern in establishing friendships that held up across the years. One wishes there were space and time to sketch the careers of them all. Wes and Liz Carlson, for instance, were given Godthab, Greenland, as their first two-year post. Later on, Wes left the Service to set up and conduct a successful business in Los Angeles. Laurie and Captain Fred Bush invited us often to their house in the Murten suburb. Freddie, their son, some twenty years later graduated from Annapolis and himself became an air attache.

Now and then you get to renew old acquaintances. Sitting in my office one day, I overheard the receptionist suggest that the visitor might want to address his inquiry to Mr. Thrasher. "Would that be Ed Thrasher?" a voice asked. It was Francis Flavin, exploring Bern in advance of transferring his family from Prague. Back in 1939 he had entreated transfer from Moscow to Warsaw, but the transfer had been given to me because he was too valuable to lose. He spent seven years in the Soviet Union, moving with the Military Attache to Kuibyshev when the Germans forced the Soviet Government out of Moscow. He married a girl from the Swedish Embassy who bore him three beautiful children, and now he was joining the staff of Colonel Miles Cowles, our attache

in Bern. In after years, Francis became an analyst in the Pentagon, and I have to report that his life ended tragically. He was working in his garage and was killed when his car slipped off the jack. Flavin was rock steady, a man of high principle and integrity, a person it was a privilege to know.

Another friend from old times was my former boss in Budapest, Colonel Richard C. Partridge. I had written to him at Heidelberg where I knew him to be stationed, and he turned up in my office one day in June 1950 and said he expected to be visiting Switzerland off and on. Nearly a year later he (now a Brigadier) and Mrs. Partridge visited Bern again. After the war he had served as military attache in Belgrade--indeed, he had written me to ask if I wanted to go with him--and there he had gotten to know R. Borden Reams, who had just replaced Morris Hughes as Counselor at Bern. In Belgrade Partridge had also known the Dutch First Commercial Secretary, Mr. Verdonck Huffnagel, and we invited all three for a pickup cocktail party at our flat. Since Reams had served some six years in South Africa in the '30s, the mix made for a sort of family party. It was good to see General Partridge again as he and his wife were neighbor-type people, and I was pleased with myself that he thought enough of me to keep contact. The evening was a social success, developing into pot-luck supper, with the Verdoncks and Reamses comfortably chatting until midnight.

Second Secretary Doug Henderson joined the economic section in late September 1950. He, wife Dorothy, and four children dined with us on Thanksgiving, and we had immediate cause to be thankful. We had placed in a corner of Karen's room a green tin cabinet, shaped like a grandfather clock, to store toys, electric bulbs, tack hammers, and old pieces of string. The kids were all in this room playing, and we adults were in the living room attacking old fashioned when there was a terrific crash. My initial reaction was to be calm, then I realized it was the metal cabinet and I was into the room as if shot from a peashooter, for had that cabinet landed on a child.... Well, it just grazed little Lee's eye, but it frightened rather than hurt her. Bruce, aged 4, had climbed atop the cabinet. It toppled over full length, tossing Bruce comfortably onto Karen's bed, and just missed the toddler sitting on the floor. Doug said afterward he knew at once there had been no harm because the kids had put up a yell. If there had been silence he would have been worried. To all our other blessings we added this close squeak from tragedy on a day of thanks.

Henderson was to rise in the Service and end his career as ambassador to Bolivia. While at Bern another child, Jennifer, disappeared, and all personnel at the economic section combed the nearby streets; she was found after some hours in the *Dahlholzli* or forest near the Legation. In 1976 a son, Peter, who had become a banker in Central America, was killed in a helicopter crash in Guatemala at age 32.

The political section of the Legation numbered four Second Secretaries, their individual responsibilities no concern of mine although I was vaguely aware that time and effort were devoted to the I. G. Farben case. To my knowledge, the "police action" ongoing in Korea was handled only at the top echelon, and to all appearances it had little impact on the diplomatic corps at large. As for the economic section, the officer complement included, in addition to Economic Counselor Paul Minneman (who replaced Mr. Canty in

January 1950), Second Secretary Jim Byrne and Third Secretary Ed Thrasher. I speculate that being the only Third Secretary in the Legation contributed greatly to our social life. When other diplomatic missions made up their invitation lists they had the problem of choosing among five Second Secretaries from the American Legation. An easy solution was to say to hell with it and invite the Third. We were included in many functions where we really had no contacts, for instance, the Turks, Argentines, Mexicans, Uruguayans.

I found it remarkable that South Africa had neither a diplomatic nor consular representative in Switzerland. There was a South African investment trust that was sold through Swiss banks, and I chanced on a Zurich banker who had just returned from an air trip to the Union regarding a Swiss loan through the Standard Bank. (He was amazed at Johannesburg and under the impression that all the buildings there were erected during the last ten years.) There was trade between the two countries; the oranges we ate at breakfast were stamped "Outspan". Yet South Africa had no one looking after its interests except Commonwealth representatives.

At the Foreign Service Institute when I joined the Service one speaker told us that in umpteen years in the Foreign Service he had never obtained any useful information from cocktail parties. Another told us that in umpteen years in the Foreign Service his main source of leads to information had been cocktail parties. I guess it depends on what you mean by information. Certainly social contacts with fellow diplomats can help. Of course, you can't get happily stewed as if every night were New Year's Eve. It boils down to work, no matter how many jokes are made about drinking 10,000 cocktails for your country. But I do grant that you attend more social functions than you need to, and this means you have to reciprocate and invite more people than your official duties really require.

At the outset I tended to categorize diplomats' traits by nationality. British (I had made up my mind in advance) were stuffy; French were overwhelmed with their own self-importance; Irish were talkative; Norwegians were blond and jolly; Swedes were blond and taciturn; Dutch were stolid and friendly; and so on. In due course I recognized that individuals are individuals no matter what their nationalities. In this respect, consider our hosts, the Swiss, who have a reputation for being correct and aloof. Given that a substantial proportion of the Swiss GNP derives from tourism, the Swiss are visited by scads of people who pop in, stay a week, and never come back. Small wonder that they can establish few personal relationships with people who stay such a short time. Diplomats are around a bit longer, but relationships beyond the correctly cordial stage are slow to develop. In our own case, we built up only one friendship that has lasted. Max Krell was on the American desk at the foreign ministry, and our friendship with him and Marianne has lasted over the ensuing fifty-odd years.

Maggie and Waldemar von Sieben were friends of Laurie and Fred Bush. Waldemar was a businessman, and Maggie had a glorious mezzo-soprano voice. We drove to Basel to hear her sing in *Nabucco*. Except for the renowned *Va Pensiero* chorus, I was not taken with this opera. There was no action to speak of, and everybody just stood around and hollered. As for poor Maggie, in the first act somebody tried to stab her, in the second

somebody knocked her down, and in the third somebody offered to decapitate her with a cleaver. In spite of being so sought after, she got to sing only one little air, and we had little chance to appreciate her voice. Maggie had potential in the operatic world and made recordings for English Decca, but her career was cut short by untimely deafness.

The Helvetians. Swiss and Americans share the same values, except that the Swiss are more serious and less inclined to play. They hike in the mountains, and they dine out in their excellent restaurants, or sip beer in a *stubli* and listen to yodels (and they can distinguish between Swiss yodels and Bavarian yodels and Austrian yodels), and they go to movies and concerts, and when they want to let their hair down they do it in Paris or Rome. When you first come to Bern you think people are staring at you because you're alien, but before long you perceive that they stare at each other, staring is in. They're individual and they're democratic--they love voting in referendums-- but they're regimented and take working nine or more hours six days a week as the norm. And the women eschew glamour. Hair is pulled into buns, eyebrows are unshaped, pancake makeup is seen only in French cantons, even lipstick is rare. Maybe one reason is that peaches and cream complexions are commonplace. Women did not get the right to vote until 1971. Would things have been different if they had rallied under Max Factor?

When you went to the movies in Bern, you were annoyed to be told that you could not take Karen or any child under 18 except for designated films such as *Snow-White*. You were more annoyed when you stumbled over somebody's dog in the dark. Somehow it didn't seem right that dogs were admitted but kids were not. The period January 18--February 14 was the official "sales" period in Bern retail stores. Switzerland is a bastion of capitalism, the economy is not controlled, and prices are not fixed by law. Yet it was illegal to advertise an *Ausverkauf* except during this period and one other in July. A Swiss lawyer explained (and I hope I have it right) that you may reduce prices on your merchandise, you may undersell your competitors on goods whose prices are not fixed by trade associations, you may advertise that you are selling widgets at SF10, but it is only during the authorized periods that you may say widgets were SF15 and are now marked down to SF10.

Territory fixing by agreement was common. Mike Williams's landlord, owner of a brewery, explained that the Bern market is divided by common accord among the several breweries in the canton, each brewer confining his sales to agreed-on outlets, although imported beers were permitted to compete freely. Apportioning the market enables businesses to survive. That it is difficult for a newly founded brewery to get a position in the market is not a matter for concern. Apropos, a group from the Legation was given a tour of one of the local breweries. I carried away from this a draft of beer in my tummy and memories of vats and pipes in my mind, but more memorable was a concert by three Alpenhorns, courtesy of the management. These are the valveless horns, tall as a man, that are played with the bell resting on the ground, the tone on the order of French horns with indigestion. The tale is they were developed as a means of signaling, with the help of echoes, from peak to peak.

Although the Bernese had numerous cafes, sidewalk in summer and indoor in winter,

they did not use them for offices and recreation as in some European cities. In Budapest, elderly gentlemen order coffee and a chessboard and sit playing for hours, and businessmen occupy the same tables at the same times every day to conduct transactions. Not so in Bern. On the other hand, use of Bern cafes and restaurants was more leisurely than in the United States. There was no pressure to gulp and run. Neither was there great love for the martini. Aperitifs such as vermouth were customary, along with the Italian Campari and the French Amer Picon. A favorite after-dinner drink was kirsch, distilled from the fermented juice of cherries. While we are talking about the palate, let it be said that Swiss cooking leads the world. I concede that, except for specialties such as fondue and raclette, Swiss dishes derive from French, German, and Italian sources, but the Swiss chefs uniformly do up these dishes superbly. Maybe you can get a poor meal in Switzerland, but you'll have to search for it.

At the time, the costs of restaurant meals seemed to vie with Mt. Everest in height. We complained at having to pay the equivalent of \$2.00 for our monthly get-together luncheons at the Restaurant du Theatre. I recorded dining at the Schweizerhof Grill, perhaps the most expensive eatery in town. We had cocktails, steak with trimmings, a bottle of red wine, and coffee for 15.00 Swiss francs, or about \$3.50. Today it would cost you that much for a glass of water.

Lots of people used bicycles to get around. The baker boy with a huge basket strapped to his back, the milkman with his little cart, the railway station baggage smasher with your trunk on a dolley, all used bicycles. Some people relied on bicycles to get from town to town. Many of these refused to yield the road to cars, meaning that you in your Dusenbergs had to crawl behind a bicycle at 10 miles per hour until a passing lane could be found.

A feature of the Swiss economy was the part played by the post office in the business routine. On arriving in Bern I opened a checking account, but I soon learned that one does not pay bills by check. Virtually all firms had accounts with the post office. When Loeb's Department Store sent you a bill, it enclosed a postal check, that is, a slip of paper printed with its postal account number. You filled in your name and the amount and took the check to the post office. The check was printed in three sections; the post office rubber-stamped all three, gave one to you as your receipt, retained one for its files, and forwarded the third to Loeb's as evidence that you had paid. You learned the drill of paying half-a-dozen bills at the post office at once. Ironically, the one thing you could not do with the post office account was pay bills by mail. Bank checks were reserved for goodness knows what. Incidentally, each check had a built-in tax stamp, a further deterrent to their use.

The banks were not exactly geared to hustle customers in and out. When I made a deposit in the Union Bank of Switzerland, I approached the *kontokurrent* teller and informed him I wanted to make a deposit. He would fill out a form and hand it and the money to a chap who was hermetically sealed in a cubbyhole on his left. This chap would type out a form and hand it back to the teller. The teller would affix a tax stamp, rubberstamp the form, and pass it to a chap hermetically sealed in a cubbyhole on his right. This chap would

initial it and hand it to me. If there had been long lines waiting before each window I would have been all day, but there were never any lines because nobody could spare the time to do banking in this fashion.

Speaking of Loeb's, we ordered some photo albums after arriving at our next post. Along with the package Loeb's enclosed a note, something like this: "Dear Sir: The money you sent us was a bit more than the price of the albums. We thought you might not want Swiss coins in change, so we enclose three small bars of chocolate."

A few weeks after we arrived, Bern celebrated *Zibelemarit* or Onion Festival Day. That same naughty Charles the Bold, who was later on trounced at Murten, was besieging Bern and had cut off the city's food supplies. The local peasantry broke the blockade by floating barges of onions down the Aare at night. Full of onions, the burghers sallied forth and drove the Burgundians away. As a reward, the peasants were given the right to bring onions into Bern one day a year without paying toll. Eventually the tolls disappeared, but the tradition survives. One of the ways you celebrate Onion Festival Day is to eat onion pie; some people like it.

Activities. Plays, operettas and operas were given at the Stadttheater Bern, a hatbox with enthusiastic orchestra, a conductor with mussed-up hair, and several divas who could carry a tune, especially the renowned Inge Borkh. Operas were offered two or three times per week, the smash being the aforementioned *Nabucco*, which was given some 30 times in the 1949-1950 season. *Il Trovatore*, too, was a success, but offerings outside the conservative groove were box office bombs. I did manage to catch the rarely-given *Fair at Sorochinsk*, but *Otello* survived only one performance, and when they put on *Elektra* I was perhaps the only person in the audience. The management replaced it with *Madame Butterfly* so somebody beside the ushers would attend. When the critic for *Der Bund* reviewed *Butterfly* he devoted three of his four paragraphs to wailing for the lost *Elektra*. On a return trip some thirty years later I took in a sold-out performance of *Hello Dolly*, given in German of course.

In Bern's concert hall we heard Marian Anderson toss off a program of Brahms, Schubert, de Falla, two operatic arias, spirituals, and five encores as casually as you sing *Home on the Range* in the shower. On other occasions we heard Edwin Fischer, Fritz Busch, Karl Schuricht, Furtwangler and the Vienna Philharmonic, and Benny Goodman and his Sextet. Elizabeth Schumann, age more than sixty, gave a quiet evening of lieder.

Another Schumann, Robert, provided offbeat entertainment. Advance notices said the incidental music was based on Byron's poem, so I broke out the old book of Byron my grandfather used to have and read *Manfred* aloud to Riekie. Somewhere Somerset Maugham has written that American husbands like to read to their wives, and Riekie will confirm this any time. *Manfred* has a hero like Laurence Olivier playing MacHeathcliff, with brow furrowed by secret pain and with the power to summon spirits. He keeps asking the spirits dumb questions about his secret pain until they get fed up and decide to take him over. He repulses them and dies with his soul intact, presumably taken over by angels instead. Remarkable that Byron, whose life was a bit earthy, could write such a

work. Well, Schumann composed incidental music to all this stuff. The hero declaims the lines until he's out of breath, the orchestra plays a little, the hero declaims some more, and the damn thing drags on for over an hour. Thrown in are three actors who serve as spirits, a mixed quartet, three trombones, a tuba, and a full chorus. If they'd had a few lantern slides the act could have played the Roxy. I have seldom passed a duller evening. We were grateful that after the intermission the orchestra gave a relaxed performance of Beethoven's Eighth.

We tried twice to organize phonograph record concerts, the way we used to have them in Pretoria, but both efforts were failures. The first time our guests stretched out on the floor, the better to hear the music, and quietly went to sleep. The second time the girls started to yatter as soon as the music began to play, and when I told them to shush they wanted to know if we had *Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life*. There were plenty of other diversions for Bern evenings, for instance the Chikita dance bar where the shots of Scotch were so large we verbalized: "Hey, not so much. Don't Chikita me."

Riekie and I spent many hours swatting tennis balls at a local club that gave us a diplomatic rate of \$25.00 a season (which we thought steep at the time). Our partners were usually Earl and Annette Myers, who never yielded us a set, and Fred and Laurie Bush, who never yielded us a game. Oh, well, 'tis better to have played and lost than never to have played at all.

One afternoon Fred Bush and Wilton Earl took me to the nine-hole course atop the Gurten mountain, my introduction to golf. First they made me buy three balls; they would lend me clubs, but nobody would lend me a ball. On the first tee I swung so hard I disturbed my pancreas, but the ball sat unimpressed. On the second I made like a golddigger on the Witwatersrand, but the ball did not budge. Then the boys started giving instructions. Bend that knee, don't break your left elbow, keep your eye on the ball so you won't be surprised if you hit it. On the third try I drove into the center of a forest where it will become a relic. A Swiss gentleman approached and introduced himself as the president of the golf club. "Why," he asked me, "don't you take some lessons?" For all their expertise my colleagues didn't do too well, either. Fred and I lost three balls, and Wilton lost four. I didn't try golf again for thirty years, at which time I achieved precisely the same results.

I suppose I ought to say a word about mountain sports. It never occurred to me to go climbing for the simple reason I was too damn scared. You climb a mountain because it's there, and as far as I'm concerned it can stay there and I'll stay over here. We never got on skis during our two years because of the expense. Skis and poles and pants and shoes and shoelaces were to be bought only after we had indulged ourselves in other respects. Moreover, if we had bought ski equipment for everybody and then been transferred to Bombay I would have been mad at Personnel. It was not until ten years later that we took up skis, when assigned to Ottawa.

Persons more athletic than I liked to swim in the Aare. They would enter the river above town and struggle through a sort of mill race into calmer waters by the Nydegg Bridge,

where they would arrange to be picked up by a car. On one occasion Wilton Earle, Fred Bush, and British Air Attache Spencer made a party of it. Wilton plunged in, Fred plunged in, Spencer plunged in. As the latter surfaced, he bumped into an object and brought it to the top. It was a corpse, the body of some unlucky swimmer.

Incidents happen, even in a town as staid as Bern, like the carousing streetcar. One evening some students climbed on a sidetracked streetcar in a suburb and turned on the controls as a prank, but nothing happened because the company had shut off the power. The students apparently concluded the old car did not work and went away leaving the controls on. About four in the morning the company resumed power and the street car set off for the center of town without any hand on the throttle. It lumbered up the boulevard that leads into Bern from Thun, negotiated a traffic circle, and pointed down Thunstrasse for the Kirchenfeld Bridge. A ten-block hill leads to this bridge, and at its foot is a fountain around which the street curves. The car must have been about to prove  $E = MC^2$  by the time it reached the bottom of the hill and, had it not been for the curve, would surely have charged into and possibly off the bridge. But when it hit the curve at high speed it jumped the rails and crashed into the fountain, where it came to rest, still on its wheels. Bern's burghers woke to find the streetcar parked in the fountain and nobody the worse.

Here and there. One thing you do a lot of when you are stationed in Switzerland is travel. You can drive clean across most of the country, from Geneva to Zurich, in four hours. To visit the southeast cantons, near Italy, will take a little longer because of mountains and winding roads, but you can still get from any point to any point in a day. Yet it's astonishing what different worlds you are in when you've covered that short distance. What distinguishes one country, or one province, from another? People both sides of a frontier look pretty much alike, grass and dandelions grow on both sides, and you can never get a taxi when you want it. All the same you know you are in a different area once you cross the line. When you journey twenty miles west of Bern you sense an unmarked frontier that separates Latin from Teuton. Tracing this frontier is difficult, but you can get an idea of its general course from the towns that carry double names. Moving north from, say, Lausanne, you name the villages according to the language you are speaking. Freiburg/Fribourg has two levels, one at water's edge where the folk customarily use German and one at the top where most speak French. The frontier cuts up to the little mediaeval village of Murten/Morat and over to Neuchatel/ Neuenberg. Thence to Biel, also called Bienne, and Solothurn or Soleure. This little arc roughly defines the border between French and German Switzerland.

As a rule, the German Swiss are more likely to know French than the French Swiss are to know German. Whether or not they know English may depend on the canton in which they get their schooling. Cantons set the curricula, and some cantons stress languages more than others. In Bern and Zurich all persons regularly dealing with the public -- government, transportation, hotels, restaurants, retailers -- speak English. Indeed I tended to get a little piqued in the shops when I started the conversation in my flawless highschool German or French and received an immediate answer in English. I grant there's no pleasing me; one time a friend and I were in a department store clanking along

in French until, reaching a thought neither of us could express, the salesgirl helped us out in English. "You're a rascal," I reproved her. "You shouldn't let us stumble around when you can speak English." "Oh," says she, "I love to hear Americans try to speak French." Bern city is primarily a German-speaking town although you do hear considerable French spoken and it has several French schools. Most newspapers are in German, and so are the street signs, and when people ask you for directions they always put the first question in German. But just about everybody can go into fluent French without hesitation. Italian, on the other hand, is an orphan except in the Ticino. Not many people in Zurich or Bern or Geneva can communicate in Italian the way they can in German, French, and English.

With the distances between regions so short, you could set out in the morning for Lausanne, take in a tennis match between the South African Eric Sturgess and the Czech Vladimir Cernik, and be back in Bern in the evening. Or you could pick narcissus in the hills near Vevey, or visit the town fair at Neuchatel, or even buy a ham in the French town of Pontarlier, and return in a day.

One of my industry trips in summertime took me to Moutier, an hour and a half over a mountain ridge to the north. The manager drove our party five miles out of town, put us on a train through a tunnel under the mountain range we had just crossed, then gave us a ride in a chairlift to the top of the range, called the Weissenstein. It was the first time I had ridden on a chairlift, and I was thrilled to the marrow.

The experience of floating 15 to 30 feet over trees and peaks supported by a steel cable was so novel and the view over the valley of the Aare and down to the Berner Oberland so remarkable I decided to give Riekie and five-year-old Karen an excursion. Unwisely I chose a Sunday and still more unwisely the day of the stone throwers' convention. We did not find this out until we got there. We had to wait a bit for the chairlift, and on arriving at the summit we encountered several thousand people on the lawn of the mountaintop hotel watching the local Herculesees shoulder a huge boulder and heave it.

Since this was not unpleasant, we had a nice picnic until we tried to go back down the mountain and realized there were hundreds of people waiting for the lift ahead of us. A chairlift can take only two people at a time, and there's no such thing as running extra chairs to handle the holiday load, nor is there such a thing as romping gaily down the crags and crannies of a mountain that is used for ski. We waited in the full sun one and one-half hours, packed five abreast. I was relatively well off because I could set Karen on my shoulders, but there were numerous parents with babies in arms and with larger children forced to stand mashed among the adults. It was an ordeal, and I imagine that people who had just begun to wait by the time we got aboard must have had to stand two or more hours. The 20-minute downhill ride was appreciated all the more for having been so hardly earned.

Proximity. Bern is a quiet town, and the Bernese like it that way, because if they want to yuk things up they can light out for Paris or Milan or Frankfurt. We, too, lit out, not so much for whoopee as to take advantage of being in Europe. We got to Paris twice, and to Stuttgart and Vienna.

In April 1950 we took a weekend to visit Alma and Bill Buffum in Stuttgart, where he had drawn consular duties, crossing the frontier at Basel, proceeding through Baden-Baden and Freiburg to the *Autobahn* and then to Stuttgart, a drive of about ten hours. Karen went with us on this trip, and the Buffums found us a baby sitter. Freiburg and most other towns had been heavily bombed, but Baden-Baden seemed untouched. Stuttgart, on the other hand, was a shambles, though I was told it was in the best shape of any large German city, with factories operating, shops doing business, and housing largely restored. But the railway station still had no roof five years after war's end, the opera house though undamaged was surrounded by crushed buildings, a great church stood with gutted insides and high on a steeple a clock that still told time. The Buffums housed us and fed us and took us to a musical comedy. We drove back through Zurich, overnighting there because I had a business meeting.

We enjoyed a week in Paris the first week of May 1950, taking Berta along to mind Karen. Most days she played in the park bordering the Champs Elysees. (I must acknowledge here that we were extremely lucky to have Berta our first two years abroad. We kept in touch with her afterward although, a native of Austria, she could not manage English and our German left a great deal to be desired. A few years later she wrote that she had married and become a Swiss citizen.) Luckily the weather held throughout our stay; it would have been awkward if rain had confined a five-year-old to a hotel. We were typical tourists, window shopping, eyeing the Mona Lisa and Notre Dame, seeking bargains at the flea market, ascending the Eiffel Tower, buying a couple of dresses for Riekie and a recording of Berlioz *La Damnation de Faust* (which at that time could be had only on French records, and 78 rpm at that), eating at economically swank restaurants, and taking in one night club, Le Boeuf sur le Toit. The return trip took twelve hours because we had trouble finding our way out of Paris.

We set out for Vienna on September 8, 1951 with Doc and Lynn Jonnes (pronounced Jones) holding down the back seat of the Ford. Doc, a nickname not a title, was an absent-minded genius in the Legation's Economic Cooperation Administration section, whose hair always looked as if it had just gone through a thorn bush because he could never stop running his fingers through it. Lynn resembled a girl of 15; it was hard to credit that one so tiny was expecting a third child. The road took us through Zurich to Konstanz on the shore of Lake Ditto which we crossed by ferry, thence over indifferent roads until we picked up the *Autobahn* at Ulm and sped to Munich. The heavily bombed city was still under military occupation, but we had no difficulty finding hotel rooms though we had no reservations.

Vince Boening, who had been with us in the Foreign Service Institute introductory course, squired us to *Biergartens*, and although I knew of such things I didn't know of such things, if you get what I mean. Imagine Madison Square Garden packed with tables around which everybody has a stein, while up at one end an oom-pah band plays popular German airs to which the whole assembly sways as one. Seeing this, I could understand why the Nazi movement originated in Munich, for it is only a step from being hypnotized by beer and music to being hypnotized by beer and words. I drank more than two liters of

beer in the places we visited, just to say I know what *Munchnerbrau* is like, and experienced next morning the significance of the German word *Katzenjammer*.

From Munich to Vienna is about 450 kilometers, but when Doc reminded us we would be getting there at nightfall with no hotel reservations I agreed it would be prudent to make the trip in two stages and nurse my hangover. We resumed the *Autobahn* to Salzburg and continued on toward Linz, but turned off to the resort Gmunden, a quiet spot of great beauty, with a paddlewheel steamer on the lake. We holed up in a decaying hotel where Franz Schubert might have stayed, and so peaceful was the scene and so uncomfortable my head--take it from me, chaps, it's not a good idea to knock back more than two liters of Munich beer in a couple of hours-- that I was all for ending the trip right there. In the morning we pushed on to Linz, about five miles from which is Ens, at that time the beginning of the Russian Zone of Austria.

At one end of the bridge was an American Army post and at the other a Russian Army post. We were a bit nervous about driving through the Russian Zone, and the American corporal was definitely no help. He asked whether we had enough gasoline to reach Vienna and whether we had tools to change a tire. When he looked at my gray card, or permit to enter the Russian Zone, he noted it was made out to Edward James Thrasher and I had signed it Edward J. Thrasher, and he recommended I get another card as he doubted the Russians would let me pass. Of course I tried it anyhow, prepared to be sweetly persuasive, but the Russians said never a word and waved us through with a cursory glance at cards and passports.

When an American car went through the Russian Zone, the U.S. soldier issued a sheet of paper to hand over to the checkpoint on the edge of Vienna. The car number was noted when you entered the Zone, and if you didn't turn up at the Vienna checkpoint within a reasonable time an inquiry was started (or so we were told). You were warned that leaving the highway en route through the Zone was not authorized. But if your car was of some other nationality--and in this corporal's eyes ours was Swiss because of its licence plates--no such instructions were given you and you could leave the highway as you wished, at your own risk of course. Since the road was like those in Switzerland, wiggling from curve to curve and going out of its way to pass through the heart of every village, you could turn aside anywhere you took a fancy. In short, it was nothing like the Russian-controlled highway from West Germany to Berlin. We stopped in a village for a hearty but not too appetizing *Schnitzel mit Kartoffeln*.

Vienna was extra crowded because we had unwittingly chosen the week of its *Mustermesse* or annual fair. We had tried to reserve rooms though Cook's from Bern but had canceled when we learned the reservations had been made for the wrong date and wrong number of persons. Friends had recommended we try certain hotels, but all were filled. Finally we were told of a private house, and we located a three-room apartment that put us up for a night, after which we were able to locate hotel rooms. I devoted most of next day to getting gasoline, shunting from ECA to provost marshal to Legation to provost marshal to post exchange to commissary, and then we began to look at Vienna.

The *Staatsoper* was closed for rebuilding owing to bomb damage, but at the historic Theater an der Wien we saw two magnificent ballets, *Don Juan* to music by Gluck, and the *Josephs Legend* to music by Richard Strauss. I had never heard tell of the latter. It makes a Hollywood tale of the story of Potiphar's wife. When Joseph was kidnapped to Egypt he was sold to Potiphar, a captain of the Pharaoh. His wife is bored, bored, bored, and to amuse her Potiphar offers entertainments. Beautiful girls do wiggle dances. Money lenders pour streams of gold. Twelve tremendous brutes (I marvel that the ballet could find them) put on boxing matches, but the wife remains bored, bored, bored. Then Joseph is brought in in a palanquin (why a slave should rate such treatment is up to you to figure out), and P's wife's switch clicks. She is so taken with this simple shepherd singing God's praises she gives him a necklace as a mark of her favor. In the night she comes to him in flowing cheesecloth and tries to entice him. When he spurns her, she takes umbrage and has him bound to a stake, but Jehovah intervenes, a shining angel descends and breaks Joseph's bonds. In an agony of fear, wicked Mrs. Potiphar seizes a cord and strangles herself--and that ain't easy, just try it.

The whole was done with incredible splendor, sets, casting, costumes. Captain and Mrs. Potiphar and their courtiers were in Spanish-ruff dress, the grand vizier and his deputy wore Egyptian robes, and several functionaries were wound around in cloth of silver in shall we say metallic style. The entire image was one of barbaric magnificence, and the dancing was first-rate provided you didn't mind the namby-pamby antics the choreographer had worked out for Joseph to avoid any hint of sensuality and concentrate on his praise for the Lord. Joseph really earned his pay; his initial dance must have lasted 15 minutes, and although he was barefoot and wore only a goatskin he was dripping with sweat when it was over. The music was typical Strauss, tremendously moving alternating with banal. When the vizier poured gold into the scales the violins gave a descending squeal, and when the boxers slugged each other the kettledrums went boom-boom. But when Mrs. P. was trying to smother Joseph with allure, and when he walked to the angel at the close, you realized one of the great composers of all time was pulling out the stops.

This music stands on its own, independent of the theater, yet recording companies have vied with each other in neglecting it. I kept looking for *Die Josephs Legende* in record catalogs for years but it was not until July 1992, forty-odd years later, that I found the world premier recording, performed by Hiroshi Wakasugi conducting the Tokyo (Japan) Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra.

We shopped and we sightsaw and we dined out, but all in all we soon tired of Vienna. Spoiled by Swiss cooking, we got no really good meals although, on the other hand, we got nothing actually bad. We tried a night club but turned back from the door on finding it deserted. We looked for Strauss waltzes but were told the season had ended. We made a point of hearing a chap playing the zither in a beer joint because a current movie *The Third Man* had made a fad of it. We drank *Schlagobers* (coffee with whipped cream) and we went in and out of shops on the Ring, but although we arrived on a Monday we were ready to leave by Friday. Nothing was wrong, but we had reached the point where we were looking for things to do, a condition arising as much from our ignorance of the city as from the place itself. I had read a guidebook before setting out but had been

discouraged by frequent footnotes: "This can no longer be seen as it was destroyed during the war".

So on Friday, September 14, 1951 we drove back to Salzburg. Overlooking the city is a mountain on top of which perches a *Kursaal* or restaurant-night spot-game room, and in this attractive setting we enjoyed a pleasant evening's dancing. Next day on to Berchtesgaden, completely taken over by U.S. forces as a recreation resort. We wanted to visit the Eagle's Nest, and following a sign we took a chairlift to the top of a mountain. Once there we learned that Hitler's hideaway was atop a still higher mountain and it would take us two and one-half hours to walk there. We descended subdued but I doubt any wiser.

Back through Salzburg. To drive to Innsbruck you had to cross a little finger of Germany, meaning you had to go through Austrian customs, German customs and then, a few miles farther along, through German customs and Austrian customs again. We did not stop at Innsbruck but continued to the foot of the Aarberg Pass, overnighing at Landeck. Next day we were back in Switzerland, traversing Liechtenstein en route. We drove along the south side of the beautiful Wollensee to Lake Zurich, then over the hills to Schwyz and the Urnersee. This was the most beautiful sight I had found in Switzerland (years later I was to see Lugano, an even more beautiful spot) and I wanted Riekie to see it though it was bit out of our way. After lunching at Altdorf we retraced our steps along the Urnersee, turned west to Luzern, and were back in Bern in two hours. The trip covered just over 2,000 kilometers, and we figure it cost about \$200. Because Doc shared the driving, I was not at all bushed when I returned to work next day.

We managed our second trip to Paris correctly, which is to say I went on government business and took Riekie along at our personal expense. This was in November 1950, and with the weather too cold for Karen to play outdoors we left her in Berta's care in Bern. The Legation's Economic Section was directed to prepare a report on telecommunications, and the job was assigned to me because I knew that you listen to a telephone at one end and speak into the other. It happened that the Economic Cooperation Administration missions in Europe were holding a conference on telecommunications in Paris. We had no ECA mission in Switzerland because the Swiss did not accept aid from other countries. ECA business was handled by Second Secretary Jim Byrne of the Economic Section, and he suggested that I and the report would benefit if I were to attend. As before, Riekie and I put up at the Hotel Vouillemont, a modestly priced lodging around the corner from the Place de la Concorde. Mike Williams, a genuine telecommunications man, brought Cora along, and we made the Paris rounds together.

Yes, we did dutifully attend the conference over several days, and at one point I even found myself making a little speech to the participants round the table. Everybody agreed that the required report would be difficult to compile, the representative of one Mission even declaring they were turning the assignment over to commercial experts. I worked on the report off and on for months, seeking help hither and yon. The requirements numbered 13 pages of questions on telephone, telegraph, radio, radio telephone, radio telegraph, railway communications, well, everything except television, which at that time

had not come into its own. Ordinarily I could get help from Swiss Government sources, but this time the Swiss Posts and Telegraphs was uncooperative, although the information apparently was not considered secret. Much of the data were published, but I had to dig it all out painfully, and of course I had other reports to write. The report was forwarded to Washington in April 1951. Whether or not anybody in Washington ever read it I cannot say; to my knowledge there was no feedback.

We took a Paris by Night tour of four entertainments, a "cave of terror" where an amiable conjurer showed us routine tricks, an Apache dance joint which the guide said showed us how Apaches would look if there were any Apaches in Paris any more, a pleasant night club where we danced a little and saw a feeble floor show, and finally the Bal Tabarin with some really fine acts. Mike and Cora being all hepped up about a spot called La Nouvelle Eve because they had read a favorable review in the *Herald Tribune*, we went there the following evening and found that the management was too stingy to buy brassieres for the chorus girls. Neither Mike nor I had any complaints. We brought back to Bern a toy phonograph for Karen and several bottles of champagne. This, our third visit to Paris, was to be our last. In the forty years since that time, neither Riekie nor I has ever been back. I am sorry to say we have never attended a performance at the Paris Opera, although I tried unsuccessfully for tickets all three times. Well, it might happen yet.

Careers. To dragoon is to compel to a course of action, as if by the use of heavily equipped cavalry. Riekie was dragooned into becoming an editor by the American Women's Club, a non-defined aggregation of the ladies of the Legation staff. The Club put out monthly a mimeographed (xerox was not yet invented) news sheet called *The Front Berner* that kept people informed about common activities, such as the softball games with the Geneva Consulate. As often happens, one person wrote, edited and published it single-handed, and when that person was transferred to another post the paper died. Well, the Club got a new president, and she decided the paper should be revived. Since she was busy being president, she looked around for someone to be editor and she picked out Riekie. One factor for the choice might have been that, Riekie being a quiet type, maybe the president wanted to cast herself as William Randolph Hearst and Riekie as Joseph Cotten (I guess I'm tangled with the movie *Citizen Kane*), but perhaps that's unkind. No matter, Riekie was nominated, and since the president as good as said that Mrs. Vincent (the Minister's wife) had designated her Riekie felt constrained to take the job, though she was skeptical that Mrs. V had anything to do with it.

Thinking big, the president got the ladies of the Club to agree that the paper should be printed rather than mimeographed, probably because the women's club of Zurich, a much larger group than that of Bern, put out a monthly printed paper, and the president wanted to keep up with the Joneses. When reminded that printing costs money and that the Club had none to spare, the president glibly said the paper would take paid advertising. I caught Riekie in the act of setting out by herself to call on enough Bern business establishments to get ads for the entire paper. I had to get across the idea that as editor she was supposed to direct the ladies and see to it that they got out and obtained the advertising.

Printing created problems. Since ads were the life of the paper, they had to receive priority, and editorial space had to be sacrificed. Given that there were only four pages--for the more pages the higher the printing costs--news items had to be cut to make room for the ads. Riekie had to measure space and count lines, then trim the material to the space available. I tried to prevent her from knocking herself out, and I made sure she had the paper reviewed by the wife of the Counselor before it went to press, for I feared she ran the risk of doing a lot of work and receiving a lot of criticism instead of thanks, especially from contributors whose submissions she cut down to size. Since she had emphatically not volunteered to be editor, she longed to get out from under, but she persevered through two printed issues. Then the gods smiled. The president's husband, one of our Second Secretaries, was transferred and took his wife with him. Riekie reverted to mimeograph format, killing the need for ads. Best of all, an eager beaver turned up, and Riekie gladly handed over the editorship to her. It was one of those doubtful honors you look back on, like being assigned to watch over Napoleon on St. Helena. So much for Riekie's career in journalism.

My own career got a boost in May, 1951. Every spring Foreign Service Officers endure the suspense of waiting for the promotion list. The promotion boards meet in January and February and customarily give out the names of those promoted by April, but this year there was unexplained delay. The names of those promoted to the two highest classes of the Service were announced early in May, but the remainder of the list was withheld. Traveling on a three-day business trip, I stopped at the Zurich Consulate on my way back and was congratulated by one of the vice-consuls. I had been promoted to Class 5. Arriving home, Riekie told me Dr. Minneman had phoned her with the good news. There was rejoicing.

What did the promotion mean? Little in terms of money immediately. Perhaps because of my age, I had been awarded the top pay in Class 6 when I entered the Service, and the difference between that and the bottom pay in Class 5 was only \$100 a year. The great gain was that I was off the hook. Class 6 was probationary, and I had only two boards to make it or be dismissed. Now I had ten years to make Class 4 and could breathe a bit easier. A second gain was that I was a bit closer to my own age group. When I took the written exams in 1947 the age limit was 35 years, and I was then 32 owing to the delays I had experienced during the war. Since the appointment didn't come through until 1949 I was 34 when I began work. In 1948 the age limit had been dropped to 30, so that at 36 I was still over age for Class 5, but the gap was no longer so wide. If I could make Class 4 in three or four years I would be only a year or two over average age. It was a curious situation for me. All through school and early working years I had always been the youngest, and it was a bit unsettling to find myself an elderly first lieutenant.

Bern was the first step on the up-escalator for me and the first on the down-escalator for our Minister, John Carter Vincent. In 1951 he became a target of charges by Senator Joseph R. McCarthy (Republican of Wisconsin) that Communist supporters had gained control of State Department policy. Although he became consul general at Tangier, Vincent was called before the U.S. Senate for a hearing on charges that he was

Communist or pro-Communist. In the end he was cleared by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles of any suspicion of disloyalty but was forced to leave the Foreign Service in 1953. The story of his ordeal is described in.... At the time of his death in December 1972 he was a member of the East Asian Research Center at Harvard University. I saw him only on social occasions in Bern, but I admired him and always felt he got a raw deal. For a time we exchanged Christmas cards, and when I was at Columbia University in 1957 tentatively arranged to meet with him, but he phoned at the last minute that he could not make it.

Transfer. You keep alert for promotion each spring, but you stay alert for news of transfer after your first year, for transfer involves not only the culture and environment you'll be working in but also the upheaval of packing furniture and effects, uprooting from schools and playfellows, and breaking off from friends it has taken you months to get to know. I had seen Jack Armitage, who arrived in Bern after I did, get reassigned in only a year, Dr. Minneman assigned temporarily to Madrid, Jim Byrne ordered elsewhere and then have the orders canceled when he was about to step on the train. So every time somebody from The Department would come through Bern on a mission or visit, I would try to pump him for news about pending transfer. I unearthed much speculation and started many rumors but got no real information.

In September 1951 the Legation was notified that I would be replaced by Joseph Mendenhall, that he would leave his present post (Reykjavik) in mid-October, and that he would proceed to the States for home leave before reporting to Bern. But this did not mean that we would stay in Bern until he arrived, it did not say whether or not we would get home leave ourselves, and it gave no clue to our next post. Consequently, I accelerated my rumor-chasing, with no better results than before. (If I had read the crystal ball clearly, I would have learned that I would be working under Mendenhall at our last post, Laos, some fifteen years hence.)

Meanwhile, I decided to sell our car and buy another at the next post. Switzerland was not a good place to sell. There were plenty of dealers in Switzerland with a glut of new cars. Moreover, the shrewd Swiss insisted that the car was worth less than I thought it was because, though it was a 1950 model in American terms, it was actually made in 1949. Several of our fellows had had luck selling their cars in Germany where there was more demand. Accordingly I drove to Frankfurt, traveling via Mulhouse and Strasbourg, and left the car with a dealer there. The reports of strong demand in Germany proved exaggerated. As the car sat untouched for three weeks, I returned by rail and drove it back to Bern, resolving to take it with us to wherever we might be going.

Oh, yes, while the car was in Frankfurt I rented a bicycle to get to work in Bern, as travel to the Legation by bus was very roundabout. Karen rode to school on the back seat and loved it.

On November 3, 1951, a Saturday, the Legation phoned that orders had come in assigning us to Haifa. First we were to go on home leave, but I was not to get an intermediate course at the Foreign Service Institute for which I had applied. Our reactions

were favorable. We viewed Haifa as an excellent post with good climate (better than, say Port Said or Alexandria) adequate housing, an American school, and comparatively free from Arab-Jew tension (I guess I had Jerusalem in mind by way of comparison). I knew vaguely that Israel had declared its independence in 1948 but I did not realize that Haifa had been the scene of savage fighting before a lull was achieved.

We became less enthusiastic after we read the post report. Post reports, prepared to advise Foreign Service personnel on living conditions in upcoming assignments, tend to stress the adverse. One of our staff girls remarked that if Adam were writing a post report on Eden he would devote one page to the Garden and ten to the serpent. Nonetheless the report on Haifa was mostly favorable, although I was wrong about the American school. Food was said to be not varied, but consular personnel could get around this by importing. A refrigerator and a deep freeze were strongly recommended, plus ample stocks of foodstuffs. The great question was housing. The notion that we could sightsee in Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan had to be revised as all borders remained closed because of war conditions. I was astonished to learn that Israel is only half the size of Switzerland. Since Switzerland would fit comfortably into Vermont-New Hampshire, that aroused comparisons with Lilliput.

Our last weeks in Switzerland ended in an amiable social whirl, but then we were always in an amiable social whirl. One event out of the routine was an invitation to attend the ball of the Grande Societe of Bern, the local Four Hundred. Bernese high society is as close as that of any other metropolis, and invitations to the ball were much sought after. We don't know how we rated ours but felt rather bucked to get it. In view of our imminent departure, we decided to decline. Looking back, we rather wish we had accepted.

Just before we left the United States for Switzerland the U.S.S.R. had exploded an atomic bomb, confirming that the United States no longer held a monopoly of the A-bomb. On January 31, 1950 President Truman authorized production of the H-bomb. The People's Republic of China was proclaimed on October 1, 1949. The Nationalist Chinese Government fled to Formosa (Taiwan). Angus Ward, whom I had known in Moscow, and four employees at our consulate in Mukden were sentenced to jail by Chinese Communists on charges of beating a Chinese employee, but were released and ordered to leave the country after international protests.

Tokyo Rose was sentenced to ten years in prison for treason. Indonesia became independent after four years of war with the Netherlands. Prince Bao Dai was declared head of the independent governments of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos within the French Union, and the U.S.S.R. recognized the Viet Minh regime of Ho Chi Minh. Alger Hiss was convicted of perjury. In June 1950 more than 60,000 troops from North Korea invaded the south, and in November some 200,000 Chinese crossed the Yalu and drove back the advancing United Nations forces. General Douglas MacArthur was relieved of his command by President Truman in April 1951. On September 1 Australia, New Zealand, and the United States signed the ANZUS security pact, and on September 8 the Peace Treaty with Japan was signed in San Francisco. Throughout, television steadily

made its way from the neighborhood bar to the living room, although in Switzerland the pace was step by step. Experimental broadcasts were to begin in Zurich in 1952, but regular television service for the whole country was not expected until 1953 at the earliest.

We traveled by train from Bern November 30, 1951 to Cannes, and wandered through the out-of-season streets for a couple of days. It was to be our only glimpse of the French Riviera, lifetime. On December 3rd we boarded the *Independence* for New York. The ship skirted the Italian coast and at Naples picked up Secretary of State and Mrs. Dean Acheson, returning from a conference. There were other Foreign Service people aboard, and of course we all sent our cards to the Secretary. He rewarded us by holding a small reception. During the voyage I said casual hellos to Mrs. Acheson as she strolled the deck for exercise, but the Secretary, to paraphrase the poet, sought the seclusion that the cabin grants, presumably to avoid his cousins and his sisters and his aunts.

Chapter 13  
Interim  
(January-May 1952)

Mr. Hopalong Cassidy was endorsing numerous products when we arrived home. Bond Bread was Hoppy's Favorite, Hoppy urged you to drink Embassy Milk, and the best way to save your money was to open a Hopalong account at the Federal Savings and Loan. You got a free sheriff badge. Washington buses were trying the experiment of piping in radio music as you traveled, supported natch by commercials. I found it counter-productive when hanging by a strap in the going-home rush to hear the announcer ask: "What kind of beer are you drinking now?" and then urge me to stop drinking that slop and switch to Arrow. Washing- ton's only brewery had given up trying to market its beer under the name Senate and now called it Old Georgetown. "Chew Dentyne, the gum with *breathless* flavor," urged one lady, giving a gasp as if somebody had dropped an ice cube down her back. An ad that took my breath away was, "Use Thunderbolt, the new perfume that smells so good to everybody, everywhere. 25 cent and one dollar sizes." I recalled a sort of commercial from T. H. White's, *The Sword in the Stone*:

"Way down inside the large intestine,  
Far, far away,  
There's where the ice cream cones are resting,  
There's where the eclairs stay."

But the following offers competition:  
"Julius Caesar was on the ball.  
He came, he saw, he conquered Gaul.  
The conflict over, he'd recline,  
And freshen up with Ballantine."

Before we left Bern, I had applied to take an inter- mediate training course at the Foreign Service Institute but had understood that it was full up. Arriving in Washington, I learned that I had been accepted after all, and we had to make an abrupt change in plans. Nan welcomed us into her row house near Catholic University, Karen entered a neighborhood public school to which Riekie walked her, and I embarked on three months of instruction with some twenty other junior officers. The course was conducted by Dr. Norman Burns, a man of broad knowledge and understanding, who taught classes at the School of Advanced International Studies of The Johns Hopkins University on the side, and later on became head of the Foreign Service Institute.

Dr. Burns wrought miracles in persuading high-ranking persons in policy positions to address us and also structured the course around active participation, breaking the group into five-person teams that prepared papers on current world questions,. For instance, one of the problems was to pretend you were top brass and had to decide what course to follow with the Iranian nationalization of foreign oil interests under Premier Mohammed Mossedegh. You and your team defended your decision from attacks by the rest of the class. It would be self-serving to say that my team's solution to the problem foresaw the

actual course of events. Another paper on which I worked concerned the best way to handle the Suez Canal crisis. One thing I grasped; when you have four colleagues who are well informed, you are more likely to come up with five solutions than with a consensus. I contributed to three exercises of this type, attended sessions of the House Foreign Relations Committee, listened to speakers at the Federal Reserve and the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce, and joined in give-and-take with experts brought in to address us. We also attended lectures at the National War College, at one of which a speaker who was really way-out predicted that the United States would launch and maintain stations in space. His prediction was received by the audience of 100-plus colonels with skepticism and amusement.

We were due for forty days of home leave after the course but cut it short to make a May 6, 1952 cruise sailing of the U.S.S. *Independence*, the only direct connection to Haifa without having to change ships. Riekie, Karen and I took the train to New Orleans, and after drinking a mint julep and refusing to wait in line for Antoine's kept on to the Grand Canyon, where we rode mules down the Bright Angel Trail. In California we visited with the family of Bob, my brother by adoption, still in the Coast Guard and stationed at Port Hueneme. The train brought us back via Las Vegas. I risked one dime in a slot and won ten, and that's how big a plunger I am. The real purpose of our stop was to gape at Hoover Dam and Lake Mead. After a pause in Chicago, back to Washington, then New York and the ship.

Ideally, I should have had at least a week's training in the Department on visa laws and procedures, my next assignment. Because of overlap with sailing date, I had only one day, and accordingly I passed much time on the voyage whacking at visa regulations. For me, the voyage passed pleasantly, but Riekie had a rough time. She packed her and Karen's clothes in a wardrobe trunk labeled for our cabin, but it failed to show up. When I contacted the ship's baggage master, it was revealed that the trunk had mistakenly been consigned to the hold. The b. master obligingly took me down there, and we crawled among stacks of luggage and boxes. He shifted a mountain of trunks and wriggled among piles of mail sacks until I feared he might be crushed, but we were unable to find the trunk. Riekie did have two short-length dresses for evening wear, but she had to wear the same black suit for twelve days. The trunk turned up at The Piraeus after other luggage had been put ashore. It had been buried under mail sacks in a hold we had not even looked into.

There were several groups of Catholic pilgrims bound for a Eucharistic congress at Barcelona, and they were shepherded by priests who impressed me with their prowess with knife and fork. Most of these pilgrims got off at Lisbon. There was also a group of Jewish pilgrims to the Holy Land, including several rabbis who sat in a corner and ate with their hats on. And of course there were ordinary tourists who just sat around and played canasta.

The ship stopped a full day at Lisbon. We took a taxi to the center of town and rambled about on foot, but I remembered few of the sights from my stay in 1940 when I had boarded the Clipper. We touched only an hour apiece at Gibraltar and Cannes and had no

time to go ashore. Gibraltar has those amazing bumboats that bob in the water beside the huge ship and sell you bottles of brandy by flinging them a hundred feet in the air over the ship's rail. At Genoa and Naples we called briefly on friends in the Consulates. At Athens a lady seated at the table next ours asked what there was to see, and I told her there were some interesting ruins. "Listen," said the lady. "I took a sightseeing trip at Naples, and all I saw was ruins. What do I want to see more ruins here for?" Riekie and I got round trip train tickets The Piraeus-Athens for about 20 cents each, then took a taxi to the Acropolis. I made the mistake of failing to hire a guide. Sometimes a guide is a nuisance, but when you're completely ignorant as I was a guide can show you lots of things you are seeing but don't know you're looking at. Sadly, I wound the film wrong, and all of my snaps of the Acropolis were failures.

We awoke on the morning of May 20 to find ourselves in the dock at Haifa. It is a beautiful harbor, but you don't realize that until you go ashore and look down on it from Mt. Carmel. From the waterfront the mountain looks puny and dry, and you do not appreciate the horseshoe of Acre Bay with the expanse of blue Mediterranean stretching to the horizon. Jesse Dean, who I was succeeding, was to leave on the ship's outbound voyage, which meant he would be in the office only one more day, so leaving Riekie in the hotel I headed immediately for the consulate. Wil Chase, the boss, and I talked about an hour, the gist being that although I had never done visa work before I was going to do it now. Then I watched Dean handle the job for the rest of the day, and after that I was on my own.

Since a visa officer never gets caught up, my predecessor bequeathed me a filing cabinet with three drawers full of unfinished business. I took over from him the afternoon of May 21, a Wednesday. Luckily that Thursday and Friday were comparatively slack days, luckily too the visa section was staffed by competent employees familiar with the work and the types of applicants. Somebody in Washington told me I would lean heavily on my staff the first few days, and you have my word the tower of Pisa is a piker compared to me. I worked all that week-end, and I worked all the following week-end, which included the holiday, Memorial Day. I have never been so bone-marrow tired in my life, and I fell into bed at nine utterly exhausted. It was obvious that either I would kill the job or it would kill me, and ultimately I woke up to the realization I was fighting it. Few people like visa work, and I am not among those few, but as one of my professors told me long ago, anything can be made interesting if you get to know it. I found that the way to keep from hating each visa applicant was to say not, "What trouble is this creep going to make for me?" but "What can I do to help him?" The laws were so written that some persons, born in the right places, could qualify for visas immediately, while others, born a few miles away but on the wrong side of an international boundary, had to wait for years. If I examined each case with the thought of expediting the application, I found myself in tune with the applicant and the job.

Chapter 14  
Haifa  
(May 1952-March 1953)

"The Bible insists that the name Israel was conferred on the Patriarch Jacob by God, yet there are divergent accounts of its bestowal on him...."

- "Israel," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*

"And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day... And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed...."

- Genesis: 32:24-30 (King James Version)

"And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob; thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name; and he called his name Israel."

- Genesis: 35:10 (King James Version)

"...I can tell you something else about Jacob, which is that he dislocated his thigh at the marriage games at Peniel when he took the name of his wife Rachel and became Ish-rachel, or Israel...." "And what does the name Rachel mean?".... "It means 'The Ewe'."

- Robert Graves, *King Jesus*, p. 244

"RACHEL AND LEAH. Both women have animal names, for Rahel means 'ewe' and Leah 'cow'...."

- The Encyclopedia of Religion

"Dictionary of Scripture Proper Names": Rachel = ewe. Leah = languid...." in Webster's Twentieth-Century Dictionary, 1937.

"If you think I'm confused, you're right."

- Ed Thrasher

City. Everywhere you look in Haifa, you see stone, and if you look somewhere else, you still see stone. Mount Carmel is stone, the houses of the city are stone, the walls that retain the few plots of earth are stone, and though the main streets are concrete, some of the older ones are stone. The sleeper wakes on his pillow of stone; David equalized Goliath with a stone; to execute criminals the French had to invent a guillotine, but the peoples of the Holy Land had only to find someone who was willing to cast the first.

The city has been around a long time under diverse names-- Sycaminium, Sycaminopolis, Caiphaz, Caiffa--but was little more than a fishing village, overshadowed as a port by neighboring Acre until the latter part of the 19th Century. Like most Middle Eastern communities it has taken its share of beatings, conquered by the Crusaders in 1100, destroyed by Saladin in 1191, invested by Napoleon in 1799 and by the Egyptian Ibrahim Pasha in 1838, occupied by the British in 1918 and made a part of mandated Palestine in 1922, and the scene of vigorous fighting during the Israel war of independence in 1948. The deepwater port, developed under the mandate, was opened in 1933, and the petroleum refineries date from 1939. For awhile they were fed by a pipeline from Iraq, but this was cut off by the Arab-Israeli war, and crude oil was brought in by tanker. Years later a pipeline was completed from Eilat at the head of the Gulf of Aqaba.

Haifa is one of the striking locations of the world. From the top of Mt. Carmel, 1,700 feet, you look over the oil refinery at your feet to the ancient city of Acre on the opposite shore of the horseshoe bay and beyond to the hills that mark the Lebanese border. Eastward you can see past the plain of Esdraelon to the mountains of Syria, on clear days as far as the snows of Mt. Harmon. The city has three layers: the port area, the Hader a short distance up the mountain, and the Carmel on top. When we arrived on May 22, 1952, part of the port area was a jumble of ruins, having been blown up after the 1948 Arab-Israel war not for strategic reasons but for purposes of town improvement. The Hader was the main business and residential sector, and atop Carmel was the abode of the swanky. To live high up on Carmel was to isolate yourself unless you had a car. It was not until years later that the lower and upper levels were linked by an underground railway.

The U.S. Consulate was in the Hader, perched on the mountain-side close to an upward road, and one of my earliest impressions was a white-mustached gentleman in baggy trousers and wearing a towel around his head seated on a donkey half his size, controlling the beast by mesmeric shifts of his hands. I remembered that in *Travels with a Donkey* Stevenson obtained cooperation from Modestine by resorting to a goad, but this Arab knew how to persuade the stem-legged creature to keep plodding to the summit by sheer force of will. I say Arab, but I suspect the man was a Druse. There were two villages on the crown of the mountain inhabited by Druses, believers in the divinity of the eleventh-century Fatimite caliph Hakim, a religion whose tenets are revealed only to the initiated ("Syria," *National Geographic*, September 1978, p. 337). How the villagers survived in such isolation is a mystery to exercise the little gray cells of Hercule Poirot. In subsequent years a road was built over the highest ridge of the Carmel range, and bus service was established, but that was long after we had left.

In the Hader, streets follow whatever paths camels happened to roam, as in Boston. The streets curl back on themselves as they climb the Carmel so that to go from A to B, 200 feet higher, you travel halfway across town and back. Public transport existed in the form of patched-together buses, but these were so overloaded they had a permanent list to starboard, and you were better off walking if the distance was at all feasible. Electric and water service to the houses were available but subject to the whims of easily outraged generators. The town had no gas mains, and most people cooked with butagaz, an

admixture of butane gas obtained as a by-product from the oil refineries. The cylinder of butagaz that you hitched to your stove was guaranteed to run out when the dinner you were cooking for twelve guests was half done. Initially we put up in a hotel room with a running-water basin, but because the drainpipe fell off whether provoked or not we did not wish to linger.

Vice Consul Jesse Dean, who I was replacing, had been in Haifa since December 1949 and was leaving on the *Independence*, the ship that brought us in. His family occupied an apartment on the third floor of an austere but comfortable house near the Consulate, and we took up residence there. It contained a few pieces of government furniture that would have to suffice until our own things arrived from Switzerland. Almost before we had drawn breath, however, Vice Consul Jim May remarked to me that we would be better off in the flat that he would be vacating in two or three months, as he too had orders for transfer. This was in a two-storeyed house, the upper floor the residence of British Consul General and Mrs. Clarence Ezard, that had bits of garden front and back and provided a distant view of the harbor. Jim proposed that we move in at once as he would be temporarily away on a training course. The proposition had a catch; Jim wanted me to buy his stock of canned foodstuffs, including 132 cans of tomato paste, for \$,1200, plus a ton of coal at \$70. When I said I could not pay such a large sum, Jim said he would accept my agreement to pay \$100 a month for 12 months. As I recall, the deal was entirely verbal, nothing committed to paper, and the debt was duly paid. The May flat was especially preferable to the Dean flat because of the play garden for Karen. I had no way of knowing at the time, but the flat was to be a cause of friction with a fellow vice consul, as yet not on the scene. Straightway we entered Karen into a convent school run by an Irish mother superior with instruction in French provided by Christian Arabs.

Three years after the war Israel still suffered acute shortages and was to continue to do so for many years. Food, clothing, and other necessities were rationed. Diplomatic and consular missions tried to ease the situation by importing for their employees' personal use. Embassy Tel Aviv maintained a commissary at which Consulate Haifa staff could shop, and Consulate Haifa staff also organized pools of funds to bring in shipments for themselves. Jim May had purposely overbought for his family, for there was no telling how long the privileges would last, and had been caught with overstock by unexpected re-assignment. The deal was mutually beneficial. My family gained good lodgings, Jim's purse gained surcease from over-investment.

Fellows. Wilbur P. Chase headed the mission. Called by some the boy consul because he was age 33, he had served in the Coast Guard during the war, entered the Foreign Service as vice consul at Basra in 1945, held posts at Montreal, Stuttgart and Hamburg, and taken over as consul at Haifa in October, 1951. Jim May, who was awaiting replacement, was charged with SWIN, the acronym for seamen-welfare-invoices-notarials, and citizenship. Normand Redden was administrative officer. Normand's wife, Annabelle, was from New Zealand, my Riekie from South Africa, Wil's Mona from Canada. Mona, a graduate of McGill, held an MBA from Harvard, and Wil spread the story that when she applied to him for a student visa at Montreal he insisted that she give him a date.

Also smitten were support staff Andy Andronovich and John Banyas. Shortly after arriving we joined in celebrating John's marriage to Terry, one of the secretaries, but Andy had a rough road. Greek Orthodox, he fell in love with a devoutly orthodox Jewish girl and had to deal with family opposition and agree to convert to Judaism to win her hand. Obstacles were overcome, and the marriage took place before we left. Helen Cornelius replaced Terry as Wilbur's secretary, and later on Laurette Strickland (who was to marry a British chap from the refinery) joined us as secretary in the visa section.

For security we had a detail of six U.S. Marines. Several had the rating of sergeant, all were Korea combat veterans, and since their main assignment was to patrol the consulate at night they had much time to kill during the day. A problem was who was in charge. The commanding officer was a captain stationed in Cairo. Given his absence, nominally the men were subject to the direction of the consul, but they were chary of taking orders from civilians, the more so since they were supposed to keep tabs on these same civilians and report security violations, such as leaving classified documents unlocked. Jim May tried sprucing them up by scattering notes on desks stating: "This document is RESTRICTED. If you find this, turn it in," and then berating the Marines when the notes were ignored, but this was an error. The Marines happily retaliated by giving him super scrutiny and entering into his personal file numerous borderline infractions that might have been overlooked if he had been less persnickety.

When you have six spirited, healthy, combat-hardened young men in a military environment, you keep them occupied by letting them play with mortars and armored cars or by putting mops in their hands, but when you have a civilian environment with limited assignments and no definite command structure you are liable to meet with rambunctiousness. A senior sergeant drew up the schedule of patrols for the detail, and when asked why he exempted himself from patrol he explained that drawing up a schedule for five men took up all his time. The six occupied a small apartment house on the side of the Carmel which featured a conference sized common room, and one of the Marines busied his hands by building from discarded packing cases the world's largest bar, stretching in an elongated arc from there to infinity. He covered it with imitation leather, punctuated by decorative buttons, silver stars, and the inevitable pinups. Shortly after he finished he received transfer orders, but he succeeded in selling it by slicing it into sections.

One of the Marines, of serious bent, filled notebooks with exercises in Arabic, snubbing Hebrew as of little practical use. I have wondered if the Arabic proved of any use in his military career. Another fell in love with a stewardess from El Al Airlines and stole off to a remote village for a marriage ceremony by an Orthodox priest. Not only was marrying without official permission a violation of Marine regulations, it turned out that the priest had been defrocked. I never heard how this poor chap made out. Another Marine was a bit of a wheeler dealer. When he left, he sold to the consulate a refrigerator that lacked a connecting plug. When called up on this, he argued that he had agreed to sell a refrigerator, not a plug. He was the source of trouble for me, standing as sponsor for an Israeli girl whom, he declared, he intended to marry. The regulations clearly authorized me to issue a visa to the spouse of an American citizen, but they were iffy about an intended spouse. The man argued that he could not marry overseas because of Marine

regulations, and I issued the visa against my better judgment. You guessed it; love died when the couple got to the States, and the marriage did not take place. When the girl tried to obtain official help, a relative of the Marine filed a complaint against the vice consul for issuing a visa to an ineligible. I reported that the sponsor had signed an oath to keep the applicant from becoming a public charge, and I heard no more.

And there was tragedy. Three of the Marines decided to drive to Jerusalem at night. A truck was parked on the unlighted highway without warning lights, for with scarcities in Israel any lanterns would have been stolen. The headlights of an opposing car blinded the driver, and he smashed head-on into the parked truck, losing his life. We had the sad duty of a memorial service and shipping the remains back home.

Job. Once upon a time, at another post, the head of a mission phoned me and asked how to go about getting a visum. Since the man was exceedingly scholarly I took it that visa is the Latin plural of visum, and it was some years before I got over that notion (if you have to know, I didn't really sweat it). Many countries call it vise, that is, the past participle of the French viser, to see, but the United States Department of State prefers visa (*Webster's Twentieth-Century Dictionary*, 1937. *New Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 1953.). A visa is defined as an indispensable indorsement made upon a passport by the properly constituted authority showing that it has been examined and found correct. For the United States, it means that a person who wants to enter the United States has been found by an official to be qualified to apply for entry. For all countries, it is a damned nuisance.

Note that the visa does not give applicants the right to enter the United States, merely the right to apply to enter. When the persons actually arrive in the United States, it is the Immigration and Naturalization Service that determines whether or not they get in. If the visa officer has done his job properly, entry is a matter of routine. During my two years I was challenged only once by the I&NS, on whether or not an applicant had tuberculosis. I had, of course, supplemented medical documents, and the person was admitted.

As visa officer I supervised an American secretary and seven locals, one of whom, Mrs. Sidi Graif, was well versed in visa procedures and had the status of chief petty officer. I recognized her competence at once and was glad of her guidance. If I have it right, she was the only staff member born in Palestine-Israel, the others all being refugees, three from Europe and two from Iraq. The seventh, young Costa Constantinides, the only non-Jew, served as office factotum and contact man with the public. The American secretary was transferred to Tel Aviv shortly after I arrived but within a few weeks was replaced by slim, personable Laurette Strickland.

The visa section occupied the basement floor of the consulate and consisted of a small reception room, a room for Laurette and the visa books, a room where I sat in less than oriental splendor, a file room, and a whitewashed salon containing the desks of the seven employees. We issued immigrant visas, for those who wanted to reside permanently in the United States, and non-immigrant visas, for those who wanted to go as tourists or students or transients. A quota system was in effect for immigrant visas. Countries in the Western Hemisphere were exempt from quotas but those in the rest of the world were

assigned quotas based on the proportion of persons from that country resident in the United States during a prescribed period. The quota to which you, as a prospective immigrant, were assigned depended on your place of birth. If you were born in Poland of Portuguese parents, moved to Lisbon when you were two days old, and lived all your life as a Portuguese, you still came under the Polish quota. There were, of course lots of trick questions like being born in Fiume and figuring out whether you came under the Austrian, Italian, or Yugoslav quota, or born on a Liberian steamer in mid-Atlantic of a Bengali mother and a Guatemalan father. The minimum quota was 100, and lots of countries had just that. There were mitigating provisions for spouses, children, and brothers-sisters of American citizens, plus exceptions for applicants with skills urgently needed by U.S. sponsors.

There were about 30,000 visa immigrant applicants on the consulate's books. That doesn't sound like too many, given the state of the world, but for most of them it meant indefinite wait. Consider those under the Israeli quota, that is, those born within the confines of the space called Israel beginning in 1948. As I recall, there were some 1,100 on our list, meaning that if you registered today you had a wait of at least eleven years before you could hope to be called. But this ignored applicants under the Israeli quota who were registered in London and Manila and Asuncion and other consulates around the world. When these were aggregated, the wait became substantially longer than eleven years.

Applicants did not grasp the notion that the consul had no discretion in issuing visas. Many consuls for other countries were given such discretion in varying degrees and could exercise their personal judgment and criteria for awarding persons the privilege of entering their countries. United States visa officers had no discretion either way. As a visa officer you were given authority to exercise judgments in some areas, for example, the matter of moral turpitude, or of whether or not the applicant was liable to become a public charge, but in others you had no leeway, especially as regards quotas. On the other hand, if an applicant fully complied with the requirements for entry, the visa officer had no authority to deny a visa, no matter what his personal appraisal of the desirability of the person as a resident of the United States.

Lots of applicants simply didn't believe in this state of affairs but were convinced that if they could gain the consul's good will they could have the visa. I was never actually offered a bribe, but there were instances of gifts, a notable one at Christmas-time when a lawyer who represented several applicants sent a case of local liquors, plus two bottles of Scotch, the latter all but unobtainable in rationed Israel. I accepted the liquors and distributed them among the staff but returned the Scotch. There were instances of influence; I remember a lady who persuaded Mr. Bartley Crum, a distinguished lawyer and publisher, to inquire about her case. I showed him that the lady was registered under the Czech quota, in all probability would have to wait for years, there were no helpful circumstances such as relatives or skills that might accelerate the application, and he realized that all that could be done was being done.

Of course, there were numerous applicants for non-immigrant visas who had to be turned down because of indications that they really wanted permanent status. I recall an

American businessman who wished to sponsor a comely blonde woman half his age for a non-immigrant visa. When asked for evidence that she intended to return to Israel he felt that his word was sufficient. I pointed out that the young woman spoke fluent English, had secretarial skills and would be able to support herself in the United States, was a recent arrival in Israel, had no relatives or property in Israel--in short, had no reasons or ties that would cause her to leave the United States at the expiration of her visit. The woman was employed at a local travel agency, the head of which assured me she would come back, but I did not feel able to issue the visa. I learned indirectly that the couple proceeded to London and, after being again turned down, married in England, giving her at once the right of entry as the wife of an American citizen. When I remarked on this to the travel agent, he said blandly there was no telling what young women might do.

No rubber stamping of visa applications was possible. The staff could process each case for documents, but eventually I had to read every file and make a determination as to eligibility. No matter how late I worked, and I assure you I put in a great deal of overtime, I could never hope to get ahead of the backlog that I had inherited. Inevitably every applicant wanted to see the consul. Costa the man of all work could satisfy some of the inquirers, but most believed that all problems would be solved by a talk with me. I tried conscientiously to make myself available to all, but I found the whole situation so uncomfortable I vented my exasperation in an article that was published in the *Foreign Service Journal* for August, 1953. I append it to this chapter for the sympathetic reader. I was buoyed by the half promise from Wil Chase that I would be rotated to other consular duties after my first year.

Day-by-Day. Three months were spent looking out our window over the harbor, waiting for our ship to come in. We used Jim May's furniture for a time, but after some weeks his effects were packed and carted off, though he had been assigned to some sort of course in Beirut and would not actually depart officially for another two months. Israel being persona non grata with the rest of the Middle East, information on shipping was hard to come by, and we pursued false scents with several disappointments. We had arrived in Haifa on May 22, and it was not until late in August that our furniture and car turned up lashed to the deck of an oversize motorboat called the *Hashloshah*. Amazingly, everything was perfect, not so much as a cracked dish.

It can get cold in Israel, but it also can get hot, especially in July and August. We received the public at the Consulate from 8:00 to 12:00, and when at 1:00 I walked home five blocks for lunch I was grateful for a shower. From 2:00 to 5:00 we processed applications, and I usually stayed until 6:00 after everybody had left because I could accomplish a lot in one uninterrupted hour and because it was still too hot to do anything outside. Saturday mornings, too, were profitably employed in the office, Saturday being Sunday, that is Shabbath or the Sabbath. We usually went for a swim Saturday afternoons. Several sand beaches lay in the neighborhood of the refinery, but the best was near Acre, about 20 minutes away, where there were two miles of sand, firm bottom, shallow water, and just enough breakers to roll you over. According to legend, ancient Phoenicians placed their cooking pots on lumps of natron (sodium carbonate) on the sands of one of these beaches and accidentally invented glass (Article, "Acre," Imperial

Encyclopedia).

Sunday afternoons, when shops were open but the Consulate was closed, were for tennis or sometimes softball. British staffers from the refinery did well at softball although their reactions were not what the coaches recommend for the major leagues. I mean if you gave a British batsman a pitch through the middle of the plate he would have trouble hitting it, but if you threw the ball in the dirt he would pick it on the rebound and slug it for six. We welcomed the British at softball, but they did not reciprocate when it came to their special sport; I don't recall any of us Americans being allowed to play cricket.

Most of our social contacts were with refinery people. Housed in apartments by the refinery, near the beach, and in a complex on the side of Carmel nicknamed the *goyto*, they ranged in occupation from sybarite to misogynist and in age from giddy to grandiose. Atop Carmel were the villas of managers of oil distributors, trading companies, banks, and occasional lawyers and professional types. There were only three other full-time consulates--Italian, French, and British--although several countries were represented by consular agents, local businessmen who found it worthwhile to render consular services once in awhile. The get-together spot was the Haifa Club, predominantly Anglo-American, where weekly dances were offered. The clientele numbered perhaps 50 British families and singles, our Consulate staff, and the odd Norwegian or other nationality, but no Israelis, although membership was unrestricted. The colony threw numerous cocktail parties for each other, and we of the Consulate were frequently invited to private homes of Israelis not, I fear, because of our charm but because of our official position.

Middle East Situation. I offer some words of wise men:

"In settled Syria [the area bounded in the north by Anatolia and in the south by the Hejaz] there was no indigenous political entity larger than the village,.... The people, even the best-taught, showed a curious blindness to the unimportance of their country,.... Some cried aloud for an Arab kingdom. These were usually Moslems;.... Time seemed to have proclaimed the impossibility of autonomous union for such a land.... When given a momentary independence by the weakness of neighbours it had fiercely resolved into discordant, northern, southern, eastern and western 'kingdoms'.... (I)f Syria was by nature a vassal country, it was also by habit a country of tireless agitation and incessant revolt."

- T. E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. Jonathan Cape, London: 1943. pp. 336, 343-344, *passim*. [N.B.: Though the book was written in 1919-1920 and though Lawrence comments on the McMahon pledge and notes the Sykes-Picot Treaty of 1916, he does not mention the Balfour Declaration of 1917. He does cite (p. 572) a document to Lord Rothschild "whose race was promised something equivocal in Palestine" (p. 572).]

"Prime Minister to Colonial Secretary and Chiefs of Staff Committee. 16 July 45

The whole question of Palestine must be settled at the peace table, though it may be touched upon at the conference at Potsdam. I do not think we should take the

responsibility upon ourselves of managing this very difficult place while the Americans sit back and criticize. Have you ever addressed yourselves to the idea that we should ask them to take it over?.... I am not aware of the slightest advantage which has ever accrued to Great Britain from this painful and thankless task. Somebody else should have their turn now...."

- Winston Churchill, *Triumph and Tragedy*. Vol. VI of *The Second World War*, p. 764.

"Almost immediately upon becoming President, Mr. Truman with the best will in the world tackled that immensely difficult puzzle--a homeland in Palestine for the Jews.... The Balfour Declaration, promising the Jews the opportunity to re-establish a homeland in Palestine, had always seemed to him 'to go hand in hand with the noble policies of Woodrow Wilson, especially the principle of self-determination'. From many years of talk with him I know that this represented a deep conviction, in large part implanted by his close friend and former partner, Eddie Jacobson, a passionate Zionist.... I did not share the President's views on the Palestine solution to the pressing and desperate plight of great numbers of displaced Jews in Eastern Europe,.... The number that could be absorbed by Arab Palestine without creating a grave political problem would be inadequate, and to transform the country into a Jewish state capable of receiving a million or more immigrants would vastly exacerbate the political problem and imperil not only American but all Western interests in the Near East...."

- Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation*. W. W. Norton, New York. 1969. [N.B.: Secretary Acheson dedicated his book to Harry S. Truman, "The captain with the mighty heart".]

"Anyone who works for peace in the Middle East inevitably gets clobbered by both sides.... Of all the world's problems, the Arab-Israeli conflict has been the most stubborn, intractable, and unyielding.... When both Jews and Arabs are convinced they're speaking for God, that makes for a tough negotiation. I've been at the table when Arabs quoted the Koran while Jews quoted the Book of Moses.... [Warren Austin, our chief delegate] made history at the United Nations by asking both the Arabs and the Jews to 'settle their differences in a Christian spirit'...."

- Dean Rusk and Richard Rusk, *As I Saw It*. W. W. Norton, New York: 1990. p. 378, here & there.

"When I entered office I knew little of the Middle East.... By the end of my time in office... I was immersed in the ambiguities, passions, and frustrations of that maddening, heroic, and exhilarating region. If the reader finds the diplomacy outlined in this Chapter (X) an agonizing swamp of endless maneuvering and confusion, he knows how I felt."

- Henry Kissinger, *White House Years*. p. 341

I went to the Middle East aware in general that everybody there hated everybody else but uninformed in detail about what was going on. Locked into my squirrel cage of making

judgments about visa applications, I learned little about the military, political, or economic aspects of the Middle East except those elements that impinged on daily living-housing scarcities, rationing of foodstuffs and textiles, currency problems, transportation difficulties, roundabout communication with neighboring countries, barricades to crossing borders. The 1948 war of independence was to be followed by conflicts in 1956, 1967, 1973, 1982, almost ad infinitum, but during our two years there were only incidents and no formal outbreaks of hostilities. Borders were closed but were opened for passage of diplomatic-consular personnel.

For non-diplomatic personnel, there were evasions, perhaps the most common being passage via Cyprus. I was told that Israeli consulates abroad would issue visas for entry into Israel on loose sheets of paper so that evidence of entry into Israel would not appear on the business person's passport. After staying in Israel the traveler would cross to Cyprus and from that point enter Beyrouth or other Arab port. That the Arab countries did not know about this procedure seems unlikely, but face-saving is important.

We, too, had to help save face. When we crossed into Lebanon at Ras 'n Naqura, we removed Israeli license plates from our cars and substituted those of other countries. In my own case, I wrote home to ask that I be sent old District of Columbia plates. My mother obliged but was unable to find two that matched. I crossed using only one plate, prepared to assert that only one was needed, but luckily I never had to tell this fib.

The world did not rest on its oars during our two years in Israel, but it was as if was coiling itself preparatory to striking out in one of the paroxysms that rent society. There were events, naturally. President Truman had ordered United States seizure of steel mills to avert a strike by CIO United Steelworkers, and in June 1952 had been overridden by the Supreme Court. The strike was settled the following month. The first jetliner passenger service opened with the flight of a British DeHavilland Comet from London to Johannesburg, 6,724 miles in fewer than 24 hours. A peace "contract" was signed between West Germany, Great Britain, France and the United States (but not the Soviet Union), and the allied High Commissions were abolished. Eisenhower was elected. West Germany agreed to pay Israel \$822 million over 12 to 14 years as indemnity for anti-Semitic acts. The first hydrogen device explosion at the Atomic Energy Commission Eniwetok proving grounds in the Pacific was reported by witnesses but not officially confirmed for more than a year. These and other news items impinged little, however, on us in our world of visas, and it was not until several months after we left Israel that the bubbling Middle East kettle began once more to boil over.

Of sheckels. Struggling economically, the new government had a hard time adjusting the Israeli pound (IL) to other currencies, amassing a welter of rates for commerce, travel, and home consumers that underwent frequent adjustments. When we arrived in May 1952 the official exchange rate for in-country residents was IL1.00 to \$1.40, that is, you had to pay \$1.40 to buy one Israeli pound. Only foodstuffs and clothing were rationed, but this was not to say that everything else was plentiful. There were numerous shortages, notably electrical supplies, but also items ordinarily taken for granted, for instance dime-store envelopes. The authorities tried, too, to induce visitors from abroad to pay for

things in foreign currency.

Our bill for two days in hotel on arrival came to IL30.00, but the hotel insisted we buy a letter of credit in dollars. Since such letters came in minimums of IL50.00, we had an unexpended balance of IL20.00. The advantage of a letter of credit was supposed to be that you could use it to buy things at off-limits tourist stores, that is, buy rationed goods without ration coupons. Since textiles were the sole restricted items apart from foodstuffs, we settled on a second-hand linen tablecloth we didn't really need, for the letter of credit was valid for but three months and we stood to lose the balance if we didn't spend it. Ah, well, one is glad to contribute to the general welfare, particularly if one can't get out of it.

Given the commissary at Embassy Tel Aviv, bulk imports by consular staff, tinned goods acquired from Jim May, and sporadic shopping expeditions to Beirut, we were but partly dependent on the local economy and needed Israeli currency mostly for electric bills, market vegetables, Karen's schooling and dance lessons, servant's wages, tabs at the Haifa Club, and odd purchases such as gasoline and movie tickets. I went along with the established way of handling these items by setting up a bank overdraft. Everybody else had an overdraft at Barclay's Bank, but I disliked mixing business and social relations because we were friendly with manager Dougie Stokes and wife Biddie. Consequently I decided to keep my account at the Union Bank of Holland, rather to the distress of its local manager. He made plain that he was reluctant to give me an unsecured line of credit but not so reluctant as to refuse me outright. I shall always be puzzled why the man didn't just plain say no. Other bankers have been known to do it, but he accorded me a line of credit up to IL1,500 and apparently suffered agonies of doubt afterward, cautioning me frequently to keep the balance down although I never let it get anywhere near the limit. At \$1.40 to the pound, this amounted to \$2,100, but in November 1952 the government revalued the rate to IL1.00 = \$1.00, at a stroke of the pen reducing my dollar liability to \$1,500.

My banker, nonetheless, became more and more antsy and suddenly phoned me to declare the unsecured two-year credit null and void. In its place he substituted a savings account in dollars against which he would advance Israeli pounds. When I had accumulated \$1,000 I was to buy securities that the bank would hold as collateral. In April 1953 the Israeli government helped me out by devaluing the currency to IL1.40 to \$1.00 and in November to IL1.80 to \$1.00. These events, of course, had the effect of making the dollars more valuable in terms of pounds. The banker lectured me about stocks being overpriced and recommended that I buy a corporate bond he would select. I said I would go along with his choice and was astounded when he settled on nine shares of AT&T common, to be held by the bank's agent in New York. As months went by, I paid off the pound loan in installments, closed out the account, and ended the deal nine shares of AT&T to the good. Whether I would have done as well if I had just gone without a bank account from the start is anybody's guess.

Paying off the loan wasn't easy, I mean physically not financially. You approached a bank clerk and confided that you wanted to deposit IL100.00. The clerk filled out a form in longhand, and you sat down and read a novel. The clerk turned the handwritten form

over to a typist, who prepared another form in quadruplicate. The clerk handed the four copies to a chap in a cage. You gave your IL100.00 to the chap in the cage and went back to your novel. The cageman rubberstamped all copies, kept one and the IL100.00, and gave the other three back to the clerk. The clerk carried the three to an officer who signed all three, kept one, and gave the other two back to the clerk. He carried the two to another officer, who signed both and gave one back. The clerk conveyed this triple-certified receipt to you. You could usually count on finishing one chapter, unless you were reading Wilkie Collins.

Eisenhower having taken office, the economy-minded Republican administration determined that Tel Aviv and Haifa no longer qualified as hardship posts. Staff personnel at Tel Aviv had received a hardship allowance of 15% of base pay and those at Haifa 20%, and the effect was to cancel these allowances. The pocketbooks of Foreign Service officers were not hurt because they did not receive hardship pay but instead were credited with time-and-one-half toward retirement. Six months later Washington had a change of heart, and hardship status was restored. The end result was a muddle for accountants and timekeepers.

One unforeseen boon came from an agreement with the Israel Government that U.S. Mutual Security Administration (which in a few months changed its name to the Technical Cooperation Administration) funds could be used to reimburse American publishers of books, magazines, and (later on) phonograph records. For such items, this meant that the pound was on a par with the dollar. Since the price included shipping costs, persons resident in Israel were able to buy U.S. publications cheaper than could Americans at home.

Roving. We crossed into Lebanon for the first time in July 1952, a few weeks after our arrival. Jim May having come down from schooling in Beirut to set his affairs in order, he asked me to drive him back to the border, only an hour away. Indeed, in good weather we could see the cliffs of Lebanon from our back porch. There was a two-mile stretch of "neutral" territory between Israel and Lebanon, spanned by wireless telephone. The Israeli frontier post having cleared with the Lebanese post in advance, I drove Jim to the Lebanese side, an Israel official going along for no apparent reason other than to exchange curt salutes with the Lebanese. Crossing no-man's land on the return, I had the thrill of seeing a genuine Arab on a genuine camel. This legendary ship of the desert, or horse designed by a committee, was not in use in northern Israel.

Our next trip was more eventful. Harry Odell, the new vice consul, arrived in August with wife Barbara, baby Debra, *schafherhund* Bullo (Buhlow?), and a low dudgeon. More about that in a moment. Jim May phoned from the Lebanese border requesting transport home. I borrowed the consulate car and took Riekie along for a glimpse of the unknown. The two of us, with an Israeli guard in the back seat, made our way across the neutral zone and picked up Jim plus three bags crammed with personal effects and purchases. Halfway back through no-man's land the car broke down. We had to give up on it and walk a mile to the Israeli side, looking over our shoulders all the while for bandits, The Arab Legion, veiled Tuaregs, and that fellow from *The Desert Song*. We phoned Wil

Chase at the Consulate, and he despatched Harry Odell to the rescue. But we neglected to tell Wil that we were many in numbers and luggage. Not being alerted, Harry brought along the outsize German shepherd. The hour from the border back to Haifa provided data for the question of how do you get four elephants into a Volkswagen, and all of us were glad we had only an hour to go. Eventually the abandoned consular car was retrieved from no-man's land and nursed back to health.

Harry's dudgeon stemmed from informal talks with people in Washington. They had told him that Ed Thrasher had replaced Dean and he was replacing May. Chronologically this was correct, but Harry inferred this to mean the Thrasher family was living in the Dean flat and his family would live in the May flat. He was taken aback to find us installed in the May flat, and although our relations were easy (and have kept up for forty years) he was never quite convinced that Ed T. didn't pull a fast one and usurp what was rightly his. In the end, the Odell family did come to occupy the May flat, as will be recounted in due course.

Wil Chase arranged for visits to kibbutzim on two occasions. In October 1952 we inspected Kibbutz Eilon, located on 6,000 dunams of land near the Lebanese border, about 600 of which were cultivated. A dunam is less than a hectare but more than a vlast. In this settlement all equipment was owned in common, children were separated from parents day and night except for occasional visits (at the parents' option), and the adults lived in little barracks. They were permitted to own small items of personal property such as books, to receive allowances for pocket money, and to keep part of their rations in their rooms in case they wished to serve tea and biscuits. The life was akin to that in a monastery or the army, with all wants met and all directions provided from the guiding authority, in this case the kibbutz assembly. The people were free, however, to leave the kibbutz whenever they wished. We spent the morning wandering through the workshops and looking over the living quarters. Our guide, a visa applicant who had invited me to visit, remarked that kibbutzes were not increasing and were gradually being supplanted by moshavs, communities where each family owned its own plot of land.

In December we visited a kibbutz half-way between Haifa and Tel Aviv, in that ribbon where Israel is only ten miles wide. Called Ein Hahoreh, this communal settlement had about 7,000 dunams. Bigger, richer, better watered, and less precariously situated than Eilon, it was located in the citrus belt and made money exporting oranges and grapefruit. Wandering through the groves one was tempted to pluck--surely they wouldn't mind just one?--and then you ran into a guard carrying a shotgun and were glad you had decided to stay honest. The barracks dwellings were a bit grander than those of Eilon, split into 1 1/2 room apartments, and its workshops for repairing farm machinery were more elaborate. Here, too, our host remarked that kibbutzim were being supplanted by moshava where the land is owned individually but the equipment is used in common. As I write this forty years later, however, kibbutzim still flourish.

"Beyrout was altogether new. It would have been bastard French in feeling as in language but for its Greek harbour and American college. Public opinion in it was that of the Christian merchants, fat men living by exchange; for Beyrout itself produced nothing....

Beyrout was the door of Syria, a chromatic Levantine screen through which cheap or shop-soiled foreign influences entered;.... Yet Beyrout... had contained before [World War I] a nucleus of people, talking, writing, thinking like the doctrinaire Cyclopedists who paved the way for revolution in France. For their sake, and for its wealth, and its exceeding loud and ready voice, Beyrout was to be reckoned with."

- *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, p. 341

Beirut-Damascus. Riekie, Karen, and Ed set out early September 19, 1952, passed the border posts at Ras 'n Naqura after considerable palaver, and were in Beirut by 11:00. While the Lebanese countryside is no green-thumb garden, it is lush compared with the stones of Israel. We proceeded north on a coastal strip with mountains at some distance on our right. Bananas grew by the road, and camel-mounted Arabs were numerous. We turned aside for a look at Tyre, but its narrow streets did not encourage touring American-style from a car seat, and we pressed on in intense heat. Tyre juts into the sea and offers a striking picture from afar, but close up it is cramped, dirty and patched. It is hard to credit that for centuries it was a leading city of the known world and that people have been living and prospering there since at least a thousand years before Christ.

Hard to credit, too, that it has been an object of desire throughout history. The Assyrians besieged it, and the Chaldeans, and beginning about 587 B. C. it stood off attacks by Nebuchadnezzar from sea and land for 13 years. Alexander the Great reduced it in seven months by building a causeway that still links the island with the mainland, and in 315 B. C. it held out 18 months against Antigonus, one of the generals succeeding Alexander. Marc Antony gave Tyre to Cleopatra as a present, but Augustus promptly snatched it back. In the 7th Century A. D. it fell to the Saracens, from whom it was wrested by the Crusaders about 1190, only to be subdued by Selim I in 1516. From that time it slid toward oblivion because of changing trade routes and the establishment of deep water ports, and today it survives with a few thousand inhabitants eking scanty livelihood from local commerce.

The night before we set out, we had been told there was a revolution in Lebanon, but on being assured it was a gentlemanly one we had no qualms about proceeding. No shots were fired, and no blood was shed. The President politely left the country, and business went on as usual. Would that this courtly state of affairs had held true in later years, but unhappily Lebanon was to become a ground of great strife and misery.

The Hotel St. Georges fronted on the bay and had a private beach where we swam twice daily without being squeamish about clumps of seaweed and occasional bits of trash. Doris Duke and Harold Lamb happened to be guests at the time. Lamb could be seen in the hotel restaurant, but Miss Duke tended to be reclusive and was glimpsed at a distance, sunning on a ledge. The tariff was surprisingly reasonable, 30 Lebanese pounds or \$9.00 a day for our double room with balcony looking out on the sea. Prices in shops were correspondingly reasonable, and we spent lots of money in order to save it, for who knew when the border might close again.

Beirut was the Paris of the Middle East. The assortment of goods from all over the world rivaled that of New York or London, with American wares at a little more than American prices and a range of French, Dutch, German, Swiss and oriental goods. Three hours to the south a man in Israel would need a month's ration coupons to buy a pair of slacks that cost \$2.50 in Beirut, and the cause was an imaginary line drawn in gunpowder. Not to say, though, that all shared equally in Lebanon. In the midst of the plenty you saw people in rags, glad of a slab of pita bread, and trying to make a living selling each other sodapop.

Two days later we headed east, climbed over mountains that are cool resorts in summer and ski runs in winter, descended to a broad valley, climbed again to the Syrian border, and descended to Damascus. On the Syrian side the road wound beside a river, and you had trees and greenleaves in a belt perhaps two hundred yards wide, but beyond that serene, sandy hills like those of Arizona. It actually rained a bit as we entered the great city, the second rain I had seen in our five months in Asia. We put up at the Hotel Damas. The restaurant was supervised by a Swiss maitre d', and we ate frogs' legs for the only time in our lives. It was as if you were to journey to Mexico City to eat whale blubber.

"The Syrian Arab Republic was born in 1946 [only two years before independent Israel] in an ancient land swept for more than four thousand years by waves of conquerors-- Akkadians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Crusaders, Turks, and Frenchmen. And for 30 of its 32 years of existence [as of 1978] Syria has been at war...." Many archeologists regard Damascus as the world's oldest continuously inhabited settlement, and to Muslims it is sacred for they believe that it occupies the site of the Garden of Eden. According to tradition, when the Prophet Muhammad looked upon Damascus he refused to enter, not wishing to anticipate paradise ("Syria" by Howard LaFay, *National Geographic*, September 1978, pp. 326 ff.).

Because of Lebanese aversion to Israeli license plates, I had replaced my regular consular plates with one District of Columbia plate that had expired. The car still had C. H. (Confederation Helvetique) plates from Switzerland, and I felt reasonably secure that these would be accepted, but I was nervous about documents. The only form of registration was a paper I myself had written saying the car was my property and giving the motor and chassis number. The customs man at Ras 'n Naqura gave me a scolding about irregularities while I meekly said, "Oui, Monsieur. Oui, Monsieur." He confiscated my home-made document and gave me another in Arabic to present at the customs house in Beirut. Here I found a harassed official surrounded by a small mob poking pieces of paper at him, but when he saw me striking a respectful pose he put me ahead of the others, scribbled a notation on the back of the document--I was always startled to see penmanship right to left-- and signed at once. Since this document was confiscated by the Lebanese customs at the Syrian border, I approached Syria with nothing covering the car save a long-winded explanation to the effect that the Lebanese had promised to readmit us. When you think about it, it is really remarkable that we were allowed to enter, I mean, bring the car in. Not that the procedure was automatic, not at all. Words were spoken and arms were waved when we crossed and when we returned, but with great courtesy on all occasions. On the return trip the Lebanese gave me another paper which they took back

when we crossed again into Israel, leaving me with the same documents as when we started, none. Eventually I got an international triptych through an automobile club, and this served on future trips to Beirut and Jordan.

We devoted two days to the bazaars (suqs) of Damascus, tunnel-depth arcades lined with open shops and workrooms, in some of them the tinkers going hammerhammerhammer on the brass pots that swamped the markets. Wood, straw, mosaic, leather goods were turned out by hand in surfeit. Beirut vendors used high pressure tactics, swarming around the tourist, urging you to have a look at their merchandise, and even laying hands on you to persuade you into their shops. Those of Damascus, by contrast, waited until you came inside, and even then made little effort to sell you until you expressed some sort of interest. The streets were thronged with hawkers of cakes, fruits, water, men in Arab dress and in western business suits, and women invariably head to toe in black. I recalled that in Budapest there had been an Arab belly dancer at the Palais de Danse whose brown body stood out from the pale skins of her Teutonic colleagues, and one day I saw the girl outside the nightclub clothed entirely in black--headkerchief, dress, stockings, shoes. Now I realized this was the Syrian uniform. To our little Karen's discomfort, I may add. A Syrian businessman stared in amazement at her white dress and laughed derisively. Only a few miles away the dresses of Beirut women ranged from Bedouin mumus to Schiaparelli gowns.

One would have liked to see the road to Damascus where Paul was converted to Christianity, the tower from which he escaped in a basket, and the sources of the legendary Damascus steel. We did manage a tourist visit to the great Umayyad Mosque. Damascus is said to be the most ancient city in the world, founded (according to the sage Josephus) by Uz, great-grandson of Noah. It is certain that it was a place of consequence in the days of Abraham. But we had only a week's holiday, and we wanted to pass two more days in Beirut where Karen could have fun making like a tadpole. Too, there were considerations of time and religion. We had crossed early from Israel to Lebanon before the Israeli border post closed at noon because of the Jewish New Year. Returning we had to travel on a Friday or on a Sunday, because the border would be closed on Shabbath, and if we chose Sunday we had to cross before noon because of the Holy Days. A complication was that Israel had daylight saving time and Lebanon did not, meaning that if we reached the border at 11:00 it would be 12:00 and we would be stuck. On the other hand, if we got there in plenty of Israeli time, the Lebanon frontier post might not be open to clear us.

Descending the mountains into Damascus our car quit, just plain quit. I speculated that the extreme heat was vaporizing gas in the fuel line before it reached the carburetor, and I forced ourselves to let the car cool half an hour. This worked, but on our return trip the car quit again at the Syrian frontier post. A young Arab man saw me looking under the hood, and before I realized what was happening he popped behind the wheel and jiggled the controls, then joined me under the hood and cross-connected two of the sparkplug wires. When I waxed exceeding wrath, he told me to remain calm since he was a mechanic with the U.S. Mutual Aid mission in Beirut. He walked away for a moment and came back with a cantaloupe-sized melon that he cut in two and plopped onto the engine.

The fuel pump was overheating, he explained, but should get us back to Beirut if it were kept cool. A wetted rag would cool it but would tend to dry out, whereas the melon ought to do the trick. The melon saw us across the two mountain ridges, and I had the fuel pump repaired in Beirut in time to cross into Israel on the Sunday. It is because of this incident that all service stations carry melons to this day.

Roaming. To reach Tiberius, on Lake Tiberius or the Sea of Galilee, you drive about two hours via Nazareth, the road rising into mountains and then descending to 680 feet below sea level. Nazareth and Tiberius were sorry places, dirty straggling villages filled with cheerless people. As in Biblical times, Nazareth still drew most of its water from one well beside which women queued up and then walked down the road balancing five-gallon tins on their heads (if you think carrying the weight of five gallons of water on your head will help the crick in your neck, add it to your aerobics). This situation was remedied in later years. Tiberius was trying to be a resort town, but except for one good hotel and overcrowded, commercial hot springs it offered only eyesore shops. (Again, improving economic conditions have led to a marked upgrade.)

We did not linger but headed north beside the Lake, stopping for a picnic lunch during which Karen paddled in the water on which Christ walked. We passed the place where He fed the multitude with two fishes, and then Mt. Beatitude, the scene of the sermon on the Mount. Most biblical spots, of course, are conjectural, and some are topics of ardent, even fiery, discussion. We turned back into the mountains and headed for the Mediterranean. This is the most beautiful section of Palestine. When you get up around Rosh Pina, which is about 2,000 feet, you have the Sea of Galilee under your right foot and Lake Huleh under your left, and to the north you have a wonderful study of Mt. Hermon, near Damascus. Perpetually snow-covered, Hermon is a tremendous ridge rather than a single peak. In Switzerland it would be commonplace, but here it is a landmark, and the whole countryside in upper Galilee takes the eye like no other part of this barren land. Barren, yet by contrast with the neighboring Arab territories (except the Leban) it is the fertile crescent, the land of milk and honey.

Safad, at 2,750 feet, is the highest city in Israel. It perches on the side of a crag like a Disney castle, and because of its altitude it is a favorite resort in summer. Formerly an Arab town, it was in sad shape at the time we visited with half its buildings in ruins, either as a result of Arab-Jew fighting or from Israeli rebuilding projects after the fighting ended. As in Haifa, the government used the war as a convenient time to demolish slum areas, for had they tried to tear down whole quarters in ordinary times they would have been involved in endless litigation.

Megiddo, which we visited on another day, is about 19 miles from Haifa. The site of numerous battles, and the traditional location of Armageddon as per the Book of Revelation, it is a desolate earth mound today, distinguished by excavations made under the auspices of the University of Chicago, discontinued on account of the Arab-Jewish war and already half grown over. You stand and look at the old stones and think of all the men in the pages of history who have hacked each other to bits to possess this place--and today settlers avoid it.

"...(T)he six great towns [of Syria]-- Jerusalem, Beyrout, Damascus, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo--were entities, each with its character, direction, and opinion. The southernmost, Jerusalem, was a squalid town, which every Semitic religion had made holy. Christians and Mohammedans came there on pilgrimage to the shrines of its past, and some Jews looked to it for the political future of their race. These united forces of the past and the future were so strong that the city almost failed to have a present...."

- *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, p. 341

Jerusalem. From Haifa you take the Tel Aviv road as far as Petah Tikva and then cut off to Lydda Airport and Lud. Beyond that point the road starts to climb, and by the time you are at Jerusalem you are up 2,700 feet. Though you bypass Tel Aviv, the drive takes three hours. If it were not for the historical associations, Jerusalem would have to be classed as just another slovenly community, or such was my impression on our first visit in November 1952. At that time it was split into two sections, the Jordan side or Old City held by the Arabs and the Israel side or New City held by the Jews. Residents of Israel were barred from the Old City, and there were frequent incidents as trigger-happy persons on both sides took it into their heads to pot-shot. If you held a diplomatic passport you could cross into the Old City, but the Jordanians were less lenient than the Lebanese and required that trips be arranged ten days in advance.

The historical monuments were in the Old City and the shops, hotels and crowds were in the New. The New also had an outsize YMCA Building with a tower some 200 feet high from the top of which you could get a wide view of the Old City and a glimpse of the Dead Sea sunk in its hole beyond. Mount Scopus, the Mount of Olives, the Dome of the Rock, the Wailing Wall were all on the Jordan side. Also in Arab hands was the Hadassa Medical Center, the largest hospital in Palestine. The Arabs would not use it and the Jews could not, so it stood there idle. When the Crusaders first came to Jerusalem, they marched around the city seven times in the hope that its walls would fall like those of Jericho. A month's siege proved more effective.

We visited the Old City for the first time in May 1953. It is enclosed in walls that date back to Suleiman the Magnificent and which are pierced by gates--for example, the Damascus Gate, Herod Gate, Jaffa Gate--all of which were closed to traffic. When you crossed from Israel to the Arab sector you had to pass through the Mandlebaum Gate, which had nothing to do with the walls and was not a gate at all. Once upon a time a fellow named Mandlebaum kept a shop on a spot that at the time of the Armistice suspending the Arab-Jewish "troubles" was designated as the dividing line between Israel and Jordan. Mr. Mandlebaum had to re-establish his shop elsewhere in the New City, and as compensation he received not gold but fame. The place of passage was called the Mandlebaum Gate although there was nothing there but crossing barriers and tank blocks.

Three days before we cleared the Mandlebaum Gate, a serious outbreak of shooting killed or injured some dozen persons. For awhile there was talk that "this is it," but the truce was restored through the efforts of the United Nations Armistice Commission. When you

spent the night on the Arab side you stayed in hotels located outside the Old City walls, which is another way of saying there was more to Arab Jerusalem than the Old City, but not much. Most of the religious sites and the shops lay within the Old City walls within a singularly compressed area. Although the New City covered more ground, it had practically none of the religious places, and this was a sore point with the Jews who for centuries had been chanting "tomorrow in Jerusalem".

We hired a guide because we had been forewarned by Embassy people that it was unwise to buck the guide system. If you refused the guide's services you ran into inconveniences at customs and hotels. Besides, they really did tell you a lot you would miss on your own. A young man attached himself to us at the Mandlebaum Gate as a matter of course, for he knew from the clearance sheet that we were coming. The guide charged a nominal fee but steered you to shops from which he obtained a percentage of anything you bought. It was curious how, as you wandered, your path crossed certain shops again and again, and you were urged to stop in "for a coffee". The selling pressure, however, was not offensive, not nearly so strong as in Beirut or, on occasion, in Manhattan.

The guide took us first to the Mount of Olives to get a view of the city and panorama. Here stands a small dome called the Chapel of Ascension, containing a slab of rock with a dent in it which, the guide told us, is the footprint left by Christ when He ascended to heaven. Built in 1835, the Chapel is the property of the Moslems, but Christians were allowed to say Mass on certain days. This arrangement was made to prevent conflicts with Jews as the Chapel was built on a site sacred to the Jews as the resting place of the Divine presence in its wanderings after the destruction of the Temple.

There is no unanimity of opinion on where Christ was tried, where He was crucified, where He was entombed, and so on. According to those of the Catholic persuasion, He ascended from the Mount of Olives. He was crucified on a spot now within the Old City walls on which is built the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which is administered by five Catholic churches, Roman, Assyrian, Greek, Armenian, and Abyssian (Coptic). Within its main rotunda is a small stone crypt you stoop to enter. You buy a taper from a priest and are told you are on the spot where Christ was buried. According to Protestants (or at least, to some Protestants), however, the burial place lies outside the walls. A tomb carved in a hill has been excavated, a garden has been cultivated around it, and the chap in charge gives you an earnest talk as to the evidence for believing that this is the spot where Christ was buried. The Protestants say that Christ ascended to heaven from here rather than from the Mount of Olives. The Moslems say He did not ascend at all.

Approximately 2 1/2 miles in circumference, the Old City walls contained an amazing number of suqs or bazaars. Not so extensive as those of Beirut, and of course nowhere near the size of those in Damascus, all the same they rambled on amazingly and held a wealth of goods. It was hard to resist the profusion when you came out of austere Israel, and we did buy numerous knickknacks. Riekie had hoped for cotton dresses, but little ready-made stuff was stocked.

The most impressive religious site was the Sacred Enclosure, a flagstoned area several

hundred yards square containing the minuscule Dome of the Chain and the magnificent Dome of the Rock, or Mosque of Omar, first of the Umayyad Caliphs. (Not the tentmaker, who was not a caliph but a vizier.) This tremendous structure, dating from 636 A.D. is a miracle of mosaic craftsmanship. The detail work in the interior takes your breath away. Inside, too, is a rock, a huge one this time, surrounded by a railing. This is said to be the rock to which Abraham brought Isaac to sacrifice him to Jehovah (Allah, if a Moslem is telling the story). Muhammad is said to have ascended to heaven from this rock, and in one corner a dent is pointed out as his footprint. Beside the rock is a box which is said to contain a few hairs from the Prophet's beard.

With all the tourists and visitors, it is inevitable that commercialism has sprung up around the holy places, but when you consider how swamped in commercialism the sites could be if there were no government restraints, you appreciate the predominately sacred atmosphere that has been preserved.

Chapter 15  
Tel Aviv  
(March 1953-June 1954)

"Israel is the only nation where children teach the mother tongue to their mothers.... Hebrew had not been widely used for almost 2,000 years.... So children learned Hebrew in school and taught their parents."

- The People's Almanac by David Wallechinsky and Irving Wallace, p. 413.

Rumors that we would be shifted from Haifa to Tel Aviv hung over us from the date of arrival. An inspector from Washington had opined that it would be more efficient for the immigrant visa function to be shifted to the larger city, and Wil Chase had been told it was not a matter of if but when. The rumors intensified at the end of 1952 and were confirmed by mid-January of 1953. To my distress, the Thrasher family was ordered to move, although I tried to argue that it was Odell's turn to take charge of visas. Wil Chase made numerous back-and-forth journeys to talk with Ambassador Monnet B. Davis, and I had no input to the discussions except through Chase, who of course was bound to accede to orders. I imagine it was noted that I was now experienced in visas whereas Odell was untried, and against this I could make only personal points--that I had understood I was to be rotated to other consular work, that new living quarters must be found, that furniture and effects must be transferred, and that Karen must be uprooted from school. I don't know for positive, but I suspect that Odell opted strongly to remain in Haifa.

The British cruiser H.M.S. Kenya put into Haifa for a three-day courtesy call. A cocktail party embracing the upper crust of the port, meaning us, was given aboard ship, and pleasant British officers helped their guests consume pleasant drinks. H.M.S. Tea 'n Grog. It wouldn't be possible in the U.S. Navy. The British Ambassador journeyed from Tel Aviv to preside over a luncheon that saluted the ship's gallant officers. The refinery people told us that when one of these affairs is in the offing the British Consulate General duns the local British residents for money to entertain the ship's crew. Thus, a movie was shown, a cricket match was held, a picnic was laid on for all ratings, and so on. We heard that when Lord Louis Mountbatten had visited Haifa the previous summer the local British were tapped for as much as 50 pounds sterling per head.

British Consul General Clarence Ezard, who lived over us on the second floor, was named ambassador to Costa Rica. A tremendous surge of farewell parties was held throughout January, and it seemed as if we bid him fond adieu some twenty times. We had maintained cordial relations with the Ezards, taking care not to trample on their dignity. He was a cherubic little man who had served all over the world, including Danzig after it had been all but destroyed during the war, and Beira in Portuguese East Africa, which ain't no paradise. His wife, though a genial lady, tended to be a recluse who disliked official parties, whereas her husband was quite gregarious. The standard arrangement was that she was always included in invitations but always declined because of an illness she didn't have. In February, British Consul and Mrs. Toy moved into the flat over us. A new Consul General, a young bachelor driving a Jaguar, arrived a month

later and took up residence atop Mt. Carmel, which he reached by Jaguar.

The mayor of Haifa held an open reception for Israeli President Ben Zvi. We and 200 other dignitaries found ourselves locked out because of the multitude. The side wing of the Town Hall houses a museum. Feeling that the President of Israel just couldn't get along without seeing us, I hauled Riekie around to the museum entrance and with the help of an Israeli acquaintance walked to the top floor and down the other side to the reception. Once in, we heartily wished we were out, the populace having crushed for the President and free beer until you could move only by losing an arm. Nevertheless, we fought our way toward the inner chamber, determined to pay our respects. We arrived at the door just in time to see the President fighting his way out with the help of police and staff. Democracy can be wearing.

Mixed with our social dates were the rehearsals for Karen's show. Maybe somewhere in the world there are parents who don't put their young daughters in ballet class, but we are not among them. When it came time for the annual show it was discovered that our seven-year-old knew how to turn a cartwheel, and she was given a spotlight in a sort of Russian number. This meant that Riekie had to supply not only a tutu but Russian blouse, pants, and boots for thirty seconds of stardom. The show was held in Haifa's movie house and to my surprise was sold out. The kiddies made a pretty picture in their white fluffies and suffered only one mishap, when Seventh Dwarf Dopey lost his nose.

The U.S.S. Constitution, sister to the Independence, called at Haifa and took away Ambassador Davis for home leave. As he was in poor health, there was a question about his return. Wil Chase arranged for the entire Consulate staff to tour the magnificent ship.

The move of the office to Tel Aviv took place on Thursday, March 26, 1953. A sad issue was the fate of some of the Israeli visa employees, given a choice willy nilly of shifting to Tel Aviv or being fired. Mrs. Graif and one other remained at Haifa to help Odell with non-immigrant visas; one decided to resign; and four came to Tel Aviv, all of them discontented as they had to make the change on short notice under duress, had to find themselves places to live, and received no compensation for the expenses of moving. Because the visa rooms in the Embassy had sat vacant for several weeks, unauthorized sections had taken them over, and it took considerable administrative prying to get them out, which meant the incoming furniture had to be stacked in the hall until space was cleared. In addition to which, I had to set up some sort of routine for processing applications. I drove back to Haifa the evening of Friday, March 27th, attaining age 38 in the bosom of my family.

Chase and Odell assented to Riekie and Karen staying in the Haifa flat to let Karen complete the convent-school year, but there were complications. When you were assigned to a new post you were entitled to Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA) for up to 90 days to help with the extraordinary expense of temporary quarters while you searched for permanent housing. The TLA at Tel Aviv was \$4 each for Riekie and me and \$2 for Karen, or \$10 per diem total. Accounts Tel Aviv informed me I could draw \$4 for myself but nothing for Riekie-Karen if they stayed in Haifa. If I had installed them in

a Tel Aviv hotel room for 90 days, the cost to the Government would have been \$900, plus storage of our household effects, but Accounts was hemmed in by regulations. Bob Davis, a vice consul, helped me out by letting me live in his flat for a few days while he was on leave, but otherwise I stayed nearly two months in a hotel on weekdays and drove the 60 miles to Haifa on weekends. Karen would receive me with screams of delight at seeing her daddy. On one occasion she organized her playmates into a welcoming parade, and the racket was deafening with whistle, coffee can drum, and moldy flag of indeterminate country found in a storeroom.

I located a flat, lost it over a disagreement on terms, located a house, lost it when the occupants' orders were changed, and then got the flat after all when the landlord and I each came down a notch or so. We really lucked out; in the heart of the city, two blocks from the busiest and noisiest part of town, yet charming, spacious, and quiet. A 24 x 18 foot living room, three other rooms, a screened-in porch, and a large yard with grass and a bit of garden from which we plucked tomatoes. The flat was two blocks from Mograbi Square, where Allenby meets Ben Yehuda, yet secluded, almost rustic.

Ben Yehuda submitted an application for a non-immigrant visa. Eliezer Ben Yehuda is lauded for having revived the Hebrew language, though some say he killed two wives and tormented his three children by refusing to let them speak anything but Hebrew. It was son Ehud, age about 60, who applied. He remarked that other kids used to beat him up for speaking Hebrew. I also had a non-immigrant application from a woman musician. One of the accompanying documents was a letter guaranteeing that she would not become a public charge. The writer, who stated that his income was more than \$10,000 a year, was Yehudi Menuhin.

Set-up. Prior to my arrival, the consular section of Embassy Tel Aviv issued only non-immigrant visas. It was run by Louise Allen, a staff vice-consul, under the supervision of FSO-5 Robert Davis, who himself concentrated on citizenship, welfare, notaries, invoices, and other consular duties. Out of the blue there descended on him me, another FSO-5, both of us promoted to class by the same Board. I wanted to establish at the outset whether I was to report to Bob or he to me, and before the transfer I pressed Wil Chase to get a decision on this point. The decision was that the consular section was to have two heads, one for visas and the other for everything else. This left unclear the issue of whom I was to report to or turn for help in case of need. At Haifa I could always yell to Wil Chase, experienced in visa matters. At Tel Aviv there were chiefs of political, economic and administrative sections, but Bob and I were unsupervised except by the head man himself, Charge d'Affaires Francis B. Russell. Since Mr. Russell's time was occupied with Israeli-Arab tensions, it was not an ideal situation.

Within the visa section there were problems of staff and space. Louise was admirably suited to continue handling non-immigrant visas, but she was due for leave and went off for a month shortly after my arrival. Bob Davis loaned me half-time services of a go-getter American clerk, but this gem suddenly got a better offer and quit the Foreign Service. A young lady with considerable smart brains was shifted to visas, but she committed matrimony and quit also. I chiseled part-time from another clerk assigned to

Bob Davis, and she was transferred out of the consular section. Added to which, only one of the Tel Aviv Israeli employees had had any acquaintance with immigrant visas, and that had been five years earlier.

The space assigned to the visa section resembled the waiting-room of an airport, with benches before a reception counter. At Haifa one receptionist could quickly assign the 75 to 125 daily applicants to the proper staff person because the entry was so arranged that only one applicant was funneled at a time. At Tel Aviv the entry from the street led into a shallow foyer before the counter. This was some 100 feet wide, topped by a glass barrier with notches or windows, one for Citizenship-Notarials and the others for Visas. I inaugurated a set of numbered cards so that each applicant could take a number and sit down to await his turn, but people of the Middle East have different notions about queuing up than those of the West. They took the numbers, all right, but continued to press against the counter and clamor, rivaling the New York Stock Exchange for noise. Young Costa, down from Haifa, bore the brunt of the 200 to 300 callers per day. The usual dialog was that the applicant had filed for a visa two weeks ago and where was the visa. Costa would pass the name to an employee and ask the applicant to sit down until the file was found, but the applicant was seldom willing to give up his place at the head of the line.

If the file were not being processed, the employee could readily find it and inform the applicant of his status, but if it was being worked on it might be one of a pile on any of half a dozen desks and could take time to locate, during which the applicant tended to become more and more vocal. Of course, all applicants believed that if only they could talk to the consul the visa would be immediately forthcoming. American citizens who wished to inquire about relatives insisted on being conducted to the Presence immediately. To help relieve the press, I reserved afternoon appointments for citizens, which had the advantage of enabling us to locate files in advance of the interviews. Most accepted this arrangement good-naturedly, but there were two or three incidents in which American citizens got irked at not being treated the way they thought they should be treated. There were also numerous letters from members of Congress and other personages along the lines of my constituent tells me his friend has been unjustly denied a visa and we would appreciate an accounting for this state of affairs *allegro furioso*. Usually I would reply that according to the documentation the applicant might hope for a visa in six or seven years but if he wished to submit additional evidence the consulate would be glad to give it due consideration.

Adjustments. Just before leaving Haifa we were honored by an invitation to participate in a family seder, notwithstanding my being a week-kneed Baptist and totally ignorant of Judaic religious practices. There were 14 at table, five of them children. Karen, who had been baptized in the Presbyterian Church and was attending a Roman Catholic convent school, sat open-mouthed through the proceedings but joined happily in the games afterward and sang *Cruising Down the River* when called on to entertain. I was amazed at the emphasis on Tomorrow in Jerusalem. In July 1953 the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs defied the recommendation of the United Nations and moved to that city. The Knesset (Parliament) already met in Jerusalem, and the Prime Minister lived there, but

the Foreign Ministry had remained in Tel Aviv. Other nations declined to accede to the move and stayed put. The result was that the diplomats became separated by 40 miles, or 1 1/2 hours, of mountainous road, from the persons with whom they had to do business.

Karen seemed to survive the move from Haifa to Tel Aviv with minimum upset. For the first week she moped around the flat, nobody to play with. And one day I came home to find the place packed with lean kids and fat kids and brawny kids and scrawny kids, and it was that way from then on. In Haifa she browbeat her comparatively few playmates into talking pidgin, but she began picking up Hebrew in the new environment. In September she entered the Tabeetha Church of Scotland school. Schweitzerdeutsch kindergarten in Bern, French-Arab convent in Haifa, Presbyterian school in Tel Aviv -- she was to experience still more as a child in the Foreign Service.

Mother Superior O'Connell asked that Karen come back to Haifa to dance in the school show in July. Flattery will get you everywhere, and of course we could not let the school show be a flop. We graciously consented. The show was given in the convent courtyard, illuminated by one street lamp, two feeble spotlights, and a fire in a brazier. I could hardly sit through the show for fear some child would fall into the fire. Karen, in a flour sack with her hair over her ears witch-style, represented one of five Spirits of Light. Insufficiently rehearsed, she ran south when the others ran north, but the lapse was small. She soloed with one leg stretch, one crab bend, and one split. These feats earned a hand but no billing. The show closed with the Pied Piper of Hamelin, a bit ragged when some of the kiddies disguised as rats got stage fright and refused to come out.

In June we entered the Tel Aviv diplomatic tennis tournament. Riekie and I were eliminated in the first round of the doubles, but I thought for awhile I might be champion at singles. I defeated three opponents and entered the finals against the Argentine Third Secretary. I had the better game, he had youth, and I was favored to win. We played at three o'clock, with the afternoon at its hottest, before a surprisingly large crowd, some of whom watched the match and all of whom tackled the refreshments. I ran up a 5-2 lead in the first set and suddenly tired. I was lucky to win it at 9-7, and from then on I was out of the match. I lost the second 6-3 and the third 6-4. By the end, neither of the gladiators was able to do more than plop the ball. Afterwards young Carlos had stomach cramps, but it was he who walked away with the cup. I was bitterly disappointed.

The swimming at Tel Aviv was less pleasant than at Haifa beachwise and peoplewise. We went often with Pete and Sandy Putnam, Al and Judy Key, and the dachshunds Pomp and Circumstance. To get to the beach, you drove north of town about 15 minutes and then picked your way over a dirt path that led around a 100-foot high cliff lining the beach. This was a strip of sand, inevitably thronged in such a populous area. It was still the Mediterranean, but somehow different from the sea in which we had paddled near Acre. How narrow is the line between serenity and tragedy. Al, keen on snorkeling, brought along a crossbow-like contraption designed to fire arrow-type bolts under water. Trying to get the hang of it on shore, he inserted a bolt but failed to secure the catch. With its butt in the sand, the damn thing suddenly triggered, and the arrow-bolt came within six inches of taking off Al's head. It was just an incident; it could have been a

catastrophe.

See the sights. As we drove north across the Lebanese border in August, the wind was blowing cool along the seacoast; already the heat was tempered, and you could feel the autumn moving in. Banana trees waved their elephant leaves and fronds of sugar cane rustled as you drove past. In Israel the roadside hawkers offered melons, in the Lebanon baskets of figs. Lebanese peaches can compete with those from the state of Ty Cobb. In Beirut American cars wound in and out among donkeys and occasional camels, the suqs burst with sellers of goods from mink coats to snared sparrows, and friendly hotels were so happy to cash personal checks that we returned to Tel Aviv enriched in spirit and poorer in cash.

I had arranged to cross the border on Thursday, the 27th, but we set out two days earlier for a look at Safad in northern Galilee, the highest and coolest city in Israel. A colony of artists roosts in Safad, and we had been told you can walk the streets viewing their paintings. From Tel Aviv we drove 1 1/2 hours to Haifa, turned off after Acre, and another 1 1/2 hours to Safad. On the way the car developed fuel pump trouble just as it had done in the broiling heat on the way to Damascus.

Although the mountain across from Safad is lined with hotels, I had been too stubborn or stupid to arrange accommodations in advance, and now we found we could not get a room. Moreover, all the artists were taking a siesta 2:00 to 5:00. With the car behaving uncertainly it seemed advisable to get located before nightfall, so we pushed on to Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee, another hour's drive. Here there is a super hotel, and we reasoned that as it was not the season for Tiberias--which is extremely hot in summer--the hotel would not be full up. This reasoning was correct. The hotel was not full, it was closed. There was nothing to do but return to Haifa, another 1 1/2 hours of driving, where we finally located a lodging for the night.

But after this inauspicious start all went well. It was as if the deity of vacations had decreed that, since something must go wrong, all the unpleasant incidents should be disposed of on our first day. Although the car was not running properly, it limped into Beirut without mishap, and we settled down in our Beirut home, the Hotel St. Georges, the most economical luxury hotel we shall ever encounter. We occupied a double room with bath and balcony overlooking the sea for seven days. We had breakfast in bed every day. We had two meals in the regular restaurant, with French wine, and we had two meals in the plush grill, with French wine, and we swam twice a day on the Hotel's beach. All of this cost us \$140.

Karen developed as a swimmer. The beach at the St. Georges is landlocked, meaning no breakers and calm water. An anchored raft lay about 50 yards from shore, and by our holiday's end she could swim to it unassisted. She used a dog-paddle of her own invention, but she got there style or no style. I felt no hesitation taking her on a little kayak that we rented, and when the kayak upset I was not at all worried as she had no fear of water and there was no concern about her becoming panicked. I bought an underwater mask and snorkel that lets you breathe while your face is in the water. It's

amazing what one of these lets you see underwater, even in so restricted a spot as a hotel lagoon. A fellow who had swum off Elath, at the head of the Gulf of Aqaba jutting off the Red Sea, told me the things to be seen there just can't exist, and yet they do. Some people arm themselves with spring guns, like the one that nearly decapitated Al Key, but I forbore such sport.

We bought a great many things, clothes, shoes, phonograph records, films, a pickup head for the phonograph, repairs to the car. Prices were reasonable, and you were filled with a sense of urgency. Better buy all you can, the border might be closed the next time you want to come. We had intended to take a few trips in the area, but I made the mistake of telling the garage I would be in Lebanon for five days, so of course the mechanic did not start to work until the fifth day. Had I said seven days, as was actually the fact, there would have been no action until the seventh. We made only one trip, two hours north of Beirut to Tripoli, an unprepossessing spot although close to the mouth of the Dog River, famous in history as a funnel through which troops of conquerors marched. The only feature of note was the series of salt pans lining the coast. As you draw near Tripoli you note hordes of windmills that pump water into stone evaporating basins. You can see the salt in different stages of crystallization, including the end result in little white mounds. I imagine the finished product is crude, but the costs of manufacturing must be practically nil, and the raw materials of course are endless and gratis.

Except for this one side-trip we stayed in Beirut, shopping every day in the suqs, lunching on club sandwiches at "Uncle Sam's" across from the American University, and loafing on the beach. I read Edmund Wilson's *To The Finland Station*, lectured Riekie on the rise of socialism and dialectical materialism, and goggled at bathing beauties from all nations.

Also vacationing at the St. Georges was the head of our Embassy's information section. He cut his leave short when word reached him that on orders from Washington some half-dozen employees were being lopped from his staff. R.I.F. (Reduction in Force) was the word under Eisenhower. Under the Roosevelt and Truman administrations foreign service personnel expanded heroically, with half the force occupied in keeping records on the other half. I compared the bloated Tel Aviv Embassy staff with the lean staffs in Warsaw and Budapest. The people being released had been hired as temporaries, but after you have worked at a job five years you stop thinking of it as temporary and you suffer shock when suddenly informed your temporary appointment is ended. Foreign Service Officers were not affected because FSOs are subject to "selection out" all along.

Karen celebrated her eighth birthday at our Tel Aviv flat. About 20 children stuffed themselves with goodies and played blind-man's bluff in the yard. She received a dozen presents, many of them books to which she took like a squirrel to pecans. Her customary day-to-day playmate by this time was Edna, a twelve year old with the contours of a hippo. Edna weighed more than I did, and it was hilarious to see Karen teaching her ballet steps, Karen light as a bubble and Edna graceful as a steamroller. We enrolled Karen in another ballet class after the summer heat had eased.

Roll, Jordan, Roll. The following April, a year after we had settled in Tel Aviv, we crossed at Mandlebaum Gate, spent the night in Arab-held Jerusalem, and set out for Amman, capital of Trans-Jordan. The country and the climate changed amazingly as we drove. In Jerusalem rain fell and a cold wind blew, but the lush green of the countryside began bleaching out as we went down hill, and as we wound through tortured gorges the grass became sparse until, below sea level, the hills were nothing but sand and rock. When we emerged onto the plain we found an expanse of fertile land, but as we approached the Jordan there was an astonishing bank of dead hills where the desolation was utter and not a thing grew, something like the gold dumps of Johannesburg. We crossed the river on the famous Allenby Bridge. The Jordan of song and legend and strife is a muddy wash perhaps fifty yards wide at this point. Then into mountains again to reach Amman.

From Jerusalem to Amman takes about two hours. On the way you pass the curious Arab village of Salt, built on the side of a cliff with houses dotted like mud pigeon coops. Amman's center lies in a valley with five or six mountain ridges resembling wheel spokes. To get from one mountain to another you have to descend into the center of town and go back out again. Although there are comparatively few tourists (for example, as against Beyrouth), the city is western in appearance, with business and residential sectors following European lines. The only antiquity we noted was the Greek theater, built by the colonists of Alexander the Great. It is odd that a city so old should look so new. We saw no suqs, but numerous open streets were lined with shops of Arab tradesmen.

On the return trip we stopped at Jericho. The present village stands at some distance from the spot where the walls tumbled down, and you cannot see the excavations without a guide. Since we feared driving in the mountains leading to Jerusalem at night, we did not take the time to go to the excavations. The site is well below sea level, and I'm told the heat in summer is incredible. Did Joshua realize what he was getting when he decided to lay siege?

We turned aside to visit the Dead Sea. The world's lowest river, the Jordan, drains into the Sea at 1,315 feet below sea level. As Riekie remarked, the picture one conjures up is often completely wrong. We had thought of the Dead Sea as inert, unmoving, and we were surprised to find waves rolling in to shore. Some enterprising lad had opened a seaside restaurant and roped off a bathing enclosure. In later years tourism caught on, and I understand it can be quite the "in" thing to take your holiday 1,292 feet below the level of the Mediterranean.

Before returning to Israel we had a glimpse of Bethlehem, twenty minutes' drive from Jerusalem, and twice as commercialized as Niagara Falls. Maybe there was once a stable with a manger in it, but not today. The Empress Helen, wife of Constantine, did the same thing here that she did in Jerusalem, built a church around the holy spot. The Armenian Church occupies one wing, the Greek Orthodox another, the Roman Catholics are allowed frequent entry, and the Protestants join in the processions at Christmas and Easter. Guides swarm like mosquitoes, and shopkeepers try to drag you in. In Jerusalem the Holy Enclosure, that is, the Moslem holy sector, is set apart, and admission is

government controlled. Tourists have to hire guides, true, but you don't have to beat them off as in Bethlehem.

Highlights. On separate occasions Embassy Tel Aviv was visited by John Foster Dulles, Adlai Stevenson, Harold Stassen, and Maria Riva (daughter of Marlene Dietrich). None of them walked on water. Factions at the Tel Aviv Opera locked each other out for awhile, but eventually we got to see a quasi-professional performance of Carmen. The Tel Aviv opera of the day knew the words and music, but that's about all it achieved. If you had told me that one day a tenor named Placido Domingo would solidify his position as one of the world's greatest at Opera Tel Aviv, I would have snickered.

The Israel Philharmonic, now, was something else. Each program was repeated ten times to accommodate the heavy demand, but all the same tickets were hard to come by. After a wait of weeks I was accorded a subscription. Leonard Bernstein conducted a concert, but he made no impression because the program was all-Mozart and Mozart does not click my switch. More memorable was a performance of the Mahler Symphony No. 9 conducted by Walter Susskind. Mahler was just beginning to catch on as a concert staple in that era, and I had to marvel that anyone could conceive such music. It was so unlike anything I had ever heard I snapped at a ticket that became available and went back for a second performance. Subsequently, chance put me next to Maestro Susskind at a reception, and I asked him many intelligent questions, such as "Why is the clarinet a transposing instrument," a matter I still don't understand. The only item I recall from our chat was a statement that symphony conductors develop legs like soccer players because they are on their feet day in day out.

One day I took my guitar from the cupboard for the first time in weeks and found the glue at the neck had softened in the heat and the instrument had folded itself nearly double. I had just bought another book on how to play it. It's so much easier to buy a book than to practice.

Situation. Ambassador Monnet B. Davis went home on leave in March, spent months in hospital in the States, insisted on returning to his post, was taken ill on the voyage out, and died in Tel Aviv after lingering about a month. Poor Mrs. Davis spent the week before Christmas 1953 watching her husband fade away. The Embassy staff was organized to help with a memorial service that involved diplomatic niceties about whether the Flabopian First Secretary should sit in the pew ahead or behind the Deputy Minister of Morale and Laundry. Mr. Francis H. Russell again took over as Chargé d'affaires ad interim of Embassy Tel Aviv. After Tel Aviv he was to serve as ambassador to respectively, New Zealand, Ghana, and Tunisia. Retiring in 1969, he died in 1989, age 84.

I, too, became involved in a protocol flap. When I arrived at Haifa there was waiting for me a letter dated February, 1952, from the Tel Aviv administrative officer saying in effect that my commission as vice-consul at Haifa was returned herewith. At Haifa we took this to mean that the Embassy had applied to the Foreign Ministry for my exequatur as vice consul. An exequatur is a written authorization of a consular officer by a

government to which he is accredited. I filled out some forms and received from the Foreign Ministry a diplomatic identity card, but month followed month without any exequatur, although of course I carried on with my job. Finally Haifa wrote the Embassy to ask if by chance they were holding on to the exequatur and were surprised to learn that, as Mr. Thrasher had never forwarded his commission, the exequatur had never been applied for. We referred to the Embassy's February 1952 letter and received a reply that the Embassy had no record of any such letter. We had to forward the letter before the Embassy would agree that they had seen my commission. By that time I had been ordered to Tel Aviv, and the question of an exequatur for me as vice consul in Haifa was academic.

With this incident in mind I at once asked the Embassy to register me with the Foreign Ministry as being at Tel Aviv. The Embassy forwarded my commission, but the Ministry rejected it, pointing out that it said I was assigned to Haifa. So we requested a new commission from Washington, and some weeks later we sent a reminder. In July 1953 came a reply that the commission was in the works. I did not push our administrative people on this because I was always bugging them about additional staff for the Visa Section and did not want to aggravate them. I also neglected to remind administration that, as a diplomatic officer, I should have been listed as a Second Secretary rather than a vice-consul. A follow-up finally went to Washington at year-end, and shortly before I quitted Israel my name was added to the diplomatic list. Inconsequential, you will say. On the other hand, if I had not asked for what I was entitled to my lack of interest could have been taken to mean that I attached no importance to the office.

Vice Consul Louise Allen was transferred to another post in April 1954, leaving Thrasher the only officer in the Visa Section and her replacement not due for two months. We drove to Haifa in May to wave good-bye to Wil and Mona Chase, off on home leave. Unofficially I was alerted that Riekie and I would probably draw home leave and transfer in the third quarter of 1954 (July-September), and on the chance that I might get orders early I put our car up for sale rather than wait until the last instant. I read the crystal ball correctly. Orders arrived on May 11 assigning me to Manila as economic officer with departure no later than June 19th. This generated another paperwork mixup.

From the moment of arrival in Tel Aviv I had pressed for rotation to other consular duties. I was head of Visa Section, Bob Davis was Lord High Everything Else Consular, and each of us wanted rotation to another job. We talked with political officer Larry Ralston, another FSO-5, and got his unenthusiastic assent to a swap. Bob would take over Larry's spot in the Political Section, I would take over Bob's spot as Consular officer, Larry would take over my spot as Visa officer. All we had to do was persuade the top brass to okay the deal, but this proved elusive. The head of the Political Section was not a career officer but an appointee who saw himself as carrying Israel-United States relations on his own shoulders and had little interest in the rest of the Embassy. This frenetic young man was always about to lead one more cavalry charge into the breach and was difficult to approach on any subject except his own concerns. The poor chap died of a heart attack only a few years after transfer from Israel. Our approach to getting his consent to the suggested rotation had to be made through the administrative officer,

himself a political appointee, and my impression is neither he nor the political officer really understood what was wanted. On the one occasion that I did have a talk with the political head, he burst out that he was responsible for conduct of political affairs and saw no reason for change, implying that what I wanted was to join the political section, which was not my intent at all.

We persisted, and in December tentative assent was obtained. The administrative officer held, however, that such a move could be made only with the consent of Washington. I felt he was mistaken, but his opinion prevailed. In January 1954 a memorandum was sent asking departmental permission. No reply was received. I argued that the Department never replied because they didn't think a reply was necessary, but the admin man refused to institute the rotation until a reply arrived. After a follow-up was sent, a reply was received in late March saying there was no objection to the rotation. But by that time several officers had been transferred from Tel Aviv, no replacements had come, and the boss decreed it was no time to put a green man in the political section, so the rotation was postponed. Washington, however, was not informed of the postponement. Personnel in the Department of State had it on their books that Larry Ralston took over the Visa Section as of April.

In May came orders assigning me to Manila, with departure by June 11th. It was suddenly realized that no one in the Embassy except me had any experience with immigration visas. To my disgust, a telegram was sent saying that since Thrasher was the only experienced visa officer it was essential that Thrasher's departure be delayed until the arrival of his replacement. I was terrified this might mean that my transfer should be countermanded, but after a lapse of three weeks the boss sent a second telegram saying the Embassy wished to make plans but did not wish to negate Thrasher's new assignment. On May 30 a telegram arrived from the Department granting delay in my departure but saying I must positively get under way by the end of June. The Department also expressed surprise to hear that Thrasher was the only visa officer around because it had understood that Ralston had been handling visas for the past two months.

The turbulent Middle East. In October 1953 Israel and Trans-Jordan exchanged heated words over the Kibya "incident". Jordan protested to the United Nations that a battalion-strength Israeli armed forces unit murdered more than 40 inhabitants of Kibya, an Arab village, with machine gun and mortar fire. Israel replied cautiously that, if indeed there was such an incident, Jordan marauders had murdered an Israeli woman and her children, and this wanton act might have encouraged persons disguised in Israeli-army uniforms to retaliate. I was called into the office on a Sunday to issue diplomatic visas to three officials who would represent Israel in the matter before the United Nations.

In mid-March 1954 the Israelis observed Purim, said by some to be originally a pagan festival adopted by Judaism in memory of Hadassa or Esther, the concubine whose personality was so charming she persuaded King Ahasueros of Persia to liquidate the enemies of his Jewish subjects. Children celebrate this event by parading in elaborate costumes, some of them embodying as much seamstress work as a couturier gown. This particular Purim fell on a grim note.

The farthest outpost of Israel is Eilat, on the Gulf of Aqaba, at the head of the Red Sea. A bus ran from Tel Aviv to Eilat, the journey taking ten hours over a rocky road lying close to the Trans-Jordan border. The day before Purim, a bus was ambushed by unidentified brigands on its return trip. According to press reports, the assassins shot the driver, then walked through the stalled bus spraying with machine-gun fire. Eleven passengers were killed. The Israelis claimed that the deed was done by Arabs. The Jordanians proclaimed that the Israelis deliberately staged the incident to provide a talking point at the United Nations for the Kibya massacre.

These were the two major violent events that happened during our two years in Israel. There were numerous isolated instances of Arab-Israeli conflict, but on the whole we enjoyed a lull. Relations between Israel and its neighbors never deteriorated while we were there to the point where borders were sealed to diplomatic personnel. As my daily working efforts were limited to the Visa Section, though on the spot I was no better informed about international relations in the Middle East than a reader of the New York Times in Queens. Given that I am so eminently qualified, I do not hesitate to set forth some personal observations.

Secretary of State Henry Kissinger has written that, contrary to popular opinion, inharmonious relations between Arabs and Jews began not too long ago:

"The conflict has not lasted for thousands of years, as is often said.... Only when the centuries of Ottoman rule had given way to the British Mandate, and the prospect of self-determination for Palestine emerged, did the Arab and the Jew, after having coexisted peacefully for generations, begin their mortal struggle over the political future of this land...."

This may be so, but the fact remains that people have been killing people in this, the region of the Garden of Eden, for 6,000 years and are likely to keep on doing so. The causes are many: religious, political, economic, ethnic, power-hunger, or sad to say simply that human beings do like to kill human beings anywhere in the world. (I was dismayed to read recently that there have been wars among the Eskimos who live above the Arctic Circle, as if they didn't already have enough trouble staying alive.) The Middle East is perhaps distinctive in the importance of religion as a cause of strife. Perhaps this is comparatively recent. Perhaps it didn't start until the first Crusade pitted Christian against Moslem, but it has been a prominent issue since at least that time.

Jews, Christians, Moslems say they are entitled by religion to the Fertile Crescent. When asked why, each replies that it says so in a book, as author Emil Ludwig puts it, the three precious books that have caused so many wars: the Koran, the Torah, and the Gospels. Nowadays you have the added impetus of the oil fields in addition to the aeons-old impetus of trade routes, but even after oil is exhausted and trade routes are bypassed the religious issue remains. People will still cling to their books. That being so, peace in the Middle East can never be maintained by Western intervention. The blood that has soaked the area over 6,000 years demonstrates that any conqueror can hold on only for a limited

time.

The West has reaped benefits from the Middle East but at what cost. Allenby in World War I, Montgomery-Alexander in World War II, France's efforts to hold Lebanon-Syria, Israel's war of independence, Eisenhower's ice cream war, the Six-Day War, the closing of the Suez Canal, the hostage crisis in President Carter's administration, the Iraq-Iran war, President Bush's intervention in the Iraq-Kuwait invasion. The list keeps growing. And more important than the costs is the toll in human misery.

I wish I had a solution. My only suggestion is to recall the World War II question: "Is this trip necessary?" Do we have to intervene in the Middle East? If the West, and of course I mean the United States, thinks of intervening in any given Middle East crunch, it should try to figure out whether or not the action will show a profit, will realize benefits over and above the costs, to mankind at large.

Departure. We sold our radio, record player, refrigerator, odds-and-ends, and car on the local market. Although we got good prices given the age of what we sold, we had to pay such heavy customs duty and luxury tax despite diplomatic status that we were far from reaping a windfall. The sale opened my eyes to the importance of knowing the market. I hired an Israeli businessman who sold household effects for a commission. I forgot to include four used tires, and I decided to market these myself. My efforts produced an offer of ten Israeli pounds for the lot. I turned the tires over to the commission agent and realized 60 pounds after the commission and taxes were paid.

We sailed from Haifa on June 22, 1954 on the M.S. *Grimani*, a small Italian ship. It was eight o'clock in the evening, and I stood at the rail for an hour watching the lights on Mt. Carmel fade into the distance. Our stay in Israel had its moments, and as members of the diplomatic community we led pampered lives compared with the population at large, but my inability to get out of the visa rut made me feel like a squirrel on a wheel, working hard to stay in the same spot. I took distinct pleasure watching Haifa disappear, and I have felt no urge to go back.

Chapter 16  
Trip  
(June 1954)

"We shall sail securely, and safely reach  
The Fortunate Isles."

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, "The Building of the Ship"

The little Grimani was a pert cockleshell, limited in space but comfortable and with a fine dining salon. Its menu was less varied than that of the huge Independence, but the food was excellently prepared. Riekie and I read and loafed, while Karen made friends with a little British girl and ranged over the ship. The second day out we put in at Larnaca in Cyprus and signed up for a sightseeing trip to Famagusta, the scene for much of Shakespeare's and all of Verdi's Otello. Neither Famagusta nor Cyprus sticks in my memory, but if ever you mention them at a cocktail party, we can say we've been there.

For the next two days the Grimani wound in and out the Greek islands, skirting them and the Turkish coast so closely you could all but spit ashore. I was especially taken with Rhodes. When I was a callow youth I read A Knight of the White Cross by G. A. Henty, all about the chaps who defended Rhodes against the infidels, striding the decks of galleys in full armor until that unlucky moment when they fell overboard. Whatever became of G. A. Henty, anyhow? I read a lot of him when I was a kid. "You dastardly blackguard," cried our hero, his eyes flashing, "I shall see that you receive the pummeling you so richly deserve." You don't often come across writing like that. As we put into The Piraeus, a warship fired a salute that was returned by a shore gun. The salute was not in honor of us but of an Israeli naval squadron paying a ceremonial visit to Greece.

We took a rubberneck bus to Athens and the Acropolis. It was our second visit, having stopped on the way to Israel, but this time we took a guide. There is much to be said for taking a guide because you get not only information but protection from other guides. Unhappily, when hiring a guide there's no way of making sure you're getting a good one. Karen was quite bucked about the Acropolis as she had just studied about it at Tabeetha School. She picked up several chunks of rock and when back on ship wrote to her teacher in Jaffa that she was sending the rocks to her. Luckily for the teacher, she lost the rocks before it came time to mail them.

From The Piraeus, the Grimani headed through one of the wonders of the world, the Corinth Canal. This is a cut through the hills between the western Aegean and the Gulf of Corinth, approximately five miles long and so narrow the ship seems to have a scant two yards on either side as it passes through. Only small vessels can use it, and they must maintain just enough speed to allow steering control and at the same time avoid churning up too much wake. It is an experience to ooze through this narrow cleft with the sheer walls rising to two hundred feet on either side, so close you can definitely touch them with a ten-foot pole.

The Canal led to the Gulf of Corinth, the Ionian Sea, the toe of Italy, and Naples. We had a six-day layover waiting for the Independence, and we used two of them for Naples, eating in pleasant restaurants and listening to serenades from strolling musicians. The train to Rome took about four hours. We rode the usual sight-seeing bus, and Karen particularly enjoyed the Sistine Chapel. As many people have noted before us, it must be pleasant to live in Rome if you have a bit of money. The shops are full, the people are friendly, there are many beautiful residential areas, and the place bursts with art, music, and history.

After two days in Rome we entrained for Florence. This gem among cities pleased us more than any other in Italy, although I don't deny that every place has its points. Our sightseeing tour gave us a glimpse of the highlights during our one day. Then to Genoa for two days, the low spot of our Italian tour because the sightseeing bus took us to a hideous cemetery and kept us there an hour looking at Victorian-era tombstones. From the little we saw of it, Genoa makes the least of its past of any major Italian city. There is a prominent statue of Columbus, but you have to search for instances of the proud days when it vied with Venice for mastery of the Mediterranean.

And so to our third crossing of the Atlantic on the Independence, undistinguished except that I almost managed to be seasick when we first hit the Atlantic. Karen swam nearly every day, I worked at a report, and Riekie and I ate ourselves nearly comatose. We overnights in New York and took Karen to the Radio City Music Hall. Also to an automat where she was enchanted with getting sandwiches by dropping coins in a slot. Our hotel room had a device called a television set that didn't work very well. My opinion at this stage was that television would never amount to more than an over-inflated toy.

We stayed in Washington about a week while I "consulted" with people at the Department of State. Visas was well aware I had kept on serving as visa officer to the end, but Personnel's organization chart showed that Ralston was handling consular work and Bob Davis political. Oh, well, the mixup must have been straightened out some day. Of more immediate interest to me were orders to sail for Manila from Los Angeles September 20, 1954 on the S.S. President Cleveland. I also learned a lesson the hard way, to wit, when you work for the Government never travel on your own funds. I was too ignorant to ask for a travel advance when I quitted Tel Aviv but paid all incidental expenses from my own pocket on the blithe assumption that the Treasury would promptly reimburse me. I was shocked when told I would have to wait for some five weeks for repayment, and I passed many unanticipated hours walking bureaucratic halls to accelerate the process.

I also learned about the latest improvement in the Foreign Service. Two years earlier, when we were on home leave from Switzerland, the word had been "amalgamation" in anticipation of implementing the recommendations of the Hoover Commission. Now it was "integration," in accordance with the recommendations of the Wriston Committee, headed by the President of Brown University. The Secretary of State had signed a directive integrating 1,450 departmental, staff, and reserve officers into the Foreign Service Officer corps, the integration to be carried out over two years. Numerous State

civil servants were given the choice of being shunted into the Foreign Service or looking for jobs elsewhere in Government. The basic idea was that foreign affairs had been run by civil servants who had never been abroad and now they would be run by an amalgamated service that mixed foreign and Washington experience. Of course, there was much more to it, especially whether or not civil servants were enthusiastic about being pressed into service overseas. From this committee came the saying: "I've been Wristonized".

We drove southwest from Washington across Virginia for some 150 miles, over the Blue Ridge Mountains and down the serene Shenandoah Valley to Harrisonburg, through farm country rich in wheat and corn, soft-tufted fox-hunting country, pine-clothed mountains, rolling fruit orchards, Dunkard communities with bearded, black-hatted zealots in horse-drawn cabriolets, until we came to the George Washington National Forest. Here stood Camp May Flather where Nan was a sixty-year-old counselor, and we deposited Karen for two weeks.

From Washington we took the train for New York where we called on friends, straightened out details of household shipments with the U.S. Despatch Agent, and picked up in Jersey City the new Ford that I had ordered while overseas. We drove it at 35 m.p.h. to break it in gently through New Jersey, Delaware, and the eastern shore of Maryland to call on Loopy and Constance Stuart Larrabee, now residing on a farm near Chestertown. I learned that Colonel Breckinridge A. Day, my boss in Pretoria, had died the previous December. The word was that he concealed from his wife that he had cancer of the lungs and she concealed from him that she already knew. Mercifully he did not linger the way Major Dalton Hayes, the third officer in Pretoria, had suffered.

Back to Washington over the relatively new Chesapeake Bay Bridge, an engineering marvel. After winding up affairs in Washington we spent two nights at Bear Trap Farm, a bed-and-breakfast near Camp May Flather. Here we picked up Karen and pointed our noses toward the Pacific.

Chapter 17  
Passage  
(September 1954)

"O, Dewey was the morning  
Upon the first of May,  
And Dewey was the Admiral  
Down in Manila Bay;  
And Dewey were the Regent's eyes,  
'Them' orbs of royal blue!  
And Dewey feel discouraged?  
I Dew not think we Dew."

- Eugene Fitch Ware, in *The Topeka (Kansas) Daily Capital*, May 3, 1898

We sailed September 20, 1954 from Wilmington, the port for Los Angeles, on the S. S. *President Cleveland* after a drive across country that took nearly three weeks. Nan rode with us for the first ten days. We packed the trunk of the car with eight suitcases and took turns driving, Riekie having completed the AAA course in Washington and obtained her license. We traveled southwest across Virginia into Chattanooga, across northern Alabama and Mississippi into Memphis, through Little Rock and across Oklahoma into Amarillo. Turning north to visit an art colony at Taos, New Mexico, we mosied through Santa Fe and Albuquerque to Gallup, at which point Nan took the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe back to Washington. We proceeded by the Painted Desert and the Petrified Forest across Arizona through the Mojave Desert into Barstow. After pausing in Sequoia National Park, we rolled on to San Francisco and then down to Los Angeles, where we holed up in a motel for a week waiting for sailing date. Our 1954 black Fodor six-cylinder Ford averaged 20 miles to the gallon and accumulated more than 3,000 miles before we put it on the ship.

Twenty years earlier, when I first traveled by Model A Ford cross-country, motels were such haphazard affairs you did not know from one night to the next whether you would put up in a palace or a hut. By 1954 motels had become standardized and cataloged, and we were able to pick and choose. Usually we had two rooms with bath for \$10 for all four of us. Many of the motels had swimming pool, garage, a kitchen, and that machine called television that plucks entertainment out of the ether. All of this was very new to us back from overseas.

Also new to us was the diversity of the United States, which you tend to forget until you take a trip like this. Timbered mountains in Virginia, lush valleys and sparkling rivers in Tennessee, acres of cottonland in Alabama followed by flat marsh in Mississippi and Arkansas, oil pumps and derricks in Oklahoma, cattle-breeding plains of Texas, flints and sandstones of New Mexico succeeded by cactus desert in Arizona, then green mountains giving way to bleak wastes of eastern California, and after you cross the Mojave you see some of the most fertile agricultural land in the world. In Sequoia you are staggered by the breadth and height of the redwoods, and then come the cities, unmistakable San

Francisco, Los Angeles a thirty-mile cluster of towns populated largely by used car dealers. It was a wonderful trip to remind us of what a great country we live in, which is the purpose of home leave.

While the *Cleveland* was not quite the floating palace of the *Independence*, it did its passengers very well, and we luxuriated for 17 days on the Pacific which, happily, never once lost its temper. We sunned and we swam and we read and we played horse race and shuffleboard and we fortified ourselves with tea and pastries between each day's three bountiful meals, and if any of us thought of Captain Cook struggling through these same seas on wormy sea biscuit we kept our thoughts to ourselves. One could write about the passengers, whose individual stories gradually were revealed as the days wore on, but the only incident that sticks in my mind was an American with Japanese wife who represented Canon cameras and told me that in time Japanese would displace German cameras as world leaders. Since this was the day of the entrenched Leica, Contax, Robot, Voigtlander, and Rolleiflex, I dismissed the prediction as sales pitch, but it turned out to be all too true.

Five days out we made Honolulu and had a few hours ashore. Many of the passengers who got off were immediately garlanded with flower leis, but none, alas, for us. Some ten days later the ship put into Yokohama. Riekie and I took a train to Tokyo--it was the sardine-tin commuter rush, but to our astonishment two Japanese immediately insisted on seating us--and strolled on the Ginza. This glimpse of Tokyo's most populous street comprises my entire knowledge of Japan. Maybe I'll write a book.

For four days after arriving in Manila we lived in a hotel not far from the Embassy while we priced individual housing and found it beyond our means. When we heard that U.S. Government housing was available, we eagerly grabbed a ground-floor flat in an apartment house on Dewey Boulevard, close to the waterfront. The flat had a comfortable living room, adequate dining room, two bedrooms, a spacious kitchen, plumbing that worked, and bamboo furniture to supplement our own leather sofa, which promptly started going moldy in Manila's moist heat. Electricity, gas, water, garbage collection, parking space were included in the rent. We had to pay extra for the telephone, but having one was an accomplishment in itself. The apartment house and another one like it stood in a fenced enclosure guarded by Embassy personnel, insulating us from the robberies that led most private Manila mansions to surround themselves with walls topped by broken glass. We were lucky to settle into quarters so soon after arrival.

Chapter 18  
Manila  
(October 1954-August 1956)

"The Filipinos are not yet fit to govern themselves,... even if let alone, and they would not be let alone should we turn their country over to them. Philippine independence is not a present possibility, nor will it be possible for at least two generations..."

- Dean Worcester

Worcester was Secretary of the Interior of the Philippine Islands 1901-1913 and a member of the Philippine Commission or sole law-making authority for the archipelago in the early years of United States control. His *The Philippines, Past and Present* (from which the above quote is taken, p. 686), contains much information about government structure, administration of justice, health conditions, roads and transport, education, peoples and tribes, lands, forests, communications, and commercial possibilities of the islands. The book recounts the American view of the Philippine "insurrection," justifies the United States takeover, and lists United States accomplishments in social improvements such as education, roads, ports, and health measures.

If the people in the streets and barrios remember Mr. Worcester at all, it is not with affection. The national hero is Dr. (of ophthalmology) Jose Rizal y Alonso, born 1861 in a small Luzon town and executed by a Spanish firing squad at Manila December 30, 1896. Rizal, educated in Manila and Madrid, published a novel in Tagalog 1886, *Noli me Tangere* (The Social Cancer) protesting the excesses of Spanish rule, and followed it with *El filibusterismo* in 1891. Although he could have remained abroad, Rizal returned from Europe to the Philippines and was exiled to remote Dapitan in northwest Mindanao for four years. In 1896 a nationalist secret society, the Katipunan, revolted against Spain. Rizal had volunteered for medical service with the Spanish army in Cuba but en route was intercepted and returned to Manila for alleged revolutionary activities. Although he had no connection with the Katipunan, had taken no part in the revolt, and consistently had advocated reform of government rather than independence, he was found guilty of sedition and executed. He is honored today with a statue in the Luneta, a great Manila park.

Assignment. Embassy Manila was said to be the third largest U.S. Embassy in the world, after London and Paris. Additional to the usual Political, Economic, Administrative, and Consular sections, it housed Far Eastern regional headquarters for security, aviation, and courier operations, along with the Veterans Administration, a joint U.S. Military Advisory Group, an FOA mission (the current designation for what was to become the Agency for International Development), and other agencies. Directing this plethora as Ambassador was retired Admiral Raymond A. Spruance, victor over the Japanese at Midway, Truk, Palau, and Saipan. The youngest full admiral in United States history (age 58 in 1944), Admiral Spruance was appointed Ambassador to Manila in 1952. With so many people on post, I am sorry to say I saw the Ambassador no more frequently than a sailor in the Pentagon sees the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

Number Two in the Embassy was Minister-Counselor Charles (Chuck) Burrows, an affable, calm-and-collected gentleman with long experience in Latin America who later on became ambassador to a Central American country. The Economic Section, to which I was assigned, numbered a counselor, a first secretary, two second secretaries (one of them me), and attaches for the Treasury and Labor Departments but not Commerce or Agriculture. FSO-1 Carl H. Boehringer, the Economic Counselor and my boss, about 52 years old, had held mostly commercial posts in Singapore, Batavia, Tokyo, Osaka, Chungking, and the Department before coming to Manila in May 1954. Mrs. Boehringer was staying with their two daughters during the high school-college transition, and "Uncle Carl" (we never used this to his face) occupied a bachelor flat in our government compound.

In Washington I had been told I would probably do economic reporting, along the lines of what I had done in Bern. As the Department of Commerce, however, had assigned no attache, Boehringer directed me to do commercial work. I was not without warning on this because I had touched base with Commerce in Washington and had been told they were particularly interested in "economic defense," that is, preventing flow of equipment to Communist China. An earlier member of the Economic Section had achieved a coup by detecting and heading off a shipment of machinery from the Philippines to the mainland, and I was given to understand that additional interceptions would be welcome. How I was to go about spotting illegal shipments of equipment was not spelled out. I was too naive to ask and assumed that I would be instructed on arrival at post.

Nobody I talked to at Manila had definite ideas on the matter, and I was left pretty much to my own devices. My one lever was the export license. Manila merchants were applying to United States exporters for supplies, and the Department of Commerce would not license a shipment of proscribed materials without a go-ahead from Embassy Manila. I would call on the Manila businessman and ask to see his books. As the Manila businessman was frequently a Chinese operating a grubby, one-room shop of shelves filled with machinery, such as auto parts, with the proprietor himself sleeping on the lowest shelf, there was sometimes a failure of communication. I decided not to take along an interpreter because in many instances the communication from Washington contained confidential information that could not be revealed to a local staffer. Usually the businessman would decline, sometimes emphatically, to let me see his books. I would look into his inscrutable slant eyes with my guileless round eyes and convey to him the idea that without compliance there would be no export license. A week or so later the businessman would turn up at the Embassy with a set of books under his arm. I knew full well that he had prepared a special set of books that he thought would satisfy me, and I tried to check what he gave me against information obtained from intelligence agencies, American and Filipino. These were numerous, characterized by the common trait of reluctance to part with information either to me or to each other. My impression is that any information obtained by any agency is considered proprietary. I also suspect that, because I was always blundering around, the agencies devoted as much time to investigating my own self as to the Filipino businessmen in question, if indeed they bothered with the issue at all. At any rate, I have to acknowledge that throughout my two

years in Manila I never succeeded in uncovering a single instance of illegal diversion of goods.

But this was only one aspect of my job. I answered inquiries from American and Filipino businessmen, supervised preparation of World Trade Directory reports and trade lists, offered my good offices in settling trade complaints, and wrote reports on trade matters. Inquiries came to me by letter and by personal visits from local entrepreneurs. Most could be settled by searching in standard reference works, such as the *Thomas Directory of Manufacturers*. World Trade Directory reports were prepared in response to inquiries from U.S. business persons about local companies. A Filipino who had been an Embassy staff member for donkey's years gathered the information about type of business, length of time in operation, bank lines of credit, reputation in settling accounts, and the like, typed the information on standard forms, and turned them over to me for review. These were routine except that my puckish staffer every now and then would insert a spicy note such as: "Sources report that this merchant drinks too much," or "Rumor has it that this businessman is having an affair with a competitor's wife," and I had to be on guard to expunge such titbits before signing. The WTDs were made available to U.S. businessmen at \$2.00 each, as were Trade Lists. These were prepared for my signature by another Filipino staff member and consisted of lists of enterprises in particular lines of business, such as the mining industry or abaca manufactures.

Trade complaints were usually handled by persuading both parties to state their positions in full. A Filipino businessman might call on me, for example, and demand action against a U.S. firm for failure to live up to asserted promises. I would tell him that the Embassy had no authority to settle private disagreements but would be glad to convey the grievance to the other party and try to find out their reaction. In due course a reply would be received setting forth the opposing position. Suprisingly often it would be found that the two sides were talking past each other and that the disagreement was not so wide that it could not be settled amicably. And as in Bern, I wrote reports on industries rather than individual firms, such as the sugar industry or copra production. To my knowledge, none of these reports was ever published. For a time I also wrote short pieces on foreign exchange regulations promulgated by the Central Bank of the Philippines, but this was because the Treasury Attache had been transferred and there was a gap of some weeks before his replacement arrived. A pity, for I rather enjoyed having contacts at the Bank and the glimpses of business shenanigans that they afforded me.

As an instance, I was an impartial observer at a Central Bank public hearing on whether a ban on imports of enamel paints should be lifted. Certain American firms already established in the Islands, along with certain Filipino enterprises, wanted to maintain the ban; other American and Filipino enterprises wanted to remove it. The participants sat round a conference table, presided over by a Bank official, and presented statistics about their factories' capacities, argued that the Islands did/did not need fewer restrictions on imports, called each other names, made impassioned appeals to national destiny, and once in awhile mentioned enamel paints. If I remember correctly, some days later the Bank announced a partial lifting of the ban.

An American manufacturer in Manila asked me to intercede at the Bank for an allocation of foreign exchange. I said I would make inquiries but could not guarantee success. The American wanted action of some sort as his application had been pending for months. I talked to a Bank official and got action in a few days. The application was turned down. The American was not displeased with my failure; I had at least helped him out of uncertainty.

An American firm had shipped some goods--I have forgotten what, so say widgets--and while the shipment was on the high seas the Philippine Government enacted a heavy tariff. The shipper protested that the tariff should not apply because the widgets had been shipped prior to enactment. The Philippine Customs did not agree and impounded the shipment. The goods had been held for three years, during which our chaps had tried repeatedly to help find a solution, and now the firm prodded us again, and I was handed the task. I applied to see the Commissioner of Customs and was admitted without demur. So, it seemed, was a large portion of Manila. The big boss sat in one corner of a conference room thronged by a small mob of citizenry, and when I took my seat at the Commissioner's right hand the entire group gathered round and hung over my shoulder. I presented the case and said that the shipper was hoping something could be done. The Commissioner said he would let me know. A few days later I relayed a partial victory to the American exporter. Customs agreed to levy the duty at the rate applying when the shipment was made, but there was a hook. The shipper would have to pay storage charges for the three years. I never found out whether the shipper was glad or mad at the outcome.

Several American firms had developed a cottage industry in embroidered baby clothes. Cloth was imported from the United States and duty was paid with the understanding that it would be partly rebated when the cloth was re-exported. At the firms' factories, patterns were waxed on the cloth, and individual baby garments were cut. Company agents distributed them in nearby barrios. Filipinas in their nipa huts plied their needles as guided by the waxed patterns. The agents collected the embroidered garments and returned them to the factories for inspection and finishing touches. When the baby clothes were sent back to the States, part of the customs duty was refunded. "A lady in New York pays a stiff price at Saks Fifth Avenue for one of these hand-embroidered outfits," a businessman told me, "and then the baby slops jam all over it."

The city. A hop-and-skip from our compound took you to Manila Bay, but before you got your feet wet you had to cross Dewey Boulevard, a six-mile, four-lane avenue that formed the axis of our community. Dewey Boulevard was an American enclave, with the commissary at its south pole, the P.X. and the Army-Navy Club at its north, and the Embassy and our block of flats at its Capricorn and Cancer. The scene was rounded out by apartment houses, hotels, bars, restaurants, and night clubs patronized mostly by non-Filipinos. A twenty-minute drive took you to Forbes Park (pronounced For-bess by the Filipinos), named after W. Cameron Forbes, Governor-General 1909, where American, British, and Spanish businessmen maintained Conspicuous Consumption homes. This was essentially the world we lived in.

This world, of course, was a small part of a city of a million. Manila is made up of three sections, the main portion north of the Pasig, Intramuros or the old Spanish walled city, and the largely residential area south of the river. The whole was heavily damaged during the war -- the claim is made that, next to Warsaw, Manila suffered the most damage in the war, but perhaps Hamburg and others might challenge -- but it did not take advantage of the destruction when rebuilding and retained the existing snarl of narrow streets, bottleneck squares, makeshift shops and dwellings, and festering canals that existed when Dewey told Gridley to fire when ready. In the business sector, most of the damaged office buildings had been reconstructed after one fashion or another, but a few of the great churches still stood as gutted shells.

The river was spanned by four concrete-steel bridges and two or three makeshifts. South of the Pasig, old Spanish Intramuros was a sloppy shambles. Behind the walls, wide enough to drive a cart on, stood a few modern buildings, but most of the area -- perhaps two miles across at its widest point -- was occupied by squatters living in shanties of old boards, woven straw, tar paper, and tin Coca Cola signs. You found squatters not only in Intramuros but in all business and residential areas, the worst concentration in Lower Tondo, living in what could be described as appalling circumstances. True, you saw country folk living under approximately the same conditions in their barrios, but it is one thing to live in a straw hut in the country and another to live in one in a great city. The hovels were reminiscent of those in the Middle East, but the Filipino has an advantage. His wife does not have to fetch water three miles down the road with an oil tin on her head. When I would go on my business rounds, I might travel by city bus if I could squeeze on, but usually I hopped into a jeepney, that widely publicized vehicle consisting of bench seats mounted on a jeep engine-chassis and painted like Joseph's coat of many colors. The jeepney was a sort of fixed-fee taxi accommodating eight or ten persons that ran a more or less regular route. You knew vaguely that when you arrived you would be somewhere close to where you had expected to be. Jeepney drivers, like all Filipinos, were cheery and accommodating. If your destination was a bit out of the way, chances are an offer of fifty centavos would persuade the driver to deviate a few blocks from his regular run. You tended to avoid walking too much because sun and humidity were more than a match for your Odor-O-No.

Dacron and other polyesters not yet having reached the market, most of us wore suits of white sharkskin, a hard-finished cotton weave, made to order by local tailors. For some reason I preferred suits of white linen, but as these tended to hang heavily in the great heat I wore so-called Saigon-linen for everyday, a combination of linen and some coarse fiber (burlap?). As regards centavos, there was a black currency market, but Embassy personnel were strictly enjoined against using it, and we exchanged at the official two pesos to the dollar. The open market rate was said to hold at roughly three pesos to the dollar.

The young set. The families in our two-house compound included some 15 youngsters of whom half-a-dozen were age ten or thereabouts. With our apartment on the ground floor, they were continually banging at the door for cool drinks and snacks, and nine-year-old Karen dovetailed happily with them. Early one morning I found her still in pajamas

busily writing. "I'm a reporter on the *Daily Crazy*," she confided, and it turned out she was also the whole staff for this "newspaper" that was never produced. The only issue I saw contained two items, a riddle and an item labelled Music Report: "My note is as sour as lemon juice." Another day she was working on "Karen's Scrap Book," but the only thing that ever showed up in it was a portrait (self-drawn) of Glinda the Good, a character from the Oz books. A hand-lettered sign appeared on her table one day: "President," of what I never found out. Among her toys was a crankemup phonograph that had long ago given up working. Borrowing Daddy's screwdriver, Karen took out its insides to "study" them, then seized a hammer and whacked like John Henry. When she quit, the floor board with the turntable was nailed to one edge of the case, an extra board was nailed to the top, and a hinged indescribable had been attached that would twist in all directions, including the Scandinavian. "It's to steer a space machine," she explained. Later she assured her mother: "Of course, it's not a real one."

Karen attended the American School, maintained jointly by the Embassy and the military, with hours 7:30 to 1:00. We also enrolled her in a ballet school two afternoons per week. Christmas was celebrated in sweltering heat with trees imported from the States by the U.S. Air Force (in ships). Singers of carols were a dime a dozen as Manila street urchins had discovered they could get handouts by bawling Silent Night under our windows. A party for all personnel, Filipino and U.S., was held on the Embassy lawn. Riekie helped set up decorations, make Santa Claus helper hats, and prepare 2,000 popcorn balls. Free gifts, cookies (Riekie made three dozen), and Coca Cola were distributed to the kids. Acrobats performed on a specially constructed trapeze, and every few minutes the public address system would announce that Santa Claus was on his way. Then the announcements got specific. "Santa will be here in 23 minutes." "...in 17 minutes." "...in just two minutes." And by St. Nick, on the dot a helicopter chugged in the sky, landed on the lawn, and ejected Santa Claus. That's the way you do things when you have a base at Sangley Point, across the bay from your Embassy.

Santa brought Karen a chemistry set, books, beads, and clothes made by Nan. I was drafted to perform experiments with the chemistry set. I was asked to make the smell of rotten eggs, but could find no steel wool to use for iron. Instead I changed water into wine and back again. I wanted to make emeralds from nutshells, but that wasn't in the instruction book. I listened to two nine-year-old boys, "Do you know what's the closest planet to the sun?"

"The moon?" says the other.

"Nah," scornfully. "The moon's not a planet. Mercury. What's the second closest?"

"London?"

"Venus!" cried the knowitall. "What's the third closest?"

"I know!" The other was inspired. "Space!"

"No!" derided the first. "Earth is the third closest."

"Oh, yes," agreed the other. "Space is fourth." The discussion went on through Uranus, pronounced uranium.

Recreate yourself. Hard by the Embassy grounds on the Bayfront was the Army-Navy Club, a private enterprise with more civilian members than military notwithstanding its name. It offered a clubhouse, swimming pool, tennis courts, restaurants, bars, the offices of the American-Philippine Chamber of Commerce, and a 300-seat theater where the Manila Theater Guild put on plays. Membership was liberally accorded to anyone who applied, and we would have been bucked to enroll, but we opted instead for the Polo Club in Forbes Park. One reason was that the Army-Navy was too accessible and too close to office/home. Moreover, you could take advantage of some under-utilized facilities without being a member by paying a fee, for instance, the tennis courts when not occupied. Another was that our particular circle of friends chose the Polo Club. We applied, our names were posted for 30 days in case anybody wanted to blackball us, and we were duly accepted for \$100 U.S. I wonder what the fee is now, fifty years later. Matter of fact, we paid a little extra and hold lifetime membership. I must fly back some day and see if it is recognized by the current management. The Polo Club had a clubhouse and restaurants and bars and tennis courts, and it also had a grounds where polo was played in the face of adversity, since it's not always easy to find eight persons who keep strings of polo ponies. Riekie and I dutifully attended a polo match but have to say we do not find polo a spectator sport, though we acknowledge that polo can be very exciting to the participants. We played a great deal of tennis, got much family mileage from the swimming pool, attended entertainments and dances, and met a number of American and British business people. Indeed, I even acquired status as an alternate in a British foursome. I entered a Club tournament and got licked in the first round by a British banker. A few days later he rang me up and asked if I wanted to play again, and I concluded I was the only one he could beat. Actually it was to make a fourth with two other English chaps, the regular fourth being away on a trip. We had three jolly good sets, and I was invited to play again.

For those of you who tend to think of the Albionese as stuffy, I offer a rule of conduct. When you are new to a group, stare at the floor and look acutely uncomfortable. They will do likewise. After awhile venture one remark, just one, on something unimportant and untopical, like the price of wool in Auckland or the scarcity of char in Arctic waters. One of the English will reply with a single sentence, such as "Indeed!". Resume staring at the floor. After awhile one Englishman will venture one remark. Now it is your turn to say a short sentence, such as, "Shore 'nuff!" (Always be as American as you can manage around Englishmen.) After awhile an Englishman will say he must be going, so you say the same thing and go. You'll imagine you have made no impression, but chances are they'll ring you up, I mean give you a tinkle. There were also several old Spanish families that belonged to the Polo Club. They were cordial and would enjoy playing tennis with Americans and other Europeans, but they were chary about mixing socially.

The Army-Navy and the Polo Club were open to Filipinos, but few participated in Club

activities except formal dinners or tournaments. The Filipinos had their own club, Wack Wack (pronounced Wock Wock), and did not encourage applications from non-Filipinos, though this is not to say that they were excluded. Wack Wack, to my knowledge, was the only Manila club that offered golf. I went there twice at the invitation of an American businessman who did not play golf but was trying to learn it to develop Filipino contacts. Since I did not play golf either (I have tried but am hopeless), I felt ill at ease, though the Filipinos made me welcome. The Filipinos also had tennis clubs around the city at which I played, but only in invitational tournaments.

Perhaps a word about my tennis prowess is in order. I have already related how I came out second best in a diplomatic tournament in Tel Aviv, and I have been fated to come out less than best in tennis throughout my life. You may have figured out that I am not a good player, and you will be right. The thing is, I look like a real player. I have a good style as the British say, and when somebody beats me he thinks he has accomplished something, whereas if he knew my record he would realize I'm really a pushover. The important thing is to look good. Tennis has been my friend for forty years and has made acquaintances and opened opportunities that would not otherwise have come my way.

Excursions. The recreation committee of the Embassy persuaded the Philippine Navy to lend a vessel for a trip to Corregidor, and about 100 of us piled aboard with lunches and bathing suits. Foolishly, I wore no hat. The trip from Manila took two hours, during which we chatted, drank beer and pop, and sought shady spots on deck.

At the island we piled into four open trucks and ground up the mountain, those who could not get seats balancing like straphangers without straps. Half-way up we stopped at an old camp for a look at some 12-inch mortars and bullet-pocked walls. All the way up, we climbed a lighthouse for a view of the Bay. Then we came back to the trucks and went down the mountain and climbed aboard the ship. That was our trip to Corregidor. Without guides or advance preparation, we learned little.

The ship steamed over to the Bataan Peninsula and dropped anchor in a little inlet with an attractive beach. My face was so badly burned by this time I knew I'd cook like a frankfurter if I ever got on that beach where there wasn't so much as a piece of seaweed casting shade. Moreover, the beach was 400 yards away. No ship's boats were lowered, and assuming I could swim that far was I sure I could make it back? I stayed aboard in the shade of the funnel, and Riekie contented herself with paddling around the ship's stern. Some adventurous spirits braved the swim, and one girl had to be rescued by a yacht that was anchored close in. With this example, the sailors launched life rafts and picked up those who had reached the shore but could not return. Then we puffed back to Manila. Everybody had terrific fever blisters throughout the following week.

Baguio. In his book, Dean Worcester writes: "An employee of the Spanish forestry bureau told me that in the highlands of Northern Luzon at an elevation of about five thousand feet there was a region of pines and oaks blessed with a perpetually temperate climate and even with occasional frosts. I confess that I did not believe all of his

statements... [Nevertheless I] determined to investigate." That was in 1892.

In 1900, as a member of the Second Philippine Commission, Worcester carried out his resolve. He reports that as far as halfway up the mountains his party found the countryside buried in the densest tropical vegetation. But "We were literally dumfounded when within a space of a hundred yards we suddenly left the tropics behind us and came out into a wonderful region of pine parks.... At the same moment, a delightful cold breeze swept down from the heights above us." This is the miracle of Baguio. Worcester had travelled in Philippine mountains and at five thousand feet had invariably found "a hopeless tangle of the rankest tropical vegetation, with humidity so high that trees were draped with ferns, orchids and thick moss, and dripping with moisture." But in this one area of Baguio-Benguet, though it is at about latitude 16 degrees, the tropics yield to the temperate zone.

Worcester recounts that in 1903 Governor William Howard Taft went to Baguio to recuperate from an illness. Taft, who could be delicately characterized as extremely plump, rode up the mountain on a horse loaned to him by one of the military. Baguio agreed with him so well he sent a cablegram to the Secretary of War: "Stood trip well, rode horseback 25 miles to 5,000 feet altitude. Hope amoebic dysentery cured...." The following day he received a cablegram from Secretary Elihu Root: "Referring to telegram from your office of 15th inst., how is horse?"

For us, the drive Manila to Baguio, some 150 miles, took about six hours, the time depending in part on how many carabao strayed into the road. The way lies roughly at sea level until the last 25 miles, during which you spiral upward to gain 5,000 feet. Worcester tells us that this last stretch of road, 45 milometers 891 meters exactly, was started in 1900 at an estimated cost of \$75,000. It was not finished until 1905, and its actual cost was \$1,961,847.05. We counted 16 big bridges and 8 little bridges on the way.

Baguio is a sprawling little town, with shops, churches, schools, and extensive parks. When the Philippines became a Commonwealth, Baguio was designated as the national summer capital, but after independence the designation of summer capital became only nominal. The President of the Philippines keeps a Mansion House, but the Government does not actually move from Manila.

The United States maintained Camp John Hay about a mile out of town. To call it a military post was exact in the sense that it was kept up by the military, but only for recreation. Troops did not march there, nor did caissons roll. There were cottages and tennis courts and a golf course, and the whole atmosphere was one of a resort rather than a martial establishment. Adjoining John Hay was a compound for the summer Embassy. A residence perched on a ridge commanding two valleys was maintained for the Ambassador, and the residence was open to Embassy personnel when the Ambassador was not using it. Additionally, there were a cottage and a guest house for those with families. We put up in the guest house, which had three bedrooms, 1 1/2 baths, kitchen and living room, during a one-week vacation. We played a little tennis, went around the golf course with rented clubs, bought rattan curios in Baguio's market stalls, let Karen

ride mestiza ponies, enjoyed excellent meals at the officers' mess, chatted with participants in the SEATO conference that was being held in Baguio at the time, and altogether had a mighty fine time. The golf course included Cardiac Hill, so-called because you hit the ball up the side of a mountain and then ran uphill after it to prevent the ball from rolling back. On other holes you looked from the tee down the hillside to the green hundreds of feet below, like a ski jump. My golf needs work. Where par for the course was 75, I scored 125, but I had fun.

That was in April, 1955. The day after we returned to Manila, we went with friends on a spur-of-the-moment swim. Though it is smack on a great bay, Manila has no beaches, and to take this swim we had to devote a full day. We drove south to Lake Taal, about an hour away, turned west for another hour, and reached the sea at a barrio called Nasugbu. There were four cars in the party, and the entire crowd piled onto a banca or native boat equipped with bamboo outriggers and a marine engine. After a fifteen-minute chug around a cape, we landed at Bamboo Beach (the name does not appear on any map), unloaded diving masks, portable radio, picnic gear, Coca Cola cooler, and stalks of bananas, sought shelter from the sun under a spreading przqxgl tree, and lolled around all day. The lagoon abounded in coral, and we could swim with our diving masks and watch an amazing multitude of fish, anemones, and coral formations. A pleasant day and a pleasant spot, but too distant to undertake often. We had to get back on the banca to Nasugbu, traverse extremely rough sections of road through rugged and desolate countryside back to Lake Taal, and continue another fatigued hour through heavy suburban Manila traffic. Simpler far, on a hot afternoon, to cool off at the Army-Navy or Polo pools.

People. Worcester reflects on Filipino characteristics throughout his 1913 book.

On page 279 he writes: "We had all had an excellent opportunity to come to know the Filipinos. Their dignity of bearing, their courtesy, their friendly hospitality, their love of imposing functions, and of *fiestas* and display, their childishness and irresponsibility in many matters, their passion for gambling, for litigation and for political intrigue, even the loves and the hatreds of some of them, had been spread before us like an open book...."

On page 535: "The Filipinos are born gamblers. Gambling is their besetting sin. The poor are usually glad to get the opportunity to borrow money, and will do this on almost any terms, if necessary, in order to continue to indulge in their pet vice. They are thoughtless about their ability to repay loans, and thus readily fall into the power of the *cacique* moneylenders,...."

On page 679: "In general it may be said of the Filipino that he is quick to learn, but needs a teacher; is quick to follow, but needs a leader. He is ready to do the things he is taught to do. He accepts discipline, orders, rules. He has a great respect for constituted authority., He lacks initiative and sound judgment. Let Americans beware of judging the Filipino peoples by the men with from one-half to thirty-one thirty-seconds of white blood, who so often have posed as their representatives...."

There are those, of course, who would add that one should beware of paternalistic Americans who think they know it all. I would not want to be numbered among them, but I admit I was guilty of sweeping and challengeable remarks in letters to folks at home. A remarkable people (I wrote), gentle, courteous, cheery (do they ever stop smiling?), and

altogether unpredictable except you can predict they will never do anything in a direct way if they can find a roundabout. Notwithstanding their sunny disposition, they are capable of amazing outbursts of violence. Hardly a day but the papers carry some story of emotions exceeding reason. An instance: Two brothers challenged a third man, with whom they had been feuding, to a drinking bout, and it was agreed that the winner would kill the loser. Man Number Three drank the brothers under the table and, while they lay in a stupor, shot one and boloed the other. The bolo, I may add, was often in the news. The custom was to make your own by grinding a leaf from an auto spring to the desired sharpness.

Intelligent and charming, the Filipino wore an extremely thin skin, and you had to take care not to cause loss of face. Once you backed a Filipino into a statement or stance, pride compelled him to defend it no matter what the cost. There was an accepted attitude, too, that every man has his price and expects to get it, or at least some sort of rakeoff. Society was divided into the rich and the poor, and when it came to wealth one either had lots of it or none. There was, moreover, a centuries-old tradition of peonage which led to an acceptance of the status quo, a seeming lack of ambition. Thus, you got the impression that people were poor because they did not wish to try to improve their status. I concede that this impression is open to argument, yet people seemed to accept as a matter of course that they should live in hovels built from bits and scraps without attempt to improve their lot. Of course if some agitator raised a cry that they should be given improved housing they would join in the chorus. In Manila there were swarms of spivs, men who would rather stand on corners day after day in hopes of pulling off some swap than take a job and earn a steady living.

Affable and courteous in business and home, Filipinos abandoned all rules of conduct when they got behind the wheel of an automobile. Behavior that in day-to-day contacts was considered outrageous became routine when driving a motor vehicle. The goal when driving was to beat the other fellow to it, and the notion that you could get somewhere by yielding the right of way received absolutely no consideration. If northbound traffic slowed down, drivers did not hesitate to take over the southbound lane, guaranteeing a tie-up that virtually froze movement in any direction. I recall an instance on a highway where a driver came at me in my lane and laughed as I veered into a ditch to avoid a head-on collision.

The kids in our compound put on a ten-minute circus, consisting mostly of cartwheels, for which they charged 15 centavos admission before an audience of ten. They turned the proceeds, one peso fifty centavos, over to the Embassy recreation committee and requested that a set of monkey bars be built. Embassy maintenance obliged by setting the monkey bars under our bedroom windows, and Riekie and I became enthusiastic advocates of a curfew.

One day I found Karen's door shut and a sign scotch-taped: GET LOST! Since she was not in at the moment, I ignored this and found several lists taped to the walls. One read:

PEOPLE THAT I DO NOT TRUST

1. Mickey DM

2. Jeff B

3. Carter C

A second notice said:

FRIENDS

ENEMIES

Rena (star)

Jeff (cross)

Mommy (star)

Carter (cross)

Daddy (star)

Patty (heart with arrow)

Patricia (heart with arrow)

Dest (check mark)

Johnan (heart with arrow)

Turning from these mystic symbols, I found an ominous chart

MOMMY

DADDY

Good

Bad

Good

Bad

Happily, there was a check mark under each "good." On what may be termed a strategic chart she had written:

## GOOD FORTS AND BAD FORTS

1. Trees

2. In bushes

She roughed out a poster:

LISTEN!

A circus is coming!

Come one!

Come all!

Karen Thrasher

queen of the circus

Pattie De Marco

Princess of circus

Carter Cassady

guard of circus

The second circus was given early in April, this time featuring stunts on the monkey bars, and once again the spectators were charged 15 centavos. The show was a success, but a revolt in the ranks must have occurred. Karen asked me to put up a bulletin board and on this she taped a set of rules for The Show Club that demoted her to vice president:

1. No fighting

2. Do not miss rehesals or out

3. Do not act silly in rehearsals or show

4. Obay comands and yor president

5. If you miss reharsals three times "out"

6. Do not come to rehearsals if hurt or sick

Among her papers, I found this:

Now I lay me down to sleep.

Find a place to park my jeep.

If I should die before I wake,

I pray the Lord put on the brake.

The Senator's picnic. "Senator and Mrs. Francisco A. Delgado," read the invitation, "request the company of Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Thrasher at a Pista Sa Palaisdaan (Fishpond Picnic) in honor of Ambassador and Mrs. Homer Ferguson." Since this was the first invitation we had ever received to a fishpond, we instituted inquiries.

Ambassador Spruance had retired and had been replaced by former Senator Homer Ferguson. It is Senator Delgado's practice, we were told, to welcome each incoming American ambassador with a picnic at his fishpond. A procession of Distinguished Guests drives out to the Senator's home town, Bocaue, Bulacan Province, about 20 minutes north of Manila, there embarks on barges and bancas (native canoes) for a cruise down the river, debarks at the fishpond (traps set in the mouth of the river) for a fish feed, then re-embarks for a cruise back up the river and home. As simple as that. Yet, we were warned, it was not so simple. When Ambassador Spruance was welcomed to the fishpond, so ran the story, the procession started hours late. Too little to drink had been provided, so distinguished guests went dry in the tropical sun. Bancas overturned, dumping Distinguished Guests into the river. On arrival at the fishpond they found that local villagers had moved in ahead of them and eaten all the goodies. Allegedly Senator Delgado afterward often told the tale as a huge joke, on the order of: "I invited 200 people and when they got there everything was all eaten." We were cautioned to be ready for anything.

The day before the picnic I bought for 50 centavos a straw hat as big as a parasol. On the appointed morning, Riekie filled two quart thermos bottles with water and fruit juice and made some corned beef sandwiches. With two other couples from our compound, each with thermoses, we set out for the rendezvous, on the outskirts of Manila, purposely arriving 15 minutes late so we wouldn't have to wait too long. The pool of 30 or more automobiles made an efficient traffic jam, but nobody seemed to mind, least of all the police.

To everybody's amazement we started pretty nearly on time, the procession of cars winding under banners proclaiming hugely: "Welcome to Ambassador Ferguson," and then in small type: "and guests," while crowds of school children waved paper penants and the townsfolk gaped. The sun had worked itself into a golden lather high in the sky, but with the cars in motion there was a compensating breeze. We were scheduled to make a "Brief stop at Polo to permit the governor and other provincial and municipal officials to welcome the honored guests to Bulacan" (I quote the printed programme), but mercifully this was dispensed with, I say mercifully because the speeches would have

lasted at least an hour.

The drive continued longer than we had expected, the procession sweeping past a brass band that was clashing away, so I was not too surprised when we ground to a halt, did a U-turn, and drove back to the brass band. Somebody had become confused and overshot the mark. At the town of the band we left the highway and wound over a dirt road through a village, creeping at snail's pace for 15 minutes, only to return to the highway about a hundred yards south of where we had left it. We realized then that this was the Senator's home base and he wanted to exhibit it to us, and us to it.

I imagine it was about 10:30 by the time we parked the cars and started walking to the river. The sun had now turned apoplectic, and I concealed myself under my hat. Crowds of school kids screamed "Mabuhay!" (hooray) as we ambled by. We Distinguished Guests climbed out on a sort of pier over which fancy towers had been built, for all the world like a canvas Taj Mahal. The programme said the next event was "Boarding the Pagoda and motorboats at Bunlo bank of Bocaue River," and we all drank Coca Cola and beer and waited for the pagoda to show up. Abruptly the Taj Mahal pier began to move, and we were on our way. The pier was actually a wooden platform built onto two barges that were towed by a stout-hearted, weak-engined motorboat. We were told the pagoda is often used in religious ceremonies, and the good Senator had borrowed it to transport us as a change from the image of the Virgin. We all remained standing for the good reason that there were no seats.

The "Start of the Fluvial Parade" had been achieved. Next came "Pampalamig at Pampainit na may Pulutan," translated "at the Bar," but we had already started that while waiting for the fluvial parade to begin. The pagoda went up-river a bit, then as if in doubt swung around and headed down stream. I had been taking snapshots and had to change the film jammed in among the 200 Distinguished Guests. I snarled the new roll and had to rip it out and throw away half of it. It is no mean feat to change a roll of film on a barge in mid-river, packed among Distinguished Guests who are splashing beer down your neck. In the molasses-colored river, bancas with built-in engines roared circles around the pagoda. A barge containing the brass band was hitched on, carrying out the next event on the programme: "Musical Numbers". Down stream, another barge carrying a second brass band cleared the air for the notes of our own.

Urchins from the barrios on the banks swam in the chocolate water (I have never seen water like it anywhere else). The motor bancas buzzed in and out like demented moths. Other bancas carried half-a-dozen paddlers who churned the waters as if they were training for Cambridge. They literally paddled for an hour, around and around, working so frantically you would have thought they were trying to keep from going over Niagara Falls. One banca contained soldiers and a radio apparatus, and as it slid under a low-hanging tree I watched the operator matter-of-factly unscrew the aerial and then replace it when the tree was passed. A banca with a small boy came alongside. The boy was unable to pry the top off his bottle of Coke. A soldier ripped the cap off with his teeth and handed the bottle back. A float decorated with banners and penons that proclaimed "Mrs. Tina's Embroidery Shop" drew slowly abreast, and I saw it was laden with maidens

dressed in pink shirtwaists and contrasting skirts. The Distinguished Guests drank up all the beer in less than an hour, and I began to fear we had been ill-advised to leave our thermos bottles in the car, for we had decided at the last moment it would be transparently rude to bring them to the picnic.

As we drew near the shore, Mrs. Tina's Embroidery Shop came alongside for a publicity shot, and the Ambassador good-naturedly clambered aboard and sat amidst the bevy of beauties. A Distinguished Guest, or I should say a local official, insisted on getting into the soldiers' banca and nearly overturned it, radio and all. As the bancas were merely round-bottomed logs without outriggers, keeping them upright was purely a matter of balance. When the pagoda reached shore, two planks were laid over which the guests walked to a tent for "Tanghalan" (seafood luncheon). Our group was among the last to get off, and we found all seats taken, with strong indication that many of the eaters were not Distinguished Guests. Eventually we obtained seats and were fed. I ate only chicken and a mango for I was suspicious of sea food that had been prepared in advance and stashed under a Philippine sun. The tent kept the rays off the diners, but it imprisoned the air, and I had little appetite. We were glad to exit and look for other events but soon realized that even under a 50-centavo hat a mid-day sun can wilt you like yesterday's daisies.

The program promised "Topada" (cockfight; betting in any currency permitted) and Philippine Folklore Songs and Dances. No arena or stage had been provided for these spectacles, and the guests clustered elbow to elbow under a tent to watch. Riekie and I gave up, although we regretted missing the dances. I carried two chairs from the dining tent to the pagoda, which had some measure of shade and also a breeze, and we sat there working hard not to exert ourselves. The Senator's drinks had long since given out, but enterprising vendors had set up stands, and I went in search of two bottles of plain soda. A foreign consul's wife (who is a witch) came up while I was there, took a bottle of pop and (thinking it was provided by the Senator) walked off without paying so I had to pay 20 centavos for her. Back at the pagoda the wife of one of our officers (who is a witch) came like us seeking shade and breeze, and I had to give her my chair, but I found a coke box and sat on that. Then another officer's wife (who is a witch) came aboard, and I had to give her my coke box, but I found a spot on deck and listened to a guitar player who had tired of the dances.

Several of our people who could not take the sun hired bancas to carry them away early, but we sat on the pagoda. The maidens of Mrs. Tina's Embroidery Shop clambered aboard, and Mrs. Tina told me they were all her employees and she was taking them out for an excursion. None of them seemed inclined to do anything but stand on the pagoda, while Mrs. Tina, who had been given a chair by reason of her prestige, sat and cracked sunflower seeds. I said that when I saw them all in costume I had hoped they would perform some dances. She passed this remark to some of the girls who simpered, giggled, and as far as Filipinas can do so, blushed. None of them appeared over sixteen. When the time came to go, they scrambled back aboard their float and were paddled upriver, and that was their holiday, sitting in the float and standing on the pagoda.

The pagoda was an hour heading back up stream, and everybody was pretty dry by the time we got back to Bocaue. The Senator had vanished, but we all said good-bye to Mrs. Delgado and ran for our cars and thermos jugs. Motorcycle cops escorted the Ambassador back to Manila with screaming sirens, and we got in on the procession. It was a thrill to hurtle down the highway while the proletarians scrambled to let us pass. I felt I knew at last what it was like to be, say Caligula, dashing his chariot down the Appian way among the cringing masses. Let's see, wasn't he assassinated?

A friend who has a swimming pool invited us to an impromptu cool-off party to wind up the day. We were grateful to accept.

Elsewhere. In 1952 King George VI of Great Britain was succeeded by Queen Elizabeth II, and King Farouk of Egypt was forced to abdicate by Major General Mohammed Naguib, who himself was soon ousted by Lt. Col. Gamel Abdel Nasser. General Dwight D. Eisenhower was elected the first Republican President of the United States in twenty years. The U.S.S. *United States* set a record for a steamship Atlantic crossing of three days, ten hours, forty minutes, but it was a vain effort to stave off the future. In May 1952 a British DeHavilland Comet opened the first jetliner passenger service by flying London to Johannesburg, 6,724 miles, in less than 24 hours. Our voyage to Manila on the *S.S. President Cleveland* was one of the last on which State Department personnel were required to travel to their posts by ship. I was to fly home from Manila, though by propeller aircraft, and the day was to come when travel by ship would be allowed only where air was not available.

West Germany agreed to pay Israel \$822 million over 12 to 14 years as indemnity for Nazi and anti-Semitic acts. On November 1, 1952 the first hydrogen device explosion took place at Eniwetok atoll but was not officially confirmed until more than a year later. The explosion achieved a yield of 10.4 megatons, 500 times that of the bomb that decimated Nagasaki in 1945. The U.S.S.R. exploded an H-bomb in its turn August 12, 1953. Stalin died. A cease-fire agreement was signed in Korea. Edmund Hilary and Tensing Norkay reached the summit of Mt. Everest. In March 1953 the Mau Mau killed 71 and wounded 100 Kikuyu in a raid on Lari, near Nairobi. Jomo Kenyatta was found guilty of organizing the Mau Mau and was sentenced to seven years in prison. Lavrenti P. Beria, first deputy premier of the U.S.S.R., was dismissed in July as an enemy of the people and was executed December 23 along with six of his aides.

January 21, 1954 the *Nautilus*, the first atomic-powered submarine, was launched at Groton, Connecticut. In March five members of the House of Representatives were wounded by four Puerto Ricans firing at random from a spectators' gallery, shouting for independence for Puerto Rico. In April the Atomic Energy Commission announced that Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer's security clearance had been withdrawn the previous December. Dr. Oppenheimer was not found to be disloyal, but the AEC voted four to one against reinstating him because his association with known Communists extended "beyond the tolerable limits of prudence and restraint". The Geneva Conference on Far Eastern Affairs, April--July, concluded an armistice under which France started withdrawal from Indo-China after 7 1/2 years of warfare.

On May 17, 1954 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously that racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional. Documents forming the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) defensive alliance were signed September 8 in Manila by representatives of Great Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Pakistan, Thailand, and the United States. West German sovereignty was confirmed October 23 by an agreement signed in Paris. On December 2 the U.S. Senate voted condemnation of Senator Joseph P. McCarthy for contempt of a Senate subcommittee and other offenses.

Sir Winston Churchill retired as British Prime Minister April 5, 1955 and was succeeded by Sir Anthony Eden. The Warsaw Pact, a 20-year mutual defense treaty, was signed May 14, 1955 by the U.S.S.R., Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, and East Germany. On May 31 the U.S. Supreme Court gave local authorities the task of integrating schools and instructed Federal courts to require a prompt and reasonable start toward desegregation. Juan D. Peron, president of Argentina, was deposed and replaced by a military junta in September, and in December George Meany became president and Walter Reuther vice-president of a merged AFL-CIO union.

At the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, February 14-25, 1956, party chief Nikita S. Krushchev proclaimed a new line featuring repudiation of the cruelties of Stalinism. The principles of the Organization of American States were outlined in a Declaration signed in Panama City by the heads of nineteen Western Hemisphere states in July. Egypt seized the Suez Canal after President Nasser denounced Western withdrawal from the proposed financing of the Aswan Dam. The first trans-Atlantic telephone cable system went into use September 25 between Clarendville, Newfoundland, and Oban, Scotland on September 25. Wladyslaw Gomulka became the head of the Polish Government in October despite Soviet opposition. Israel invaded the Sinai peninsula. When Egypt rejected a demand for a cease-fire, France and Britain bombed Egypt on October 31 and landed forces on November 5 and 6. The United States condemned the attack and supported a United Nations cease-fire demand. On November 4 Soviet armed forces crushed a Hungarian revolt against the Soviet-dominated regime.

These were some of the events that occupied the high brass during our years in Tel Aviv and Manila. It would be nice if I could brag that I predicted that the course of events in southeast Asia would involve the United States in the most frustrating war in its history, but in fact I had no such intuition.

Personal fortunes. If a Foreign Service employee had to be hospitalized while overseas, the government paid expenses, but the employee had to buy insurance to cover hospital expenses of spouse and family. A law enacted in April 1955 changed this situation by extending the benefits to dependents. It also provided for reimbursement of employees for expenses of educating their children, recognizing that Foreign Service personnel did not have access to free United States public schools. Third, the new law accorded hardship differential pay to Foreign Service Officers. Previously, staff employees had received differential in cash but FSO'S received time and a half toward retirement. Now

at Manila I would get an extra \$900, plus \$300 education allowance. Atop these favors, Congress granted a 7 1/2% pay increase, raising my within-grade pay to \$7,500. Hearing all these things, Karen reminded me there were only 26 days to her birthday.

To sharpen my business acumen, I read *A House Is Not a Home* by Polly Adler, said to be New York's most celebrated madam. This best-seller of the moment was not so much about prostitution as about its logistics and economics. Food for thought.

Early in 1956 our status took an upward bounce when I made the promotion list and advanced to FSO-4. Given that the Class 4 salary range was from about \$7,400 to \$9,500, our immediate benefit lay not in money but in satisfaction that we had climbed another rung on the career ladder. I already held the diplomatic title of Second Secretary, and neither this nor my job as commercial officer changed, but I enjoyed the feeling that I was judged to have potential for upper echelon advancement. At age 41, I was still a bit old for my grade, but I felt I was making progress toward overcoming the handicap of not entering the Service until I was age 34.

I also received an unlooked-for boost in prestige. *Who's Who in America* sent me a biography form to fill out. All Foreign Service Officers Class 4 and higher were listed in *Who's Who*, and I was pleased to be included in the 1957 and several later editions. Fame fleets. I was promptly dropped from the book when I retired.

Tagaytay is a scenic spot about an hour's drive from Manila that overlooks scenic Lake Taal. You drove to Tagaytay on a moment's spur, when you felt the need for a change of scene from the city's jumble of chrome-plated office buildings, residential mansions, fine apartment houses, thatched huts, gutted shells left from the war, asphalt streets, mud streets, fragments of broken sidewalk, and shanties pieced from wood, tar paper, and softdrink signs. From the ridge overlooking the Lake you could see an island some two miles distant and speculate on whether it was inhabited by Friday and that other fellow. In March, 1956 enterprising friends organized an exploration of the island.

If you were to try snaking down the bluffs to the lake, it would take perhaps four hours, but we drove around the Laguna de Bay to Santo Tomas and forked back to the Lake and a barrio called Talisay, where we climbed into a motorized banca. We numbered three couples from the Embassy, two business couples, and a handful of Filipino escorts. These last carried shotguns and .22 rifles, for the stated purpose of the expedition was to shoot duck. The banca possessed a Packard marine engine that leaked like an open porthole, and we would have foundered in short order had it not been for a Filipino crew member who bailed with an oil tin. Our destination was the island, its volcano (dormant), and the ducks (said to be not dormant). We arrived after a voyage of perhaps half an hour.

The next step was to take horses, and for this we had been alerted in advance, but we had not been alerted that there were no saddles. Nor bridles. In place of bridles, the locals wound lengths of rope around the horses' snouts. As there were not enough horses to go around, at first there was a bit of elbowing to get a horse ahead of the other chaps, but after ten minutes of bareback riding there were generous offers to yield the horses to

whose who were afoot. I was one of these, but I declined to ride. Riekieie, however, was mounted, and I could see before long that she was enjoying her ride through her gritted teeth.

After nearly an hour's plodding through our own sweat -- and if I haven't conveyed this to you before, let me tell you that in spite of a straw hat you can get very steamy under the Philippine sun -- I asked the Filipino who was nominally in charge whether there would be anything to drink after we arrived at the volcano. The question had to be pressed, for a Filipino is so polite he will never give you a direct answer until he has decided what he thinks you want him to say, but persisting I confirmed what I had suspected, that neither food nor drink had been brought with us and that there would no source of either at the volcano. I had anticipated this and had brought along some bottled sodawater, but I knew it would not be enough if we got to the volcano, saw the sights, and then started waiting for ducks. I got Riekie down off the horse, and she and I walked another hour back to the banca and the cases of beer contained therein. The Filipino is a wonderful guy, but he does not believe in planning ahead. Happy-go-lucky, he takes for granted that something will turn up to make things all right. He does not anticipate a need, although in this instance the man in charge of the show carried a canteen for himself.

So we two did not see the volcano. The others did, but they did not linger to shoot duck; in fact, one shotgun shell fired as a token constituted the day's shooting. Then everybody trickled back to the banca, attacked the iced beer, and groaned about saddle sores. The return to Talisay in the leaking banca and the drive back to Manila, two hours in itself, consumed the remainder of the day, and immediately on arrival at home we rushed out to a suki-yaki dinner given by the boss for a departing member of our office. Our stamina was tested, the more so because we sat on the floor Japanese-style, and I was glad I had not tried to reach that silly volcano.

Silly volcano, indeed. Ten years later, September 28, 1965, Taal Volcano blew its stack and kept on roaring for three days, burying fields and houses, killing two hundred people, and making thousands homeless (*National Geographic*, September, 1966, p. 305).

Anyone for tennis? I tried to make people at the Club believe I was a player of repute, but I was eliminated early from tournaments whether singles or doubles, though I had formidable Ed Johnson of Booz, Allen and Hamilton as a partner in the latter. Riekie, on the other hand, made a bit of a mark. She had long, beautiful legs, but because she never learned to take a stride you watched her work her long stems like pistons while staying in the same spot. But she had a steady game, and when she could get her racket on the ball she gave it a sturdy swat. In doubles, if she had a partner who was agile at the net, she provided a secure anchor from the baseline.

She had such a partner in the lame duck tournament at the Polo Club, Jose Madrigal, member of a prominent Filipino industrial family. Jose usually turned up at the Polo Club in a chauffeur-driven Cadillac, but now and then he and his pretty wife would materialize informally in a cream Lincoln Capri convertible. A chubby little man with an awkward way of jabbing at the ball, he was actually a clever player with good control, especially at

the net. The idea of the lame duck tournament was that weak players would be paired with strong players as partners, but in this instance he and Riekie complemented each other, with the result that they went all the way to the championship match. I hoped they would achieve a victory that would put Jose in such a good humor he would give Riekie a ruby-studded racket cover, but they went up against the women's champion and could not get the job done. Riekie did get a runner-up cup, without rubies.

But I had my moment. Felicisimo Ampon, champion of the Philippines, Davis Cup contender, victor over some of the greatest in the game, and in his day one of the top ten of the world, visited the Polo Club. With Riekie as his partner, he played two sets against me and another member. Ordinarily I would object to being made a fool of, but in this instance it was a pleasure. The swarthy, bow-legged, five-foot-four "mighty mite" (as the newspapers styled him) ran us from corner to corner, setting up easy little shots that we never could thwack because they were always just a bit beyond our reach, and no matter where we put the ball he had always figured out in advance what we were going to do and was there, waiting. A wonderful tennis lesson, and from a great gentleman. Ampon was noted for not being a prima donna, and he never hesitated to play with the lowliest duffer.

That, of course, was a for-fun game at the Club. Some months later, a Filipino of considerable ability persuaded Riekie to be his partner in an international tournament, featuring players from the States, Canada, Japan and Vietnam. In the first match they found themselves against Ampon and his sister, Desideria. They were badly licked, of course, but Riekie was able to boast that it took the best to beat her. Felicisimo, a model of courtesy, switched from shorts to white flannels when playing with ladies. Though Desi did not have the international stature of her famous brother, she was the ladies' champion of the Phillipines and a strong player. She and Riekie developed a nodding acquaintance and met several times in social games.

Scrap. Sunken in Manila Bay were more than forty ships left from World War II. The Philippine Government negotiated off and on with the Government of Japan on a reparations agreement under which Japan should indemnify for damages, and as a step in such negotiations there was agreement on terms for the Japanese to salvage the sunken ships. Three companies had sent teams to work on breaking up the submerged hulks. The scrap was turned over to the Filipinos at so much per ton, the proceeds to be deducted from the total of the reparations settlement whenever it should be reached.

I was one of a group from the Embassy that went to have a look at the salvage operations. We called on the receiver of the scrap, the National Steel Corporation, whose manager arranged for a coast guard cutter to cruise the Bay. Since I had forgotten to bring a hat, I knotted a hanky about my brow like a Moro pirate to block the sun. With sunken commercial ships, the Japanese salvage crews were cutting and blasting the scrap loose as it lay, lifting the pieces with cranes, and carting them to the scrapyards. We watched a crane raising the foremast and part of the deck of a rusty freighter. Gathered around the wreck were three putt-putts, each flying a red flag to warn that it carried explosives. Small charges of dynamite in sticks of bamboo were put into position by divers. As each

diver finished, his little boat raised a white flag to signal ready, and when the three were set the charges were detonated. Our own cutter took a sharp rap on the plates from the explosions. If the job was done right, a piece of scrap would be jarred loose for a crane to pull up.

For sunken warships that were known or suspected to contain ammunition, the procedure was to refloat the vessel and tow it to dry dock for scrapping with care. We climbed aboard a Japanese salvage ship, a small freighter in size, which was anchored alongside the sunken light cruiser *Kiso*. The warship's stern was partly out of water, but her bow was submerged, and workmen were engaged in fitting wooden platforms to help in operations. The Japanese chief engineer invited us into his cabin to show diagrams. The cruiser had had seven compartments separated by bulkheads, all of which had been destroyed in the heavy bombing. He proposed to replace three bulkheads, thus giving the cruiser four compartments. Water would be pumped from the foremost compartment first, raising the bow slightly, then out of the next compartment, and so on. First, however, divers would have to position hoses that would jetstream away the three and one-half meters of mud into which the ship had settled.

There was considerable ammunition in the hold, the engineer told us. Furthermore, the cruiser was carrying eight torpedoes when attacked, and she jettisoned these, four on each side, when she saw she was a sitting duck with no hope of escape. Six of the torpedoes were buried so deeply they were considered no danger, but the other two were thought to be under the cruiser's hull and emphatically hazardous. The divers could not see because of the mud but had to grope their way. When the hoses had cleared some of the mud, they would try to find the torpedoes so that tackle could be fitted and the cranes could drag them out from under the ship. Of course, there was always the possibility that the torpedoes could be techy and might explode unexpectedly. I reflected that there are many ways in this world to earn a living. If my circumstances had been otherwise, would I have elected to dive under ships looking for devices that might be unfriendly?

Around and about. The Pasig River derives from two streams, the one from the great lake to the south (Laguna de Bay) and the other from mountains to the north. We inspected the stream to the north, called the Mariquina River, driving for about an hour to a barrio, Montalban, whence we followed a dirt road after paying toll of fifty centavos. Two kilometers farther on we parked at a picnic ground and walked to a waterfall generated by the Wa Wa Dam, named after a creek that enters the Mariquina at this point. The dam was built to supply water for Manila; pipes were laid and used for a number of years but were abandoned and allowed to deteriorate. Worcester relates (page 346) that because Manila used to draw drinking water from the Mariquina the people were in constant danger of infection from cholera and water-borne diseases. Accordingly, the dam and water system were built for \$1,500,000, and Worcester states that deaths from ordinary water borne diseases dropped from a yearly average of 3,558 to 1,195. He does not say whether the \$1,500,000 came from a United States contribution or a levy on the populace. During our stay in Manila there was talk of expanding the Wa Wa Dam into a hydro-electric works, but the proposal became snarled in politics. At any rate, the narrow, rock-filled gorge rewarded us tourists with a striking view, and the excursion into the

mountains gave a bit of relief from the heat of the plains.

Some 100 miles east of Manila a formidable chain of mountains stretched the length of Luzon (notably the Sierra Madre), but since they were a wilderness without roads and were the hideout of the Hukbalahaps or communist revolutionaries I had no wish to go exploring. A memorable trip to a tame wilderness area, on the other hand, was shooting the rapids at Pagsanjan Falls. A bunch of us drove around the 75-mile Laguna de Bay to the itty bitty Pagsanjan River, spilling down from hills. We hired bancas, two passengers and two paddlers per hollowed-out log, and dressed in shorts or bathing suits had ourselves hauled upriver for an hour or so, the boatmen stroking where the water permitted and leaping nimbly from rock to rock to drag the bancas through stretches of white water. At the summit was a 200-yard pool fed by a timid waterfall, but the trip was the cake and the waterfall was mere icing. Coming back with the current the bancas shot the rapids, *whiz*, the boatmen fending off the rocks with their paddles. We got a bit of a thrill, a happy drenching with spray, and a sniff of danger although if you overturned (which Riekie and I did at one point) you sank into only two feet of water. We enjoyed this gentle risk so much we came back a second time to take Karen along.

Four days of leave in Hong Kong, where we danced at the Peninsula Hotel, bought Dynasty silks, ogled Tiger Balm Gardens, took a snap of the interior of a Chinese temple, rode on the Peak Railway, steamed overnight to Macau (there was no hydrofoil in that era), and toured a jade factory, housed in a narrow, shabby, four-storey building in the Island's commercial district. On the top floor a craftsman split blocks of jade into narrow slices. One floor down another craftsman carried out the more demanding cutting of the slices into pieces from which gems would be formed. Another floor down, and a skilled artisan carved the stones into gems. All of these people worked under primitive conditions with a minimum of furnishings and equipment. For lighting the skilled gem-cutter had a naked electric bulb suspended from the ceiling. He had affixed a sheet of paper atop it to shield his eyes from the direct glare. On the ground floor the gems were crafted into settings and sold at retail. Since I had only a superficial oversight of the establishment perhaps I judge harshly, but I came away with the impression that the workers held jobs only as long as they kept their health and that this could not be long.

Our last glimpse of the Philippine hinterland was a trip by motorized banca up the Pasig near to its emergence from the Laguna de Bay. The trip lingers in memory because of the odor from the balut farms that lined the banks. Balut is eaten in the shell, unborn embryo of duck.

The Manila Theater Guild was an amateur group that played a prominent role in the American-European community. Housed in the 300-seat theater in the Army-Navy Club, its volunteers put on five or six plays per year and was so enthusiastically supported that its budget was consistently in surplus. This meant that its stage equipment was more sophisticated than that of the typical community group and the shows qualified as professional, though nobody was paid for services. *The Rose Tattoo*, *Witness for the Prosecution*, *The Caine Mutiny*, and a play by William Inge were well done. Rosemary Davis, wife of an ICA staffer and mother of three, brought previous Broadway

experience to acting in some of the plays and directing others. Rosemary took the fancy that I would do well as Elyot in Noel Coward's *Private Lives*, and the suggestion revived the ham in me from my stage ventures in high school, college, Washington amateur groups, and the Little Theatre of the Rockies. Since Australian John Dolby, who was directing, awarded me the part on first reading, I suspect that he was strongly influenced by Rosemary, but I was flattered to accept. My earlier theatrical days had been spent playing timid policemen, absent-minded professors, slimy villains, and self-effacing waiters, and the role of Elyot was a plum. Had I been casting it, I would not have selected a forty-year-old skinny runt as leading man, but with the public clamoring who was I to argue. I figured that if I performed well everybody would say, "I didn't know he had it in him," and if I bombed everybody would shrug, "Well, it's an amateur group". It had been fifteen years since I last did a show, and I welcomed the chance to make a fool of myself. Rosemary was Amanda, Embassy staffer Susan Shaw was Sybil, and British Embassy staffer Roger Smith was Victor. I had fun seizing Rosemary in my brawny arms and covering her heartshaped face with melting kisses, dancing around the stage in dressing gown, and losing a knockdown fight to Rosemary to conclude the second act.

Rehearsals ran throughout April, at first three nights per week, then four, then five, and every night the week before opening on May 8 for a five-performance run. Tickets were pesos 5.00 (\$2.50) each, and every night sold out. The Guild supplemented ticket income with sales of advertising in programs. John Dolby had recordings made of Noel Coward tunes to use as musical background, and he wrote a skit to bring the actors on stage. Elaborate publicity photos were placed in Manila's four English-language newspapers, all but one of which gave us favorable reviews afterward. The adverse review was predictable, written by a critic who invariably attacked the Guild's productions.

My only regret was with my own behavior after the play was over. The Guild threw a party; I came to celebrate and was taken aback to find that every member of the cast was giving a little skit. Maybe the others had been forewarned, but I was totally unprepared and let myself get into such a funk that when I was called on I declined ungraciously. Afterward, it occurred to me that I could at least have thanked John Dolby and the backstage crew that did so much to put us actors across, but I flubbed the chance. My ineptness made a most unfavorable impression and, I fear, was held against me.

Ten-year-old Karen attended dress rehearsal and was enthralled. Next day she announced that the kids in the compound would do a play. Since none was ready to hand, she wrote one. She also directed it, staged it, costumed it, arranged chairs for the audience, and played what she thought was the leading role, the queen. It lasted about ten minutes, and we of the audience applauded until the kids did it over again. Unhappily, I failed to make snapshots.

Man, you need schooling. After a year in Manila we began to wonder about our next assignment. Advanced training at universities was offered in several disciplines, and in September 10, 1955 I applied for training in economics. My background in that fuzzy science consisted of freshman Principles of Economics and sophomore Money and Banking. I surmise that I was assigned to economic-commercial duties in Bern because my

resume said I had been working for a financial advertising agency when I entered the Service. Given that I had again been assigned to commercial-financial duties in Manila, I thought it advisable to find out a bit more about what apparently was to be my career track. Early in May, 1956 a telegram from the Department notified that my application had been accepted and I was to attend a university starting in September. Asked to designate three choices, I named Harvard, Columbia and Princeton. Promptly I was notified that I would be attending Columbia University for a year at Government expense, on full salary. Our household effects would be shipped to New York, but we would have to find and pay for our own housing. This was heady news.

We had been thinking of returning to the States via South Africa, paying the difference in travel costs ourselves. Because I would have to allow time for consultation with the Foreign Service Institute in Washington, we decided the schedule would be too tight for me, but there was no reason why Riekie and Karen should not visit her mother and family. We compared travel by plane and by ship.

Qantas Airlines flew from Manila to Darwin, change planes, then to Cocos Island, Mauritius and Joburg, leaving Friday afternoon and arriving Monday morning. Two nights trying to sleep on an aircraft with an active child could be an endurance test. To travel by ship, it would be necessary to go first to Hong Kong from which port a Dutch line operated small liners to Singapore, Malacca, Mauritius and Lourenco Marques. Hong Kong to Lourenco Marques would be 24 days, with the longest interval between ports nine days. The ships had swimming pools, cabins with showers, and excellent cuisine. We decided that ship was the way to go. The plane and ship fares were about the same, \$1,250 for Riekie, half that for Karen.

The two flew Philippine Airlines to Hong Kong on August 20, sailed on the S.S. *Tegelberg* of the Royal InterOcean Lines on August 22, arrived at Lourenco Marques on September 15, and were driven by her brother, Henk, to Middelburg, Transvaal via Kruger National Park. Curiously, although Riekie had lived within 250 miles of this great game reserve until she married, she had never actually seen it. They stayed about a month visiting relatives and friends here and there in the Transvaal, flew on Pan American from Joburg, and arrived in New York in November.

As for me, Pan Am was to take me August 22 to Guam, Wake Island, Honolulu, San Francisco, and Washington. But odds and ends had to be wound up.

Vice President Richard Nixon flew in to Manila on July 3rd and vanished in the direction of Saigon two days later, but not without causing considerable headaches for security, protocol, and administrative personnel, all of whom run in hundreds of directions whenever VIPs turn up. I did not get to see Mr. Nixon until he addressed the Embassy lawn party the morning of July 4th, which is Independence Day for both the United States and the Philippines.

For the lawn party, the gates of the Embassy were thrown open, supposedly to American citizens but actually to anybody who wanted in, as you couldn't compel each person

seeking entry to prove he was a citizen. Many local yokels who wanted a glimpse of the famous plus a free hot dog took advantage, and they formed a goodly throng romping over the Embassy lawn, and gawking at square dancing, a staffer got up as Uncle Sam, an air-sea rescue by helicopter from Sangley Point, and other attractions. Karen, of course, was in the thick of everything, but I spent my time in the shade trying to stand still. After the lawn party I attended a reception at the Ambassador's residence for the diplomatic corps where Charge d'Affaires Burrows proposed a toast to President Magsaysay and Philippine Vice President Garcia proposed a toast to President Eisenhower. I shook Mr. Nixon's hand and exchanged a few words, all the while remarking to myself that the Vice President looked better in the flesh than in photographs. The crystal ball gave me no clue at the time of the extraordinary place this man was to occupy in United States history.

At 1:30 Riekie and I made our way to the grandstand on the Luneta, the great park and exhibition ground where displays of pomp and circumstance are held. To play safe I carried a thermos of water, for I knew that once activities began there would be no way of easing thirst. Although the parade was not scheduled until 2:00, the grandstand was filled, with people standing in the aisles. In the Luneta itself, people stood five rows deep under the open sun although the Vice President was not to speak until five o'clock and President Magsaysay not until after he had finished. For us Distinguished Guests, extra chairs were placed on the ground in front of the grandstand, and I had a fine view of the neck of the man in front of me. We sat there fifteen minutes, and the sweat oozed although I wore the lightweight shirt called the barong tagalog. And then it occurred to me that neither Nixon nor Magsaysay would be terribly disappointed if we did not sit there the next four hours, and so I gathered up Riekie and went to the Polo Club to play tennis. We heard part of the speech on a portable radio. The microphones were dead much of the time, we learned later, and half-way through Mr. Nixon's talk a fearful rainstorm descended and the crowd, estimated by newspapers at half a million and probably numbering 50,000, dispersed with such a hullabaloo it made no difference whether the microphones worked or not.

Merchandising. Having been told that we would be leaving, we began selling off our car and surplus household effects. I learned that I had much to learn when it came to retailing, for instance that people who came to see the things we advertised were interested not so much in what we wanted to sell as in what we didn't. Thus, we sold things we hadn't expected to sell at all; for instance, a woman who arrived in a Cadillac bought a pastry board, a colander, and an old kettle for Pesos 8.00. Riekie didn't want to sell any of these things, but she was so taken aback she couldn't say no. I also learned there are lots of people who love to pass an afternoon window shopping in other people's homes. They priced every article, offered half the asking price, but found a reason for not buying if you took them up. On the other hand, there were people who would buy anything if they thought they had a bargain. And I was reminded that the Filipino must persuade you to lower your price as otherwise he would lose face. But if you lower your price clumsily he must get you to lower it still further, for the initial drop has not saved face.

We asked Pesos 450 (\$225) for the washing machine. It was virtually new as Riekie and

the lavandera were so terrified of its gadgets they never used it. In the Philippines it is cheaper to hire a lavandera than buy a washing machine, and for two weeks the only bid came from a dealer who offered Pesos 300. Then came a Chinese with wife and baby who obviously were seeking a washing machine. I demonstrated, and the machine sold itself, but face had to be saved and a reduction made in the price. I made the tactical error of dropping at once to the price I expected to get, Pesos 400, but the buyer countered with Pesos 380, and there we stuck. To make the sale I had to make the face saving gesture of coming down to Pesos 390.

To my astonishment, our electric stove was the first large appliance to go. We had bought it from Jim May in Israel for \$150. Our flat in Haifa was not wired for three-phase current, and we had operated the stove on two-phase current, 220 volt, which would not correspond to Manila standards. We never used it in Manila because our apartment had a gas stove, and accordingly I never changed the Israeli-type plug, which meant I could not demonstrate, could not show that the stove actually worked. Nevertheless I set the price at Pesos 400 and sold it for Pesos 380. The buyer had an electrician look at it and was satisfied, after I made the face-saving drop in price.

The face-saving was carried to an extreme by a lady who looked at big items such as refrigerator, leather furniture, bedroom suite, and then tried to buy six cheap drinking glasses. I told her I would not spoil the dozen, but she combined forces with another shopper and began the enjoyable game of haggling. I asked Pesos 6, she offered Pesos 3, I dropped to Pesos 5, but this was too fast and she countered with Pesos 3.50, and when I went to Pesos 4.50 she offered Pesos 4. Saving my own face, I would not yield on the last 50 centavos (25 cents), but I wanted to get rid of the glasses so finally chucked in free a peanut butter jar. Was all this worth it? I think so, for it is on margins like these that the business world moves. And there is a market for everything if you can find it; discarded slippers, two used dresses of Karen's, two worn handbags, three beatup metal cabinets, a folding bed, hand mixer, phonograph. Our refrigerator brought Pesos 900 and our Ford car Pesos 4,700. We could have shipped all these items at government expense, but household goods suffer stresses from packing and shipping, and after the third move it's a good idea to turn over what you can. Given that we would be staying in New York only an academic year, we shipped part of our effects and left part in storage in Manila pending further assignment.

Wind-down. When our schedule firmed, people began giving us despedidas, and for our last two weeks we attended at least one party every night. One would have thought all Manila was weeping to see us leave. Friends presented Riekie and Karen with bouquets when they took off on Philippine Air for Hong Kong on August 20, 1956. I was scheduled to leave the following day, but the flight was scrubbed, and I actually left on Pan Am at 1:00 p.m. on August 22. We stopped an hour at Guam and another at Wake, the latter a horseshoe of coral enclosing a lagoon. It was a marvel the pilot could find it in all that ocean. I overnighted in Honolulu and arrived in San Francisco early in the night of August 24. Not sleeping well on the plane, I fell asleep on a bench in the San Francisco airport, but this was not enough, and when I was welcomed by Nan in Washington two days later I responded by tumbling into bed and sleeping the clock

around.

Ambassador Ferguson resigned to accept a federal judgeship and was succeeded by Ambassador Nufer who, sadly, died of a heart attack shortly after our departure. And President Magsaysay visited Cebu and died in a plane crash on the return flight, not far from the little island where Ferdinand Magellan met his death in 1521.

Chapter 19  
Columbia University  
(September 1956-June 1957)

"Who owns New York?  
Who owns New York?  
That's what the people say.  
Who owns New York?  
C-O-L-U-M-B-I-A"

- Popular ditty

Two weeks were passed in Washington being debriefed-- that is, making the rounds of Government bureaus that were interested in what I had been doing--catching up with Foreign Service and Washington friends, and getting particulars on my new assignment. My focal point in the Department of State was a Ph.D. whose job was to shepherd FSOs assigned to universities.

I would be required to take only one course for credit, but there was no objection to taking more if I wished. Indeed, there was no objection to trying for a master's degree. The recommendation was that I audit as many courses as possible to develop a broad acquaintance with the nooks and crannies of Economics. I would have to write a brief paper at the close of the academic year giving my evaluation of the training. Otherwise, I would be under no obligation.

Ideally, I would have been told at the outset what my next assignment would be and would have selected courses pertinent to that assignment. At this stage I could only guess at what I might be doing nine months hence. My Department mentor recommended a course in Economic Analysis as basic but otherwise left the choice to me. Having been concerned with matters of trade and commerce for two years at Bern and another two at Manila, I opted for two courses offered by Professor Ragnar Nurkse, International Trade and Finance, and International Capital Movements. I rounded out the curriculum with courses in Monetary Economics (Angell), Public Finance (Shoup), Economic Analysis (Vickery), and a Seminar in Economic Growth conducted by Dr. Arthur F. Burns. Dr. Burns had just finished a stint as Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers to the President. He was to become Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and then Ambassador to Germany, but of course I could not see that far ahead. Dr. Burns remarked in the first session that, as he was not back into his teaching swing, he was going to let the seminar ramble in many directions, without particular concentration on Economic Growth. His only requirement was that each class member write a paper on a topic of his own choosing. I did something on the impact of nuclear energy on international patterns of trade which he accepted without fuss.

Having been told over the years that a basic knowledge of statistics was essential to understanding Economics as a discipline, I approached the subject warily for I knew from commercial work that statistics is not cut and dried. I consulted the head of statistics in

the University's Department of Economics, told him I had had no training in the subject, and asked frankly if I was likely to pass a graduate course in economic statistics. The professor judged that I would have great difficulty and suggested I take a statistics course in the University's School of Business as less demanding. Here I made a mistake. I should have asked a professor in the School of Business if he agreed that the Business School's course would be less demanding, but I took the Economics man at his word and signed up for the one course in the School of Business. Statistics is statistics, no matter what its emphasis, and I was hopelessly over my depth. I agonized over the lectures-text-supplementary readings but could not seem to translate them into anything I could understand. In despair, I dropped out of the course for credit, although I continued to audit.

All other courses I took for credit. It seemed to me that if the U.S. Government was willing to let me earn a master's degree I would be foolish not to give it the old college try. I swotted throughout the year, and although I failed to take advantage of the social and extra-curricular opportunities available at a great university, nor was I invited to join Skull and Hasty Pudding, I did maintain the required B-average and did qualify for the degree. I was hustled off to my next posting before I could finish writing the compulsory essay, but I took two weeks leave from Ottawa in August 1957 and spent them in the Library of Congress completing the requisite research and was awarded the degree in December. I am most grateful that I was given the chance at the Master of Arts and had sense enough to take advantage of it.

Supplementary to the courses, a Columbia student association arranged for talks by visiting Greats of the Economics world--Jan Tinman, Nikolas Kaldor, Charles Kindleberger, Leon Keyserling, Abba Lerner, George Stigler (who at that time was a member of the faculty and in after years was to be awarded the Nobel prize). Additionally, a friend invited me to the New School for Social Research to hear an address by Gunnar Myrdal. I was pleased to get glimpses of these Personalities, but I have to say that an hour's talk gives even an Einstein little chance to convey a lasting message.

During our nine months in New York we lived in a two-room k & b off Central Park West, about a mile's walk from the University. Into the two rooms we crammed so much furniture we had to thread our way among the chairs and tables. I was glad to accept this situation because most real estate required a two-year lease and I was able to get our flat on a one-year sub-lease. But I give an imperfect picture when I say that "we" lived in the flat. In the way that husbands do, I acted all for the best and stranded my wife.

(at sea) M. S. Tegelberg

Dear Daddy,

"I am having a lot of fun on the boat. I go swimming every day and last night I saw a movie called 'Smoke Signal'. The ship has a library and I go there every day. We will arrive at Singapore on Monday. I have no girl friends except a five-year-old named

Christina. I have to eat before the grownups do because I am not over 12 and I do not like it. The grownups can choose from the menu, but on the children's menu there is only one thing and they put it in front of you anyway.

"(off Penang) The day before yesterday we had such fun! We went to see some coral reefs. Coral reefs didn't enter into it much though but we had a lot of fun. We had a picnic lunch on a little island, then we went to a special place in the ocean where some men dove for coral, the flowery kind. Mommy didn't get any because it was too expensive.

"Not too long ago I told Mommy that I would like to live with Ouma in Washington instead of New York because I would be able to ride my bike. Then too, I have a small room, and I couldn't mess it up so easily. I could buy myself a light and I could ride my bike to school. All I want now is two yesses, one from you and one from Ouma. Please let me! with love, Karen"

Riekie and Karen arrived from South Africa in late October. Because chances seemed strong that I would draw a Washington assignment after Columbia, we left Karen with Nan in Washington, reasoning that there was no point to putting her in a New York school for a few months and then relocating her. Inevitably, she was missed. At semester break in January, 1957, we drove to Washington and found we had bought a house. It just sort of happened. We passed our time looking at houses, and one jumped at us, on a cul-de-sac close to the Maryland line but only twenty minutes from downtown if you're driving a Porsche at full throttle. It was a dumb thing to do, but forty-five years later we still live in it and are mighty glad we were so stupid. To impress you by dropping names, two blocks away is the house where conservative presidential candidate Pat Buchanan was raised, around the corner is a house owned by Ambassador to Paris and Moscow Arthur Hartman, and across the street is a house occupied for some five years by Anna Roosevelt and her husband Dr. Halsted.

What do you do with an empty house? You put your wife and kid in it. But not your furniture. We were entitled to move furnishings from New York to our next post at Government expense. But we wouldn't be told what our next post was until June, 1957, at the earliest. If we used up our transfer allowance shifting our furnishings to Washington and were ordered to Asuncion, we would have to bear the cost of shipping to Asuncion. So from February to June Riekie and Karen lived in our three-bedroom, 2 1/2 bath house with a bed, an armchair, and little else, while I commuted weekends from New York and told her Baby keep your chin up, you're really happy even if you think you aren't. From hindsight I realize that her existence was not too inspiring as she was dependent on public transportation and had few friends, but I was fully occupied learning to say that the marginal utility of the transformation curve will combine with liquidity preference of the multiplier to ease the incidence of the indifference map, and I did not appreciate how isolated she was. Riekie loyally let herself be confined to our new house until we learned that we would not be going to the Department after all but would be proceeding to Ottawa.

One other thing we accomplished in Washington. Our friends, Mary Frances and Tom

Sweeney, sponsored us for membership in Kenwood Country Club. We didn't use the Club much while we were in Ottawa, but we sure have benefitted from it over the years. When I was in high school, let's say about 1930, I attended a professional tennis match at Kenwood, with Martin Plaa, Robert Ramillon, George Chapin, and William T. Tilden III, and at that time the Club had only one tennis court as against today's twenty. Inflation note: When we joined in 1956 the entry fee was \$150.00. As of June 1992 the entry fee is \$19,500.00. I will add that in my initial week in New York I saw Gwen Verdon in *Damn Yankees* and was staggered at having to pay \$5.75 for a seat.

While at Columbia there occurred a wiggle on the career ladder. I had advanced, it will be recalled, to FSO-4 in February, 1956. In July that same year there was a shakeup resulting from the recommendations of the Wriston Committee, the gist of which was that the number of classes or career steps was increased from six to eight and I was "demoted" back to FSO-5, though at no loss in pay. In January, 1957, to my astonishment, I was restored to FSO-4 on the new scale and given a raise of approximately \$1,000. You will be correct in assuming I was not depressed by this turn of events.

Nor were we depressed at our assignment to the land of the Northwest Mounted Police (renamed the Royal Canadian Mounted Police after Nelson Eddy left it), although we were a bit shaken when the Department gave us no breather but insisted we hustle to Ottawa immediately following the university. We bought a second-hand Ford that looked as if it had been used to haul cement but was actually a mechanical gem and headed for the North Pole at once. Let's acknowledge, most United States-ians, meaning me, are amazingly ignorant about our great neighbors, Canada and Mexico, and I was gratified at the chance to serve in so friendly a country. The Foreign Service ranges wide. While you are prepared to go where you are sent, you feel that neither your life nor your family's will be greatly enriched by serving two to four years in, shall we say, Vladivostok. We rented out our new house to the first in a succession of tenants, ranging over the years from an elderly couple who improved the place to a family with a monkey and two dogs who rather ran it down. Shortly after we arrived in Ottawa, the Canadian Government gave us as members of the diplomatic corps a hunting license that carried with it the right to export one moose.

Chapter 20  
Ottawa  
(July 1957-July 1960)

"Canada, corrupted from the Iroquois *Kannatha*, a village...."

- Imperial Encyclopedia

"My life is gliding downward, it speeds swifter to the day  
When it shoots the last dark canyon to the Plains of Faraway;  
But while its streams are running through the years that are to be,  
The mighty voice of Canada will ever call to me."

- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Athabasca Trail*

Habitat. The place to be in Ottawa is Rockcliffe, an enclave east of the Rideau River where the Prime Minister has his house along with other nobs. It was beyond our means, and we sought elsewhere. The chap I was replacing wanted us to take over the lease on his flat, but we didn't like the neighborhood, the terms of the lease, or the flat itself. After ten days in an apartment hotel we settled into a house at Ottawa's west end, a comfortable but unfashionable area that was satisfactory as regards schooling for Karen but inconvenient for us night owls. For though Ottawa had no commercial night life, the diplomatic corps hummed with at-home after-hours activity. At the close of day it was a grind to drive across town to pick up Riekie, drive back across town to Rockcliffe, and back across town to our house after the function was over.

When winter settled in, early in November, being out-of-the-way was heightened by the low temperatures, the early darkness, and of course snow. On the recommendation of fellow staffers, I equipped our 1953 V-8 with a block heater, a device that plugs into house or office current to keep the engine oil flowing for easy starting, but we had a lot to learn about driving in the cold, for instance, not setting the parking brake. This was driven home to me when I got the engine started without trouble and found the wheels would not turn because the brakedrums were frozen. Our offbeat location was also a drawback to friends. We entertained only once while in the house and realized that our guests had a long way to come and a long way to go.

Opportunity never knocks twice, and when it did I acted. On learning that my boss, Economic Counselor Myron L. Black, who had been in Ottawa since 1954, had received orders to transfer to Washington, I at once negotiated to take over his flat. Close to the Rideau Canal, on stately Clemow Avenue, it offered two bedrooms and baths on the upper floor of an elderly widow's mansion that stood in its own small park. Myron helped me persuade the agent that our eleven-year-old child would not disturb the widow's peace or property, and we moved in toward the end of January, 1958. Our west-end landlord released us from our lease on condition that we continue to pay rent until he found a new tenant, a condition easily met. The new location was ideal from every standpoint: accessibility, space, scenic outlook, prestige, and no change in rent. We got into a little

hassle by trying to keep Karen in her west end school after we moved, but the authorities insisted she transfer pronto and she started at once to accumulate a new set of friends. At Clemow we lived the rich, full life; as the little park was government property, we didn't even have to shovel our own walk.

Fellows. Distinguished diplomat Livingston T. Merchant, holder of numerous special posts and assignments since 1942, headed an Embassy that, because of proximity to the United States, included a number of distinctive attaches such as Treasury and a representative of the Internal Revenue Service. Ambassador Merchant was an outgoing and self-disciplined man, on easy terms with everyone on the staff and notable for never showing any sign of temperament. He was singular among heads of mission in that he used weekly staff meetings, which at so many posts are stiff do-this do-that affairs, for casual exchange of information, telling us in general terms what he had been doing during the week and listening attentively to a brief report from each of us. There is always an atmosphere of respect between staff and Ambassador owing to recognition of rank, but with Merchant there was also an appreciation of genuine accomplishment. Mr. Merchant achieved the rarely conferred rank of Career Ambassador in 1960, served as Under Secretary of State 1959-1961, returned to Ottawa as Ambassador for two more years, and after retirement from the Foreign Service in 1962 served as an Executive Director of the World Bank (Department of State *News Letter*, June, 1976; *The Washington Post*, May 17, 1976, p. C6).

Second in command as Counselor with the personal rank of Minister was Tyler Thompson, a veteran of the Service since 1931. Merchant and Thompson, both graduates of Princeton, complemented each other in style, Tyler approaching the martinet more than his Ambassador, yet retaining the cooperation and enthusiasm of the staff. I got to know him fairly well, though there was never any question as to who was chief and who was indian, because he believed in physical exercise and often asked me to play tennis for an hour in the middle of the day. He was a big man with a powerful forehand, but I could give him enough game to make him feel he had had a workout, and afterward Mrs. Ruth Thompson would feed us lunch. Tyler, who believed in the rugged outdoors, was in his element in Canada. His idea of a happy summer vacation was to paddle and portage the Mackenzie River, which to me smacks of work more than fun. After Canada, he served as Ambassador to Iceland before retiring to his house in Maine.

The political section, under Rufus Z. Smith, who was to rise to career minister and become deputy assistant secretary of state for European and Canadian affairs, afforded instances of the way the ball can bounce in your favor or against. Delmar Carlson, an able junior officer, went on to become consul general in Georgetown, British Guiana. When that colony became an independent nation in 1964, Del was given his due and raised to ambassador, the only officer to be promoted from Consul General to Ambassador when the post became an Embassy. For Adolph (Spike) Dubs, on the other hand, the ball bounced off court. He became ambassador to Kabul, only to be abducted and murdered there by extremists in February, 1979. There was an extra aspect to this tragedy. Three years before his death Spike and his wife of many years had divorced, and he had re-married. Under the regulations then governing, his widow was entitled to his pension but

his first wife was left unprovided for. Subsequently the regulations were amended, but poor Jane Dubs did not benefit. Ironically, his widow, Mrs. Mary Ann Dubs, survived him by only a few years (*State*, August-September 1985, p. 80; *The Washington Post*, December 1, 1992, p. A18 and December 13, 1992, p. C6).

Economic counselor Myron L. Black offered varied experience in and out of government since graduating from Harvard in 1928. After transferring from Ottawa he could not resist the call of business and retired in 1960 to join the Isbrandtsen Steamship Company (*The Washington Post*, August 28, 1976, p. B4). He was succeeded by Willis C. Armstrong, Swarthmore and Columbia, a civil servant re-assigned as FSO under the Wriston re-organization, who was eventually to become Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs. Both of these men were easy to work for. The economic section numbered two other reporting officers like myself along with commercial, air, labor, and agricultural attaches.

"SUMMARY. Canada's Gross National Product advanced 5 percent by volume in 1959 over the level of 1958, according to a preliminary estimate. For 1960 a further advance was predicted, opinions ranging from a modest rate of growth to a possible boom. Toward the close of 1959 the total manufacturing production index reached an all-time high. The number of employed was running higher than a year earlier, and the number of unemployed as a percentage of the labor force promised to be lower in the coming winter than in 1958-59. Income, saving, and consumer expenditure held at sustained levels, with favorable prospects for the months ahead. Concerning expenditures by governments, the outlook was for a continued rise in 1960, but in view of the Federal Government's desire to work for a balanced budget it was thought that the rise would be moderate. New housing construction was seen as showing a further decline in 1960, but non-residential construction and expenditure on machinery and equipment were expected to gain. Canada's commodity exports were estimated as increasing approximately 5 percent in 1959 over 1958 to the highest figure on record, and imports also advanced. In finance the prospect was for continued high interest rates in view of the Government's determined stand against inflation. While individual sectors of the Canadian economy faced problems of varying degree, on the whole 1960 shaped up as a prosperous year."

The foregoing is the introductory paragraph to an economic assessment for the year 1959 prepared by me as one of my assigned tasks. I was required to write an economic assessment every three months plus a comprehensive one for the year, plus a quarterly resume of current business conditions. These travelled by surface pouch to the Department as Foreign Service Despatches. The old days, when you sent in everything by despatch and resorted to a telegram only to announce the outbreak of war, had long been superseded by using despatches only for what you were sure nobody would read. To my gratification, however, indirect feedback confirmed that what I wrote was being read not only in the State Department but in Commerce and Treasury as well. Indeed, one chap in the Federal Reserve exchanged several pleasant letters with me, the gist of which was that what I was saying might be right but my reasons were all wrong. I welcomed these evidences that I was writing for more than the Round File.

The information for my reports came from published sources and personal contacts. Government publications, newspapers and magazines, bank letters, information sheets issued by brokerages and economic forecasters--in short, the same wealth of media material that would be available in the United States. I cultivated Canadian Government economists, statisticians, and commercial and trade authorities, as well as economic officers in commercial banks and of course the Bank of Canada. From the latter I never succeeded in getting more than official handouts. An Information Officer was assigned to take care of me, and when I tried to talk with others I was politely turned away. On one occasion I did obtain an appointment with a Very High Official, but as soon as he realized I wanted to talk generally about the state of the economy he led me brusquely from his office to the Information Officer, a chap who was amiable but chary about saying anything that might be construed as release of official confidences. I stress, however, that my reception was always cordial; indeed, I was taken into lower vaults and shown some of the bars of gold that were held as reserves.

I journeyed once to Toronto and once to Montreal to consult economic people. Not that I obtained anything distinct from these visits, but it did no harm to let Washington know that I was tapping opinions from more than just a small circle, for of course I was careful to let my readers know that I was not coming off the cuff but was conferring with authoritative sources. The better to understand the Canadian economy, I audited two night courses at the University of Ottawa, but they turned out to be typical supply-demand without anything singularly Canadian in content.

I confess I was mystified as to the need for me. The despatches that I wrote contained no classified or other information that was not readily available on both sides of the border. There were dozens of government and non-government people in New York and Washington turning out pieces of paper like those I drafted; yet I was in demand.

As part of my job I followed week-to-week the fluctuations in the rate of exchange between the Canadian and United States dollars. I found that by paying attention to official figures, principally those released by the Bank of Canada, I could predict in general terms whether the value of the one currency in terms of the other was likely to rise or fall, and I gained minor respect by saying at staff meetings: "My guess is that the Canadian dollar will probably strengthen (or weaken as the case might be) in the next few days," and seeing my fearless predictions come true. I should think the same soothsaying would be possible by watching United States publications, but I never tried my hand at it after leaving Ottawa.

Researching publications, talking to sources, and drafting the reports took up most of my working time. Inquiries and visitors to the economic section were usually referred to other officers, but occasionally I would fill in when they were absent although I might not be quite expert on the issue. Thus, I discussed with a Canadian civil servant the issue of the tariff on tongue-and-groove lumber without being exactly sure what tongue-and-groove was. I prepared an informative squib on the way that Canadian customs people gauge the weight of canned shrimp. I won thanks from a fellow who wanted to import a second-hand ice cream truck. He called at the Embassy and asked for help because his

truck had been impounded by customs. During our talk with a Canadian official the man revealed that he was marrying a Canadian girl and intended to settle in Canada. The official said promptly there was no problem as landed immigrants were entitled to bring in equipment to help them earn a living. The truck was released, and I was thanked for being a good Samaritan although I hadn't really done anything.

Canadian-United States relations were the same as those you enjoy with the fellow next door. For the most part you get along great, except that maybe you differ over whether he or you ought to mow that strip of weeds between your two properties. A few politicians and a set of journalists made good livings by "defending" Canada against its southern neighbor, repeating again and again that Canada keeps all its eggs in the United States basket, that the United States controls Canada's economic destiny through ownership of Canadian industry, and that Canada should be more than a hewer of wood and hauler of water for the United States. One writer in particular, Michael Barkway, repeatedly attacked the United States in his column for a weekly financial paper. To my amusement, Karen's closest playmate was this chap's eleven-year-old daughter, Bridget, a relationship that I never advertised around the Embassy.

Journalists who liked to tease the United States enjoyed their finest hour in the Red Shrimp scare. Commercial/financial transactions between the United States and Communist China were forbidden under U.S. Treasury regulations, but Canadians suffered from no such restrictions and regularly imported cargoes of shrimp from China into Vancouver. With the trans-Canada highway not yet completed, for years the importers had been transporting the shrimp in sealed, refrigerated trucks from western to eastern Canada over United States highways. Abruptly the U.S. customs began turning back shrimp-laden trucks at the border. We at Embassy Ottawa thousands of miles away were informed of this turn of events after the fact. An Embassy spokesman who had to answer questions from the press explained that the action was required under U.S. Treasury regulations. When asked for the reason, the spokesman made the generalization that the regulations were needed to assure United States security. The Canadian media had a field day with scareheads along the lines of RED SHRIMP THREATEN UNITED STATES SECURITY. The hullabaloo did not subside until a decision was reached that the practice of conveying Chinese goods in sealed transports across United States territory did not constitute an infringement of the regulations after all.

This was an extreme instance of the pinpricks that Embassy Ottawa was continually dealing with. I remember sitting in on a meeting of people making arrangements for receiving Queen Elizabeth II at the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway. Somebody pointed out that the Queen would be in Windsor, Ontario, and at one point might have to set foot in U.S. territory. Would Her Majesty have to clear U.S. Customs? The protocol chaps had to make sure that the Royal and Presidential penants flown on the car conveying the Queen and President Eisenhower were exactly the same size and carried at the same height. A recurring issue was that of radio frequencies. Signals used to summon taxicabs in U.S. border cities sometimes interfered with transmissions of the Canadian Broadcasting Company (or was it the other way around?). Canada did not agree with us on some issues and did agree with us on others. On the whole, the hewers-haulers cliché

was heard no more frequently than that of the 3,000-mile undefended border, the symbol of the two nations' enduring friendship.

Ottawa featured an imposing set of parliamentary buildings with a scenic river washing their feet, but otherwise had few distinctions. If you were to drop into Ottawa blindfold and look in any sector away from Parliament you would find little to distinguish it from Frontiertown, Anystate. In later years overpasses would be built, museums and galleries established, sophisticated restaurants opened, but at that epoch sections of town other than the government and shopping center had the air of the last post before you set out with your dog team for the Klondike. Many of the houses were little more than crackerboxes of plywood with tar-papered roofs, as if thrown up before the onset of winter and never replaced.

Ottawa was not purely governmental like Washington but contained two large paper mills, a match factory, a plywood factory, and imposing water-power installations. Booms contained logs on the river to feed the paper mills. Going through a mill, I was awed at logs cannibalizing each other. A log drops into the grinder-stack and is subdued into pulp because other logs press down on top of it, only to drop down and themselves be ground to pulp because of still more logs descending. In the plywood factory, my fancy was taken by a specialist who spent his hours going over the finished sheets inserting slivers to correct tiny blemishes.

Having said all that, I must not ignore the many sectors of substantial brick homes and the new developments on the edge of town. And the area in which we were fortunate to locate, close to the Rideau Canal.

After the War of 1812, the British built a 124-mile waterway, using the Rideau River and a string of lakes from Kingston to Ottawa, so ships wouldn't have to sail along the St. Lawrence under cannons from the United States side. The waterway having been built under the direction of a Colonel Bye, the town's original name was Bytown but was changed to Ottawa in 1854 and designated the capital of Canada by Queen Victoria in 1858. The Rideau River drops into the Ottawa River over a scenic waterfall or curtain (rideau). A Canal was built a few blocks to the west of the River to let small boats descend to the Ottawa River through locks. Along this stretch is a tree-lined promenade, most eye-pleasing in spring and summer. It was a sign of spring when they filled the Canal, and after you ambled to the junction with the Ottawa River you could dine at the Chateau Laurier, a gothic hotel something like the Chateau Frontenac that you see in pictures of Quebec. At that time, the Chateau Laurier was the only place in town for sumptuous dining, and since it lacked competition it tended to be fussy rather than gourmet. Other city restaurants served hale and hearty truck-stop fare. It was not until some years in the future that Ottawa began concentrating on good eating places.

The diplomatic crowd made do without fancy restaurants. This bunch furthered international relations with frequent at-home sociables, and it was a rare week when you were not invited to three or four lunches, dinners, receptions, and/or dances. You entertained and you were entertained by Canadians, British, French, Italians, Jugoslavs,

Chileans, Venezuelans, Danes, Australians, South Africans.... Well, let's go into reverse; I don't remember many affairs with orientals, and the few occasions when there were get-togethers with Poles or Russians were correct and formal.

Climate. In Manila we hid from the sun; in Ottawa we tried to hide from the frost. Ottawa, says the *National Geographic*, is the coldest capital city anywhere except for Ulan Bator in Mongolia. It gets an average 85 inches of snow per year, and the temperature settles at zero Fahrenheit most of the winter. I recall being roused from bed at 2:00 a.m. as duty officer and making my way to the Embassy when the thermometer read minus 30. Unaccustomed to such cold, our family stayed indoors the first winter in town, but realizing this was not a good idea we bundled up and got outdoors the rest of our stay. Karen became pretty good at ice skating, and the three of us ventured onto skis.

From Ottawa you drove north, parallel with the Gatineau River into the Gatineau Hills (tallest about 1,100 feet), and there you came to Camp Fortune, Ottawa's semi-municipal ski resort. The "club" had eight rope tows and two ski bars, plus several cross-country trails if you wished to get up hills under your own power, push yourself across flat spots, weave in and out among pines, and carry your own lunch. Most people preferred to buy tickets for tow or T-bar (there were no chairs or cars). A T-bar, for high hills, looks like a rake without teeth. Its handle is attached to an endless cable, and its cross-bar tucks under the bottoms of two people and drags them upwards while they slide on their skis. You have to be more than a novice to use a T-bar because, with hundreds of people being tugged over the same path, irregular ruts are soon dug in the snow that trip your skis and dump you unless you know how to compensate. With a tow, for low hills, there is merely an endless cable that you grab in your leather gloves to get yourself dragged to the top. Every now and then some klutz loses his balance and falls off, meaning that everybody behind must let go to avoid a pile-up. My first try I fell off and fouled the line for a hundred yards, but after a few times I learned to shift my weight from one ski to another to skip worn ruts, and riding the tow became routine.

Arrived at the top, you must get back down, and for me that never became routine. I looked back with a sigh to our two years in Bern, when we might have zipped down the Jungfrau, and I acknowledged that after you pass age forty you become a slow learner. By using the elementary snowplow I managed to descend modest slopes without assassinating myself, and I made a start at learning to stem, but I never reached that comfortable stage where you flick your skis in parallel and weave your way down like Jean Claude Killy. Maybe it's just as well; the highly skilled are tempted to take undue risks. I kept no tally, but every year we seemed to run into a dozen acquaintances with legs in casts, expert ski-ers who went for one thrill too many. It's a glorious sport and a noble form of recreation. I'm sorry I came to it so late I never mastered it. One additional caution. In Ottawa, wear something on your head, or when you get home you may find that your ears have dropped off.

Summertimes we played tennis, lots of it. There was a sort of informal tennis club in Rockcliffe into which we wormed ourselves. Given my good "style," I was considered a formidable player, and with astuteness I managed to hold onto that reputation by never

competing in a tournament throughout our three years. There was no schedule board or formal arrangement. You showed up with your opponents, and if a court was vacant you took it for an hour. As there was a clubhouse-shack where you could make tea after your game, I suppose there was a maintenance committee, but the whole thing was run very casually. We played with officials, business people, newsmen, fellow diplomats, especially British. Once we had a game with Yussuf Karsh, the photographer of Winston Churchill and other world-famous people. He had his own court at his unpretentious home on the outskirts of the city, and afterward we admired his small collection of artworks under carefully arranged skylights. We swatted often with Charles and Moire Cruickshank of the British High Commission and kept in touch with them in after years. After retiring, Dr. Cruickshank tried his hand at murder mysteries and also wrote a set of histories about the German occupation of the Channel Islands and British spy operations in European and Far Eastern sectors during the War. Speaking of literature, the topic of conversation of the moment was a set of four novels, the Alexandria Quartet, of Lawrence Durrell.

Ottawa offered two television programs, both government-operated, one in English and one in French. For the most part the programs were dramas, supplemented by features on felling trees and trapping beaver. There were a few variety shows, the most notable centering on Simon and Shuster, two Canadian comics who also appeared on numerous shows in the States. The CBC encouraged local talent but did pick up a few big U.S. shows, notably Ed Sullivan and Perry Como. Montreal had four T.V. channels, but they did not reach Ottawa. The overwhelming sport on T.V. was hockey. In the U.S. a kid is born with a baseball bat in his hand, in Canada with a hockey stick. Baseball of course is Canadian, too, but at that time it was not major league. Canadian football is similar to that in the United States except that the field is 110 yards long, there are twelve men (five in the backfield) on a team, and you have to gain ten yards in only three downs rather than four. You also have to end the season earlier than south of the border if you hope to avoid bouncing on frozen turf.

Voyageurs. Ottawa's drawback was that it was just close enough to the States to be too far away. Ogdensburg, New York, was two hours drive, and while it's a pleasant place it's not too different from towns on the Canadian side of the St. Lawrence. People who live in the region cross back and forth to take advantage of shopping bargains, but there weren't enough of these to compensate us for frequent four-hour round trips. Watertown was a bit more distinctive, but it was a fur piece down the road, and once you had seen it you had no incentive to go back, even if it was the birthplace of current Secretary of State John Foster Dulles.

Ogdensburg, now that you mention it, was the site of an episode in the War of 1812 that was not altogether glorious for United States arms. The townsfolk mustered a small garrison protected by fortifications. Colonel MacDonnell with a company of Glengarry Highlanders at Prescott across the St. Lawrence drilled his troops every day on the ice, marching just out of range but every so often charging and wheeling before coming too near. The Americans became accustomed to these harmless maneuvers and by some unwritten agreement each side refrained from firing a shot. But on February 22 the

British swung near, executed a sharp charge, and kept on coming. Before the American garrison realized that this was war and no longer a game they were overpowered and the town was captured (Ernest Thompson Seton, *Rolf in the Woods*, Doubleday, New York, 1916; page 340).

Neighborhood jaunts from Ottawa landed you in the forest primeval no matter which direction you headed. If you travelled, you made it an expedition. An exception was Montreal. We regretted that we never explored Montreal, though it was only two hours away. We went there for a performance by the Bolshoi Ballet, and I made a couple of business trips, but we never got to know this unique city. Nor did we get to know the equally unique Quebec City which, being 275 miles from Ottawa, did indeed require an expedition. Ours was to Washington, via Quebec, in July 1958. We crossed the Ottawa River and travelled entirely on the Quebec Province side, bypassing Montreal on the north and corkscrewing on back roads through numerous hamlets whose names begin with Saint. For the most part the countryside was not forested but flat, well watered, and green.

Quebec is a two-tiered tourist attraction. The old town or bottom tier is not so old as the guides would like you to believe. True, the settlement was founded about 1585, but the place has burned down so many times most of the present buildings date from the early 19th century. Well, maybe that's old enough. A small building in the Citadel, the fortress that dominates the high rock overlooking the River, was built in the days of Champlain, but the rest are later additions. The city is reminiscent of France yet unmistakably Canadian. Its fame rests on having been the capital of New France; its capture by the English in 1759 symbolized the fall of the nation, though fighting continued for a year after Quebec was taken. The bluffs rise sheer above the St. Lawrence for hundreds of feet, and as these bluffs line the banks for miles to the south and are protected by the Charles River on the north, the setting forms a natural fortress. Everybody knows how the English under Wolfe found a path up the cliffs, landed at night, and were drawn up in the morning to face Montcalm on the Plains of Abraham. The guides show you a public park designated the Plains of Abraham, but the books say the actual scene of the battle is now covered with houses and shops. But what do you care; you want a plain, you get a plain. We stayed two days in a pension, wandered in and out of shops, and in general filled the role of tourists being tugged around by their kiddie.

We drove through Maine and points south to Boston, duly showed Karen the Old North Church and Old Ironsides, and then paused for two days in New York City. Riekie and I took turns with Karen while the other went shopping. When my turn came, Karen and I hit on a novel (this is a pun) expedient. Karen had been wanting to read a lesser known work of Oz author L. Frank Baum, *Queen Zixi of Ix*, which I had known as a child. We went to the New York Public Library and sat there reading it throughout the afternoon. Queen Zixi, if I recall, was a sort of Dorian Gray, beautiful to everybody except herself when she looked in the mirror.

New York to Chestertown, Maryland, to overnight with Loopy and Constance Larrabee, my former boss in South Africa. Then a week in Washington with Nan and friends,

staying at Kenwood Club because of its swimming pool for Karen. On our return trip we drove through the newly opened Harbor Tunnel that underpasses Baltimore and returned to our somewhat disreputable hotel in Greenwich Village. Constance Stewart Larrabee joined us in time for a Hollywood incident. At the corner of Christopher Street and Seventh Avenue a man began running pell-mell down the street. Two other men hustled after him, and a third pulled a pistol and fired into the air, presumably to frighten the fugitive. The effect was to make him run all the faster, darting across the Avenue and disappearing down a side street with the other two demonstrating the doctrine of hot pursuit. A rumor went around that the runner was an escaped criminal and his pursuers were police, but we never learned the whole story. It happened so fast we all reacted differently: Riekie stood passively, Constance got out of the way; and I crawled under an ashcan to protect the girls. From New York we drove across New Jersey and a corner of Pennsylvania to Corning, home of the makers of Pyrex. We toured the Steuben Glassworks, specialists in hand-crafted artistic glassware. Constance, who is a renowned photographer, had recently completed a photographic assignment for this company and knew many of the people.

Next day to Niagara Falls which, to get full due, must be viewed from both sides of the border. On to Toronto, where Consul General Ivan White, a former boss from Tel Aviv, treated us to lunch at a yacht club. Toronto a world in itself, and as with Montreal I never got to know it. Then back to Ottawa, whence Constance flew on to Quebec City and home, Karen entered the eighth grade, and Riekie and I got out the skis.

Events. John Foster Dulles, who had popped in when I was in Tel Aviv and Manila, stopped by shortly after we arrived in Ottawa. P's and Q's are minded when the Secretary of State calls, and I was glad that I was not remotely concerned with any of the arrangements for squiring him around. On September 4, 1957, National Guardsmen prevented nine black children from entering an all-white high school in Little Rock, Arkansas. After negotiations failed, President Eisenhower ordered Federal troops to escort them and proceed with integration. On October 4, Soviet scientists launched Sputnik I, the first man-made satellite, and on November 3 they followed with Sputnik II carrying the first space passenger, the dog Laika. When the Soviets announced Laika's death on November 10, the unofficial word went around: "Our line is that we are all dog lovers." The United States Army launched Explorer I, the first U.S. earth satellite to go into orbit, on January 31, 1958. Secretary Dulles came back to Ottawa on July 8, this time escorting the President, who addressed a joint session of the Canadian Parliament. An event of that sort makes you happy you are not involved with the cogs and wheels that clank and clash whenever a High Honcho takes a trip. About as many people accompanied the President as we had on the Embassy staff, and they brought a complete set of portable files for which they borrowed several combination-safe cabinets for security during their four-day stay. Napoleon said an army travels on its stomach; a government travels on its papers. On July 14, Arab nationalists in Baghdad assassinated King Faisal II and Premier Nuri es-Said of Iraq, paving the way for one Saddam Hussein who was to become head of state in 1979 and a personage of great interest to the United States in 1991. And in January, 1959, Fulgencio Batista was succeeded in Cuba by Fidel Castro.

Queen Elizabeth also stopped in to address Parliament, and with the Embassy across the street from the gateway to the grounds we members of the staff had a good view of her in the pomp/circumstance carriage. Riekie and I and 20,000 others received invitations to a monster garden party for the Queen, but there were so many people we could not come within 100 yards of the Presence, so Her Majesty never got to meet us. She came back to Canada in April, 1959, for the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway, but we didn't get involved in that. The Soviets hit the moon with Lunik II on September 13, and two days later Nikita Khrushchev started a transcontinental tour of the United States. Lunik III, launched on October 4, circled the moon and radioed to earth photographs of the moons' other side, much to the chagrin of all of us in the Embassy who, of course, wanted the United States to be first.

Our family contribution to history was a trip to Miami Beach in the heat of July. You can sell me anything if you tell me it's a bargain, and when I read in a *New York Times* ad that the Hotel Monte Carlo would give us free beach lounges, a wiener roast, a cha cha lesson, a chance to appear on T V, and two daily meals, all for \$19 a day for the three of us, I could not resist. Miami Beach was deserted in summer, but the hotels found it better to stay open with skimpy staffs and lose a little money than to close altogether and lose a bundle. The first thing the bellboy asked when we climbed out of our new Ford Galaxi was if I had any hot tips on the stock market.

Grapevine. Given that we had been two years in Ottawa as of July, 1959, we tuned our attenae for indications of the future. From soundings made by fellow staffers who visited Washington we heard that we would go on home leave in the autumn and return to post for two more years. I even got informal word that while on leave I would be expected to give at least two public talks, the times, places, and audiences to be chosen in due course. We projected a trip to the west coast and had fixed a starting date of October 12, 1959, when in September came official word. Our home leave was deferred to June, 1960, at which time we would be assigned a tour of duty in Washington. We bought new safety bindings for our skis and settled back for another Canadian winter.

John Foster Dulles had been succeeded as Secretary of State by Christian Herter. Ambassador Merchant had been succeeded by former Congressman William B. Wigglesworth of Massachusetts, and Counselor Tyler Thompson had left to take up his post as Ambassador to Iceland. Illustrating the uncertainty of assignments, in May I received a letter from an FSO stationed in Alexandria, Egypt, who had been told he would be replacing me, but before I could reply I received word that his post had been changed to Stuttgart. And so it went until once again we began getting hints that we would indeed get home leave and transfer to Washington, and we scheduled our departure for July 23, 1960. My new slot would be as economic officer in Southwest Pacific Affairs, Far Eastern Bureau. The orders actually arrived on June 25, 1960.

At a dinner a British air attache asked my views on the pending United States election. In a ten-minute speech I predicted that John F. Kennedy would not get the Democratic nomination unless he won it on the second or third ballot, that Lyndon Johnson would

work overtime to block Kennedy but would be incapable of getting the nomination himself, and that the Democrats would probably nominate Symington not because anybody was enthusiastic about him but because nobody was terribly opposed to him. I concluded that the election would be won by Republican Nixon, although there would be a close fight. As you know, this forecast was somewhat wide of the mark. I have to say I have not always been correct in my political predictions; for instance, I voted for Dewey.

We did our bit at the Ambassador's 4th of July lawn party, attended by an estimated 1,400 people. Riekie arranged gobs of flowers, and I headed a posse to keep guests moving at the end of the reception line, because if you didn't prod them they herded and blocked traffic. After a time, rain helped out. During my final weeks I continued with my usual assignments, turning out a quarterly assessment the week of July 11th and a quarterly "Resume" the week after. The successor to my job was Robert E. White, a young officer already on post. In after years he was to become a controversial ambassador to a Central American country and to argue strongly and publicly about U.S. policy. During our final three weeks we attended numerous social events given by friends in our honor.

With departure fixed for Saturday, July 23, I stayed at home Thursday to supervise the packers and get our things together. At 11:45 Counsellor Rufus Smith phoned to ask if I knew there was a presentation for me. To my astonishment, dismay, and at the same time mirth, I learned that the Embassy staff and the Ambassador had assembled to do me honor but nobody had thought to tell me about it. Five more Embassy people phoned me after Rufus, but it was a bit late by then.

The following day I wrote three short despatches to impress everybody with my industry and then turned up for the presentation, which Ambassador Wigglesworth had good-naturedly re-scheduled. I made a nonsensical speech, saying that standing up one's ambassador was not the way to get ahead in the Foreign Service and pretending to find that the silver-plated bowl was engraved "Made in Communist China". I'm sure Rufus was not pleased that I had been absent the previous day, but I think he acknowledged the blame did not lie at my door. And at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, July 23, 1960, we piled into the Galaxi and headed west on home leave.

Chapter 21  
Home Leave  
(August 1960)

"From sea to shining sea."

Four of us rolled westward, Riekie, Ed, Karen, and Karen's 12-year-old friend, Connie. In two days we were in Detroit and made like tourists at Greenfield Village and then at the Ford Rotunda, whence a bus carried us to the River Rouge plant. I noted that the insignia of the bus manufacturer had been obliterated. Since Ford does not make buses, one suspects that the bus was made by General Motors, a fact that Ford would be reluctant to advertise. Final assembly lines for cars were not working, but we did go through the steel mill with lots of sparks appopping.

Via Toledo to Columbus, Ohio, to visit Charles Moszczinski from my Warsaw days. Married to a political scientist named Ruth, he had anglicized his name to Morley, become a professor of Slavic history at Ohio State, and published *Portrait of America*, a collection of letters by the Polish 1905 Nobel prize winning novelist Henryk Sienkiewicz. The turn indicators on the Galaxi quit working, but a garage repaired them for 10 cents; it should happen to me again.

A day later we were in Chicago visting Ed and Trish Johnson from Manila. Ed had joined a management efficiency firm, improvers of corporation practices, and a few years later had formed his own company. The Johnsons' flat looked over Lake Michigan, and sandwiched among the apartment buildings was a tiny tennis club at which we had a game in memory of Manila Polo Club days. Ed had obtained tickets to the Republican Convention, and I suppose we should have used them, but we preferred to talk about old times. Nixon and Henry Cabot Lodge were nominated.

Waverley, Iowa; Mitchell, South Dakota, and the Corn Palace with murals made from ears of corn; Custer, South Dakota. We took side excursions to glimpse the Badlands and Mt. Rushmore. Fly Speck Billy hangs in effigy in front of a Custer curio shop. Abe Somebody gave Billy a ride, Billy became incensed and plugged poor Abe with his sixgun. A mob snatched Billy from the sheriff and hanged him to a tree, and now Fly Speck Billy lives in history. Surely there are easier ways to achieve fame. Through Wind Cave which, unlike most, has no stalactites/stalagmites. Northward to Spearfish, South Dakota, and my first experience with a coin-operated laundromat. I was fixing to pour the soap powder when a lady stopped me. "You look like you need help," said she. "That's the drier." Devil's Tower in northeast Wyoming. This monstrous freak thrilled us to pieces, and we also enjoyed a colony of prairie dogs that had settled at its base. Sheridan and Buffalo, and a loop south of the Big Horns into Worland.

From Cody a beautiful drive through the Shoshone Canyon into Yellowstone, and we counted 23 bears before we reached Old Faithful Camp, where we had reserved two cabins. The geyser put on a good show. It was August 3rd, but Riekie and I were shivering at night until the two 12-year-olds came over from their cabin and showed us

how to light the fire. In the morning, Castle Geyser performed so gloriously that other geysers and hot springs were anti-climaxes. The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone revived us. We joined a horseback group with genuine cowboys; I lectured the two girls on the safe way to ride and promptly fell off. I don't know what I did wrong, maybe the beast swerved or leaped, but I hit the ground emphatically, and a nearby cowbody was totally disgusted with me. I escaped with bruises.

I got the fire started at 4:30 a.m. and by 6:00 the kettle still had not boiled. Karen had to bring us boiling water for tea from the kids' cottage next door. Okay, okay, I may not be an outdoors type, but I can mix a mean Shirley Temple. South to Grand Teton or rather Jackson. Nobody in our bunch except me was impressed, but they did not have memories from 1935 of riding into the mountains and climbing on the glacier. We crossed easily into Idaho and overnighted at Burley, the other side of Pocatello. Boise about noon on the morrow, and I was amazed that, viewed from the desert, it was reminiscent of Damascus. An oasis of green trees surrounded by scorching hills, lacking only palm trees and minarets. I wonder if anybody else has a similar impression of Boise, a comfortable town, all houses with a bit of lawn fore and aft and reasonable mortgages.

Continuing to fantasize, the gnarled mountains of eastern Oregon put me in mind of the Great Wall of China, which I have never seen. We chugged along to La Grande, and I bought a magazine. A cartoon: A chap exhibits his diary and says: "I'll bet my life would make a best-selling sedative." From Pendleton to the Columbia River we snaked through seared hills planted to wheat; one surmises irrigation. Eating a picnic lunch in Pasco, Riekie did not note a lawn sprinkler and was drenched. Our destination was Richland, Washington, to spend a few hours with Lucille Proulx, now Mrs. West Matthis, who had worked with me in Pretoria. She married an engineer with the atomic energy installation, concerned not with plutonium but with flow of water through the reactors.

Through fields of hops, sugar beet, and asparagus back to the Columbia, which we crossed by ferry. On to Portland while Mounts Rainier, Adams, and Hood looked down. Or do I mean St. Helens, the volcano that was to raise hell some years later. The roads in Oregon and northern California were two-laned, and for much of the way to Redding we followed trucks single file in long queues, unable to appreciate the lovely timbered hills or even Mt. Shasta, especially with the temperature approaching 100. The following day came throughways, and we were in a San Francisco motel by 2:00. I bought a haircut for \$2.00, a fearful price. You would have thought that after Manila and Hong Kong we would have had our fill, but to my surprise Riekie was keen on going through Chinatown. Next day I saw a movie of *Don Giovanni* with Cesare Siepi while the family went shopping. Evening-wise we went to the Top of the Mark, which I had assumed was a restaurant but turned out to be a reasonably priced bar. We had an admirable view of the fog.

San Francisco's coolth held when we rolled down the peninsula and turned off at Palo Alto to see the chapel of Stanford University. We also toured Monterey, but had to pay so much attention to painted lines and directional signs we saw little of it. The historical attraction that I knew in 1934 has become a traffic jam, and if you want to see the house

where Robert Louis Stevenson lived you'll have to take a tour bus. Carmel, where we lunched, had turned into a mish-mash of shops and tourist traps. We continued to San Luis Obispo and tried a local Beaujolais at dinner. It tasted like a local Beaujolais. Santa Barbara had changed from a haven for the well-to-do to a bustling middle-class community. We pushed on to Wes and Liz Carlson in their house at Van Nuys. After serving in Godthaab and Bern, Wes quit the Service to found his own business, an outfit centralizing home maintenance in one company. You signed up for a small fee, and when you wanted a plumber, electrician, contractor, or roofer, you called Wes and were guaranteed prompt service all days, all hours. From lean beginnings, Wes built the business into a clientele that came to include many Beverley Hills movie stars. He told us a story. Two goats were turned loose in a field belonging to a movie producer. One found and ate an old film. "Did you enjoy it?" asked the second. "Yes," said the first, "but not as much as the book."

Wes drove us to east Los Angeles to visit Fred and Laurie Bush, also from Bern, in their 3 1/2 acre "ranch," boasting two horses, a cat, three dogs, and a cow named Cyrano. Son Freddie, a playmate of Karen's in Bern, took the girls up behind him on a horse, making macho at age 12. In later years Freddie graduated from Annapolis, opted for the Air Force, and followed in his father's footsteps as air attache in European posts. We all stood in the night to watch the star-like spark of Echo I, a balloon satellite that had been orbited a few days earlier.

We visited Disneyland twice, the first with the two girls, the second with our nephews after Connie had gone off to stay with relatives. Pat and Robby were a bit younger than Karen, but everybody got along, the more so since we handed them books of tickets and told them they could select any rides or shows they liked. Disneyland was the best maintained and least garish of any amusement park in my experience, a far cry from Coney Island. And having reached the Pacific, we turned about in two days and headed back whence we had come, toward the Atlantic.

We drove a bit out of our way to visit Jack Ballew in Ridgecrest. While serving as Labor Attache in Ottawa Jack was so racked by arthritis that he retired to the hot, dry desert. We found him improved in spirits and down to eight aspirins a day instead of fifteen. Wickenburg, Arizona; the Salt River whose canyon on a small scale vies with Grand Canyon; Socorro, New Mexico; Aspermont, Texas; and around Fort Worth into Dallas.

We did not overnight but spent a few hours gawking at prices in Neiman Marcus before rolling on to Greenville, Texas, and next day to Newport, Arkansas. It depends on how you phrase it. If we say we covered 361 miles the following day it doesn't sound impressive, but if we put it that we drove more than 100 miles in Arkansas, crossed a corner of Missouri, angled across Illinois and penetrated into Indiana, it sounds as if we're trying for the Guinness Book of Records. Bryan, Ohio; and I phoned Larry Diehl in Ottawa to make sure he and Lou were still willing to put us up while we returned Connie to her parents. We reached the Canadian capital on August 28th, picked up mail and baggage, said good-bye to several folks who dropped in at the Diehls', and were on the road to Washington early the following day. July 23 to August 28, a rewarding sampling

of America on our home leave. Oh, yes, a year earlier the Department had indicated I would be making speeches while on home leave. Whoever it was in Personnel who dreamed that up must have been fired. Nothing was said about speeches when the orders to take home leave were actually issued.

Chapter 22  
Washington  
(September 1960-September 1964)

"What you want [in Washington] is to have a city which every one who comes from Maine, Texas, Florida, Arkansas, or Oregon can admire as being something finer and more beautiful than he had ever dreamed of before;...."

- James Bryce, *The Nation's Capital*

Job. We occupied our house, and I began work in the Department of State, in mid-September 1960. I was assigned to Far Eastern Affairs Division (FE) under Assistant Secretary of State J. Graham Parsons, the former ambassador whose name was closely linked with the early days of the United States involvement in Laos. A year or so after I arrived, he took another ambassadorial assignment and was succeeded by Walter McConaghy who, as we shall see, was succeeded by W. Averill Harriman.

My slot was in Southwest Pacific Affairs (Philippines, Indonesia, Malaya, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Polynesia-Melanesia). John Gordon Mein, its former head, had just left for his new posting as Minister-Counsellor at Manila. This gentlemanly officer was fated in future years to become minister to Guatemala and there be assassinated. Although addressed as Jim, never Doctor, James Dunbar Bell, the head of Southwest Pacific Affairs, held a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. After several temporary Government stints he became an FSO in 1947 and served almost exclusively in the Far East. He was to wind up his career as ambassador to Kuala Lumpur.

My immediate boss was Francis (Frank) G. Jarvis, a GS-15 civil servant who had somehow not been affected by "wristonization" and had not been mustered into the Foreign Service. Although he had a law degree from Fordham University, Frank worked hard at conveying the impression that he was totally untutored, with Yogi Berra his speech model. In tactics, he resembled an A-bomb pushing its way out of the Pacific. His position was listed as international economist, but he was actually in charge of all economic matters for the section, under the overall supervision of Jim Bell. Southwest Pacific Affairs consisted of "desks," with political officers in charge of the Philippine desk, Malaya-Indonesia desk, and so on. The desk officer was responsible for matters concerning his particular countries, except that where the matter was economic he had to consult Frank Jarvis. Some of the political officers chafed under this arrangement, others welcomed Frank's shrewdness and experience.

My bailiwick comprised Indonesia and Malaya (later to become Malaysia when parts of Borneo joined Malaya), but on occasion I would fill in elsewhere when other economic officers were absent. I boned up on tin, rubber, oil, spices, and coconuts, and I learned the difference between a dato and a tunku. Under Frank's direction, I compiled statistics and wrote papers on diverse economic matters ranging in length from one paragraph to several pages. The desk is the lowest policy level in the Department. If a desk officer wants to grant aid to Indonesia to increase the output of durians, all he has to do is

persuade his boss, his section chief, his division chief, his Assistant Secretary, the aid people, the international affairs (United Nations) people, and the Secretary of State, with due allowance for input from the anti-durian people, and after he has convinced all these persons maybe a Department spokesman will take the matter up with Congress.

I was to spend approximately four years in Washington during which my career was to climb to Everest and start down the slope to Death Valley. During the early months I did some things right and won the approval of Frank Jarvis, the supervisor who had to write my efficiency report. Later on, I did some things not so right and got pointed in the wrong direction. I enjoyed my time in Washington, but with the advantages of hindsight I wish I had it to do over.

As an instance of how you can do things wrong but maybe retrieve yourself, shortly after I began work I took a phone call from Stefanie Matthews, the lady in charge of administration. She noted that an officer was needed to coordinate the annual United Way drive, and she suggested that I was admirably qualified. I replied huffily that I was newly arrived and she ought to try somebody else. Oh, dear, said she, she just didn't know what to do, so she would have to bring the matter to the attention of Jim Bell. After I hung up, it did not take much reflection to realize that I was doing myself no good. I rang back and agreed that I was indeed the man to handle the United Way. Damned good thing. A few months later, Stefanie Matthews and Jim Bell were married. A great lady; Riekie and Stefanie found each other *sympathique* at social gatherings, and although they did not see each other often they got on well.

One element new to me was input from the Agency for International Development, or International Cooperation Administration as it was called at that time. There had been aid missions at posts abroad, but I had never had anything to do with them apart from social affairs. In Washington, economic policy was tangled with aid policy, and I found myself sitting in on conferences with aid people trying to comprehend a distinctive jargon which itself was in course of revision. In 1960 Walt W. Rostow, a professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, published *The Stages of Economic Growth*, hailed by *The Economist* as a significant contribution to economic theory. Rostow wrote that it is possible to break down the story of each national economy into a set of stages of growth, the third of which he styled the take-off or interval when resistances to steady growth are overcome and forces making for economic progress expand and come to dominate the society. A watchword was hatched, and rare was the government paper on economic development in the next two years that did not mention take-off. Just one additional increment of aid, and Ruritania will be ready for take-off. In due course Rostow was to join the Department of State and wield considerable influence for awhile.

Talcott Seelye, later ambassador to Syria, and Howard Furnas, a special assistant in the Department, drafted me as a last-moment replacement to make up a fourth in tennis doubles, with Rostow as my partner. I might have made my fortune, but the circumstances were awkward. Talcott and Howard were training as a team for a tournament, and Rostow and I were unfamiliar with each other's games. After we lost the first set, I should have insisted on a change of partners and so should he, but for

politeness' sake we continued and got creamed a second set. Whatever impression I made was not favorable, and I was not invited again.

Working in the Department was like working in any other Government agency except that one's outside contacts were with the diplomatic community. The hours were supposed to be nine to five, but in any position of responsibility the hours are irregular, and this was particularly true of State where hours in Washington had to be matched with hours overseas. On a rotating basis, you also had to serve as duty officer on weekends. Additional to that, there was a full social schedule with the countries to which you were assigned, plus which you caught up with friends from home and abroad. In our case, a number of Canadians we had known in Ottawa who were now serving in Washington kindly included us in their invitations. Our days were full.

Grind. Ordinarily I am not a diary person. From time to time I have tried writing a diary and have always given up. From September, 1960, to April, 1962, however, I did keep one, and as it recounts our rounds more graphically than any summary, I resort to some extracts. For the most part I leave out names because personnel changed so often the list would be confusing.

September, 1960. My first experience at getting clearances on a telegram. I called one fellow at least six times. The Malaya desk officer took me along to the airport to meet the Malayan Minister of Finance and several officers of the Malayan Embassy. At home, the plumbers came to check the leak that has moistened the ceiling over our stairs and told us the repairs would cost \$200. Karen, seeking companions, joined the youth group at the Presbyterian Church but soon lost interest. I completed my mandatory physical exam satisfactorily except that there was too much wax in my ears. Went to several meetings of top officials with Jarvis to meet people and get an idea of how the wheels go around. I attended a rally for the United Givers Fund at which Secretary of the Treasury Dillon spoke and lots of brass, such as Loy Henderson, was on stage. Called the D.C. Bureau of Motor Vehicles and was horrified at news I must pay 2 percent of purchase price of car as excise tax in addition to registration fee. Three men from Reynolds Metals stopped in for information about Indonesia. I was impressed with the way Jarvis talked their language. Jarvis stumbled and fell while coming through the office door, put a gash over his eyebrow, broke his glasses, and hurt his gimpy leg. No broken bones, but he was carried out on a stretcher. I attended a reception at the Indonesian Embassy for General Nasution, who had come to the States along with President Sukarno to attend some sort of shindig at the United Nations. The Indonesian Embassy is the carbarn-like mansion on Massachusetts Avenue off Dupont Circle that was formerly the residence of Evelyn Walsh McLean.

October, 1960. Riekie had been ordered to Baltimore for cauterization of an inflamed cervix but went instead to a local doctor who gave her treatment and said cauterization might not be necessary. I tried driving to work for the first time and straightway got into a rhubarb with the garage. All I wanted was a monthly rate, but why should they rent by the month if they can get more by the day? I shall try leaving the car in the great open lot near the River, where the old Heurich's brewery used to be. [N.B.: In later years this lot

became the site of the Watergate apartments complex and the Kennedy Center.] Frank Jarvis phoned he cannot walk well, and for a time I had the thrill of running the economic detail single-handed. Not for long, as Jim Bell promptly assigned Lyle Lane to handle Philippine, Australian, and New Zealand economic matters. [In after years, when a mission was set up in the Swiss Embassy in Havana to negotiate with Fidel Castro, Lyle Lane was chosen to head it.] At lunchtime I waited forever in line at the Bureau of Motor Vehicles to get license plates for the Ford Galaxie we brought from Canada, but there was a reward; because it was a used car, I did not have to pay excise tax after all. A pleasure to drive home at the end of day as the fords are open and one can go through Rock Creek Park all the way. [In later years, a tunnel was drilled through a ridge, and the fords were bypassed.] Four of us drafted a telegram on rice and by the end of the third day had almost cleared it. It is amazing that anything ever gets done given that Washington agencies seem to work on the requirement of unanimity. There is a thing called the Interagency Staff Committee on Disposal of Surplus Agricultural Products, and by the time you have extruded a telegram through that bunch you have done more campaigning than Nixon. I left at 6:00 and felt guilty at staying only an hour overtime. Was the Government more efficient in the era when there were fewer exchanges of views because there were no telephones?

Karen frequently on the phone to a boy named Joe who goes to Sullivan Prep, a school in the Kalorama Road sector that trains for the Service academies. She met him at Republican headquarters which she and a girl friend wandered into out of curiosity; if he had been a Democrat he would have done just as well. To my amazement, I received a check for the full amount claimed on my travel voucher, the first time I had ever gotten through without something disallowed. Also, I was told that my job had been classified as GS-14, a civil service rating. Frank Jarvis out two weeks, and I stood duty for him on a Sunday. Good experience; I learned some more about how wheels spin. The Pirates won the World Series over the Yankees four games to three, with the final game a 10 to 9 squeaker.

Carl Boehringer, my former boss in Manila who now heads Career Development Division, suggested that I come and have my career developed. Karen invited her boyfriend Joe to a party at someone's house, and I drove them and three others to the affair. She phoned that it was too juvenile, and I fetched them to our playroom basement which in days to come was to know numerous festive occasions. One cannot anticipate the young. Joe came over the following Saturday and spent the afternoon doing crossword puzzles although the balmy day cried for them to go outdoors. Karen went with Caribel to seven sorority rush parties at Woodrow Wilson High. Caribel's mother drove them to the first four, and I drove them to the remainder. The day started as an adventure, but Karen was tired and bored by its end. At work, we began the day by learning that the Indonesians had accepted the 56.25 rate of exchange at which rupiah should be deposited under P. L. 480; we ended by learning they had numerous other demands. We started a telegram on P. L. 480 rice for Indonesia on a Monday. On Tuesday we canvassed people, on Wednesday we got them around a table, on Thursday we got the draft to a meeting of the Inter-agency Staff Committee, and on Friday we would have sent it off if it had not come under the purview of circular-number-umpte

and had to be initialled by an assistant secretary. It went out on the Saturday. I was called on to be an examiner of a chap seeking a reserve appointment. It was a sort of dress rehearsal, conducted with the applicant's consent on the understanding that we examiners had no authority to make recommendations one way or another. The scene was reminiscent of the day in 1949 when I sat before the Board of Foreign Service examiners. On this occasion, since I was drafted as a judge at the last moment and had to extemporize, I was more nervous than the candidate. Personnel cancelled my GS-14 rating with no more explanation than when it had given it to me, and I went back to being FSO-4. From the book club we received a collection of short selections by Kafka titled *The Great Wall of China*. I suppose I am absorbing culture by reading this stuff, but I confess it does not amount to much in my stable of writers. Because his father never accepted him, Kafka felt repressed and wrote all his works from a cringing posture. That's my judgment, after reading twenty pages. Karen in the dumps because she received an invitation to only one sorority tea whereas her friends received three or four. A phone call from Joe brightened her up. She went to church to help with trick-or-treat for UNICEF; I don't think she knows what UNICEF is, but is that important?

November, 1960. Two events early in the month. For weeks I have been wondering when my pay would shift from Ottawa to Washington, and I've been dreading the gap that will occur between paychecks. The gap turned out to be the minimum three weeks, and now I can count on regularly receiving my pay. A perhaps more important event occurred on November 8. I was not bitterly disappointed when Kennedy won, but I would have preferred Nixon; I thought the newspaper hype about Kennedy winning the debates was newspaper hype. I think spending will be more free under Kennedy, and that means deficits and inflation and perhaps a flight from the dollar abroad and almost certainly higher taxes. Moreover, having just seen how complicated P. L. 480 can be, I have misgivings about the farm bill Kennedy proposed during the campaign. Will Kennedy be able to do something about Hoffa beside make headlines now that he is President? The scant margin of popular vote points up a flaw in the electoral college system. In a democracy, the candidate who gets the most votes should win. There is talk of changing the system, but I doubt that anything will come of it.

Karen was escorted to a dance by Joe and seemed to have an enjoyable evening. She bought high heels in advance and spent days practicing so she wouldn't fall on her face. She tends to be critical of Joe for pinching pennies, and I think they will tire of each other soon. But a few days later Joe took Karen to a movie, and she was startled when he ordered a taxi both ways. At home I raked the oak leaves into the gutter and burned them, a practice that was soon to be forbidden by the City fathers. Jarvis gave me advance notice that Southwest Pacific Affairs is to be reorganized. He will become a second (with Arthur Emmons) deputy to Jim Bell and we economic officers will no longer report to him but will report to the political desks. The date for the move is not yet determined.

December, 1960. A go-around with the ICA boys has left a bitter taste. It stemmed from private U.S. companies' attempts to conclude contracts with the Indonesians for construction of a fertilizer plant. We received a telegram commenting on the matter from our Embassy in Djakarta, and desk officer Lindquist and I had lunch with Indonesians

from their Washington embassy to talk about it. Afterward we wrote a telegram to inform Embassy Djakarta about our conversation, and as a matter of routine cleared it with ICA, or tried to. A week elapsed despite phone calls, and finally I was invited to talk with a concerned ICA official. To my astonishment, I found myself debating with seven, yes seven, ICA types, but I still treated it as a friendly gathering and freely stated my views. Jarvis warned me later that they had their knives out for me, but I pooh-poohed until I was called on the carpet by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Avery Peterson who had been phoned by an ICA section chief. It all ended happily because the Indonesians concluded the contract, but I hope I learned a lesson, to wit, that the ICA boys can be rough.

To a Far East luncheon to hear Gerhard Colm, the economist, give a talk. Dullsville. Some people can write but not speak. A great deal of trouble with a sty that developed into a cyst. I was all but unable to read. Karen held a party in our rec room for her Sullivan Prep crowd. We gave her a pair of bongos in advance of Christmas that took a bash of pounding. On December 12 the Government all but shut down because of a snowfall that built up to eight inches. The District of Columbia is paralyzed by snow, but paralyzed in orderly fashion. Every hour or so the radio announces that there is an Advisory or that Emergency Plan No. 2 has been superseded by Plan No. 4, and since you have no idea what either Plan is, you sit tight and hope you are doing the right thing. The situation is complicated by announcements that Arlington County is following Scheme No. 3, Montgomery County No. 1, and Beltsville Plan White, so that you are snowed under by regulations as much as by weather.

We renegotiated our mortgage with Perpetual Savings and Loan in order to reduce our monthly payments by \$30.00. I did not realize that in doing this I was increasing the rate of interest from 5% to 5 3/4%. Moreover, in a few years tax rates were revised, and our monthly payment was back at its old level. At a party one evening I talked to the manager of a small loan company. He remarked as a matter of course that for some unsecured small loans the interest rate can run as high as 66% per year. Bob Lindquist, who will be my nominal boss if the plan to attach economic officers to political desks goes through, loaned me a thriller located in Indonesia, *Passage of Arms*, by Eric Ambler. I thought it one of the best of this genre I have ever read, and still do on re-reading it thirty years later, but Bob Barnett, who replaced Deputy Assistant Secretary Avery Peterson, gave it low marks.

A man who was celebrating his twenty-fifth wedding anniversary was congratulated by a friend. "Don't congratulate me," said the man. "I hate my wife." "Why, that's a terrible thing to say on your twenty-fifth anniversary!" "Listen," said the man, "I hated her so much that when we had been married five years I wanted to shoot her, but I was warned, don't do it, they'll give you twenty years. Just think, if I had gone ahead and shot her, today I'd be free."

Karen conducted a campaign to snag a boy for a pre-New Year's dance at the Club. Apparently unable to lasso anyone from her school or church, she went with Caribel and Benay to a dance at a CYO group. The dance was a frost, but Caribel--who apparently

maintains a stable of boys--called up an old faithful named Sullivan and promptly discarded him after he dutifully came to rescue her. Karen allowed herself to be driven home by this young man (it would perhaps be an overstatement to say she put handcuffs on him) and then contrived through Caribel not only for him to escort her to the dance at the Club but to bring a friend for Benay. Caribel could be so selfless because she was visiting in New York over New Year's and had no need of either young man herself. The dance came off last night, and Karen opened her eyes long enough this morning to tell us that all hands had a wonderful time.

In the office, the brass started drawing up charts of office space and talking about knocking out walls in connection with the upcoming reorganization, but no date was fixed. Present plans call for me to remain physically where I am though reporting to a new boss. The one thing unclear that concerns me is who is to write my efficiency report.

January, 1961. On New Year's Eve we attended a dinner party but were back home to see 1961 in. Karen and Benay went to their own party, and along about 2:00 a.m. Karen was on the phone wanting to bring the gang over, so the new year celebration went on in our basement. Think what she will do when she's sixteen. The same thing, we hope; we'd a damn sight she'd rather party at home than in some dive. There were many football games over the weekend. One remembers when there was only the Rose Bowl with Roy Riegels running the wrong way (what a claim to fame!), and now there are a dozen. All teams these days use the T-formation. Some smart coach should revive the Notre Dame shift; being different, he would clean up, at least until the others copied him. We looked in at a party given by Assistant Secretary J. Graham Parsons but came away promptly because we figured he would just as soon nobody would linger. The crisis in Laos has been taking up a great deal of top brass time. Out of the blue, somebody routed to me a despatch from Durban on South African production of wattlebark. Anything can happen to you in the Department and frequently does. On January 3 the United States broke diplomatic relations with Cuba after Cuba demanded that we reduce our embassy staff to eleven members, claiming that most of our diplomats were spies.

For some weeks I was concerned with details for an Indonesian "floating fair" that had been dumped on Southwest Pacific Affairs, but my headaches eased when the ship *Tampomas* broke down and called off its voyage to Honolulu. The dancers came by air instead and were welcomed by Cultural Affairs rather than us. On January 11th my morale suffered a blow when the promotion list came out without my name on it. Since I had hoped I would advance this time, I indulged in doubt, self-examination, and speculation about what was in my personnel file. Jarvis appeared shaken by my lack of success but rallied loyally and assured me that if I continued to maintain the same working level he would give me a strong report. I reflected that, if the reorganization goes through, someone else may be writing the report. The reorganization, so runs the rumor, is stalled pending negotiations for more office space.

Karen came up with a yen to join the National Rifle Association, her objective being not marksmanship but companionship, as all her friends are members. She will learn something about shooting in spite of herself, I gather. She has several boys on a string

and has contrived to sever her near-steady relationship with Joe but at the same time keep him available.

President Kennedy was inaugurated on Friday, January 20. The preceding evening snow fell, and I mean fell, and Washington snarled like a bowl of spaghetti. I had the idea I would avoid a jam by taking the road to Chevy Chase alongside Rock Creek. By eight o'clock, having sat under Massachusetts Avenue bridge for an hour, I realized that nobody was going anywhere, abandoned the car, and started walking to Chevy Chase Circle. At the Zoo I picked up a bus but still had to walk a mile from Connecticut Avenue to our house through knee-deep snow. In all, I was five hours getting home, and I had an easy time compared to some.

The inauguration was memorable for the President's speech, much of it devoted to foreign policy and capable of interpretation as signalling change. Personally, I doubted it, notwithstanding Adlai Stevenson's statement to a Senate committee that Red China might be admitted to the United Nations. A week later there was snow again, and the Government dismissed at 1:30. If a little snow can immobilize Washington, how will we make out with a real emergency?

Toward the end of January I had an interview with a member of the career development staff. My file indicated that I was doing everything right except the most important, getting promoted. There were two adverse reports, one from visas back in 1954, the other from an entirely unexpected source. Although this last was so far back in time it had no bearing on present promotion chances, it gave me a start. I had no idea that the particular officer had ever written an efficiency report on me or that he would have given me a low rating. The career staff man said that since the adverse report stood alone, there was a presumption of a personality clash. I met that particular officer on several occasions in after years but took care never to reveal to him that I knew about the report. No point to riling him as some day he might be in a position really to do me harm. Otherwise my record read well, and the career staff man seemed taken aback when some voice on the telephone told him I had ranked just below the 50 percent mark on the last promotion list. No reason or explanation available. So I came away with no particular guidance on how to straighten up and fly right.

February-March, 1961. An eye doctor cut the cyst from my left eyelid, and for several days I went around with an apparent black eye (the South Africans say blue eye). I escorted an ambassador-designate to Kuala Lumpur to various desks in State and Commerce, although I fear I annoyed him more than helped him. Internationally, the topic of the week was the murder of Patrice Lumumba, ostensibly shot while trying to escape from prison. Belgian and United States embassies were attacked in "spontaneous" demonstrations. In Djakarta some Indonesian students damaged an outbuilding at the home of Ambassador Jones, although he was away at the time. The Indonesian Government apologized for the incident and offered amends. Throughout February and March I was busy cranking out papers on diverse topics, some of them having to do with a pending visit by President Sukarno. Before Sukarno arrived, Graham Parsons went off as ambassador to Stockholm and was replaced by Walter McConaughy, who had just

finished a stint as ambassador to Seoul. On March 1 President Kennedy signed an executive order creating the Peace Corps, that curious Government agency that everybody approves of without quite knowing why.

April, 1961. Sukarno arrived, received head of state honors, and departed in 25 hours, putting an end to our labors on briefing papers. Whether or not anyone read them is inconsequential. On April 12 Major Yuri Gagarin of the Soviet Union became the first human space traveler, launching into orbit in a spacecraft called Vostok I and returning safely to earth after one circuit of the globe. Five days later 1,500 Cuban exiles from the United States tried to land at Cuba's Bay of Pigs and were all killed or captured. We in Far Eastern Affairs were not directly involved, but of course there were repercussions throughout the Department, the more so since the Russians kept us dangling with half promises of a cease fire in Laos.

On April 13 Riekie and I drove to New York through sheets of rain and a stretch of snow to meet her sister, Didi, coming in from South Africa. Didi was in good spirits, and we overdid the eager hosts to such an extent that we all but knocked her out, completely ignoring the fact that she had just spent seventeen hours on a plane. We walked her down Fifth Avenue to 34th Street, took her on the Staten Island ferry for a passby look at the Statue of Liberty, fed her a meal at the Brittany restaurant, walked her through Times Square, and took her to see *My Fair Lady*. We followed this with a day of moseying through shops, and then drove her to Washington for her first glimpse of our house.

I read Mattingly's *The Armada* because the Book Club sent it to us, but I could not understand why it became a best seller although I agree it's a competent bit of popularized history. I ordered it for Karen, who is hooked on the Elizabethan period, but she thought it a bore. Karen's social life took a nosedive when Caribel coralled all the boys for a C.A.R. dance and refused to invite any girls, but within a few days Karen was back in the groove and one day she added a new twist, tea for the newsboy. This paid off. In due course, the newsboy took her to a dance at Woodrow Wilson High. On May 4 thirteen "freedom riders" left Washington for New Orleans to test the desegregation of public facilities along the way. President Kennedy eventually called out Federal marshals to protect the riders as interstate travelers.

June-August, 1961. The office was much livened by Jarvis writing my efficiency report in a stealthy secrecy that communicated itself into every corner of the section. Then he took a week off, and I had a happy time running things for Australia and the Philippines in addition to my normal beat. Having no long papers to write, I got by handily and rather enjoyed the responsibility.

I enrolled for an early morning brush-up course in German to start in September, and I was enticed by a circular that said you owed it to yourself to attend a one-week Foreign Service Institute executive course in Front Royal, Virginia. A crisis in oil kept me hopping for awhile, but it subsided with the departure of Sukarno for the conference of non-aligned nations in Belgrade. Jarvis returned from his holiday, and with him back in charge I had to acknowledge that he anticipates angles that escape me and is ahead of the

game at points where I would be caught flat-footed. Another item was the Djakarta bypass road, funding for which was approved after arduous labors by desk officer Bob Lindquist. In the European theater, the Bizerte crisis was succeeded by something more momentous. In August, East Germany closed the border between east and west Berlin to stop the exodus of East Germans, and began erecting a wall between the two sections.

I attended the executive course at Front Royal and found it well-intentioned but questionable. I had understood it to be a must-do endeavor, but there were so few applicants that the organizers had to scabble to fill available spaces. Two of those attending told me they had just come from overseas for home leave and had been informed on arrival that they would be taking the course. We were all housed in a barracks outside the little town, and several attenders devoted much time to importuning the administrative officer for the official car so they could enjoy Front Royal beer joints in the evening. Speakers and facilitators encouraged us to think about hypothetical problems, and I suppose I benefitted but candidly I did not feel more executive minded. I was rather glad that Frank Jarvis sent a message directing me to return two days early because of some sort of crisis.

September-October, 1961. Indonesian Minister of Trade Arifin Harahap visited the United States under Department of State auspices, and this was interpreted to mean he was entitled to have an escort officer. Lindquist decided I should be the guy to accompany the Minister, guide him in American ways, and pay his hotel bills in cash. It did not occur to me to ask if the Indonesians had expressed an opinion on whether or not their Minister should have an escort officer.

The first stop was the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, with the Minister authorized a room at \$35.00 per night for two nights. When I asked for the bill, I found that ministers don't put up with such childishness. The Indonesian Embassy had ordered a suite at \$80 per night for three nights, and Embassy personnel swarmed around the Minister like bees around a buttercup. At that point it occurred to me I was going to be as useful as a teapot in a bar, but I had my orders and I hung on while the Indonesians cheerfully ignored me.

We drove to Baltimore to tour the McCormick spice factory, a major consumer of Indonesian products. When I had visited this as a tourist I had been told politely the factory is not open to the public, but as one of the Minister's crew I started on the top floor and trickled down through the entire operation ending in sealed packages of cloves/pepper/cinnamon/any spice.

Descending from the plane at Idlewild, the Minister and his swarm of Indonesians were met by another swarm from New York offices. Two limousines had been provided by the Department's reception center, but as the Indonesians had provided a string of cars on their own I ended by canceling one limo and riding in solitary splendor in the other to the St. Moritz on Central Park South. As the day wore on and it became evident that the Minister's party was assisted by the Indonesian Consulate, the Indonesian Purchasing Commission, the Indonesian United Nations Mission, and the American-Indonesian Chamber of Commerce, the presence of a State Department escort officer became a farce.

While there was good-natured acceptance of the fact that I was there, in their scheme of things I just didn't matter.

There was some sort of party that evening, but since the hosts did not deliver an invitation to me until ten minutes before it started, I pleaded a prior engagement. I dined alone and bought a ticket to *Irma la Douce* for \$6.90. This musical, like *Never on Sunday*, was built on the theme of a noble-hearted prostitute, played by Elizabeth Seal. When Elizabeth Seal was dancing it was a good show, but otherwise it had little to recommend it. Whatever became of her? She was a star for a season and then disappeared from the boards.

The next day being a Sunday, the Minister's party attended a luncheon given by the Consul General and then went sightseeing in their own cars. My offer of services was happily declined. On Monday all the men set off on a round of business calls while I provided a limousine and escorted Mrs. Harahap, Mrs. Godjali, and Mrs. Aziz on a pre-arranged visit to a school in Forest Hills. This went off well except that an assistant principal tried to give the ladies ham for lunch, unaware they were Muslims. They ended the day at the Museum of Natural History and showed particular interest in exhibits of gems. There was a night club party at the Latin Quarter but again I did not receive an invitation until the last moment and thought it prudent to decline. The party flew off to Europe the next day, and I let the hotel send its bills direct to the Department. Obviously the whole idea of providing an escort officer was ill-conceived. It was the standard package for a single mid-level official and should not have been used for a personage of cabinet rank.

November-December, 1961. Karen developed a deep friendship with Frank, a classmate at Woodrow Wilson, and was receiving calls from him so frequently his parents limited him to two dates per week. In the Department a shakeup at the top replaced Chester Bowles with George Ball as Under Secretary and installed former Governor Averill Harriman as Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs vice Walter McConaghy. The personnel changes extended downward several levels, but in Southwest Pacific Affairs the only effect was a loss of the second officer on the Philippine desk. Meanwhile, the selection boards wound up their business, and once more I began to hope for promotion.

Dag Hammarskjold, Secretary General of the United Nations, was killed in a plane crash in Northern Rhodesia. By military action, India took over Goa and two other Portuguese enclaves. President Sukarno intensified threats to invade West Irian, the Indonesian term for the western half of New Guinea, still administered by The Netherlands. Lindquist worked on this problem for months under special ambassador Ellsworth Bunker; ultimately West Irian did go to Indonesia, and eastern New Guinea became independent Papua. The first two U.S. military units were sent to Vietnam but under orders to fire only if fired on. Among the numerous social affairs that Riekie and I attended was a reception held at Blair House, the only time I have ever been inside this old mansion just off Lafayette Square. In late December Montgomery, Alabama, officials reached a settlement with black groups under which public facilities were desegregated in return for an end to protests and boycotts.

January-February, 1962. Shortly after Christmas I was five days in bed with the 'flu, and Riekie narrowly staved off an attack. Jim Bell, back from three months at United Nations headquarters, also went down, and Arthur Emmons checked into hospital and was found to have diabetes. SPA made its long-anticipated move to the sixth floor and benefitted from increased space. I was given a room of my own overlooking 23d Street, and nominally I was attached to the Indonesian and Malayan desks though I still reported to Jarvis. He was deluged with calls from congressmen about import of United States tobacco into the Philippines, and he had to scrounge stenographic help wherever he could find it. We had a temporary secretary for two weeks and then a permanent who had spent the past three years typing travel orders. This poor girl worked one day, resigned, withdrew her resignation, worked two days, resigned again, withdrew her resignation, worked a week, and resigned once more, this time for final.

How the wheels of progress turn. The secretary/ stenographer was a key player in that era because she (I don't recall any he's) stuffed six carbon copies behind the original document and had to correct each carbon for every typo. And if you wanted to change a sentence or paragraph, she re-typed the entire page. If you wanted multiple copies, she had to type a stencil and run it on a mimeograph machine. The thermofax was just making an appearance, a duplicating machine that turned out copies the color of overdone toast, hence the phrase, "Burn me a copy". It was a far cry from today, when even the chairman of the board picks out memos on his own word processor and the trademark xerox has become a verb.

I record a remarkable feat. An officer (not I) locked up papers one evening and with them inadvertently locked up the card bearing the combinations to five filing cabinets. Ordinarily this card was kept in the safe, but it got mixed with the papers. Despair, and then rescue. Gladys, the temporary who had worked for us two weeks, came by on a sociable call and opened all five cabinets from memory.

In February the United States established the Military Assistance Command in Vietnam, and in March the Pentagon acknowledged that U.S. pilots were flying combat missions. Involvement in Vietnam was intensifying.

The promotion list came out on March 19. Early in the morning Lindquist reported a rumor that Jim Bell and Arthur Emmons had both made FSO-1, and my heart dropped like a plumbob for I figured that if my name were on the list somebody would have phoned me. But when Bob and I came back from lunch there was a *HOORAY!* scribbled on my desk pad by Ballantyne, and then Linehan came in with assurance that he had seen the list. Thus did I achieve FSO-3. A load off my mind. I could not picture myself going overseas as a 47-year-old second secretary, and I had reluctantly contemplated seeking a new connection if I did not make it, although I had been only five years in grade and supposedly could have remained four more before being selected out. I was grateful to Jarvis, for I recognized that the report of my immediate supervisor was of primary importance.

The Desk. I could not know it, but I had reached the peak of my career. The promotion pyramid narrowed sharply between FSO-3 and FSO-2, and the rate of fallout was high. I was to have a shot at upper rank and fail to take advantage of it. For the moment, however, my star seemed to continue up. Jim Bell offered me the Australia-New Zealand-Pacific Islands desk, and of course I was glad to accept. The Pacific Islands sector was the largest geographic consular territory in the world, stretching from Polynesia through Melanesia although not Micronesia. French Polynesia, Western Samoa, Fiji, Tonga, New Caledonia, New Britain, and the New Hebrides were the principal components, serviced by a consular office in Suva, Fiji. At the time, all except Samoa were affiliated in some form with a colonial power, with New Hebrides governed by an English-French Condominium informally known as the Pandemonium.

It was a non-controversial bailiwick. Winds of change were blowing among the Pacific Islands, many of which were to become independent in years to come (Western Samoa separated from New Zealand that very year), but the powers were acquiescing at varying rates of speed and there were no hot-blooded revolutionaries inciting populaces to rebellion. Australia and New Zealand, while proudly national, for the most part saw eye-to-eye with United States policies, and my job was essentially to avoid disturbing good relations. As neither country requested United States economic aid, I no longer had to negotiate with the people in the International Cooperation Administration. On the other hand, there was touchiness about potential United States trespass on what Australia and New Zealand regarded as their markets for wool and butter. Politically, the iffy issue was support for the United States in Vietnam, not so much in the sense of fighting men as in international forums of diplomacy. Inevitably there was some opposition, but the governments of both countries tended to approve of what we were doing. Socially, while Riekie and I still said howdy to Malaysians and Indonesians at receptions, we were no longer on their lists but instead were invited out by people from Down Under.

Much desk officer time was spent on protocol. When a Personage came to visit Washington, the desk officer met him and saw him off as a matter of courtesy, and this had me driving to and from Dulles and Baltimore-Washington airports once a week or more. For Exalted Personages, the desk officer coordinated with Protocol on rolling out the red carpet. Literally. When Prime Ministers Menzies or Holyoake arrived, a length of carpeting was laid from the airplane steps and dignitaries were lined up alongside it in order of precedence as determined by Protocol. The last dignitary in the line was named Thrasher. It was also the desk officer's job to assemble briefing papers on topics that the visitor was expected to want to talk about.

Visitors of high rank came too frequently to record them all. Among them were Arthur Calwell, a leader of the Australian opposition who spent his political career trying to unseat Sir Robert Menzies, Robert Hawke a labor leader regarded as a loose cannon who turned out to be an astute statesman when he came to power years afterward, and Gough Whitlam a brilliant idealist who became prime minister on a wave of euphoria and straightway alienated everyone who had backed him. While he was still in Opposition, Whitlam visited Washington and, among other things, lunched at the Department with Under Secretary George Ball. It was the practice, whenever a visitor met with a policy

official, for the desk officer to sit in and take notes. Not verbatim, but simple longhand notes of the topics that were discussed, and afterward the desk officer would prepare a memorandum as an informal aid to memory. In the case of Whitlam, word came to me that (a) I was invited to join him and Mr. Ball at lunch on the Eighth Floor and (b) I would take notes. Australian Ambassador Sir Howard Beale accompanied Mr. Whitlam, and the four of us sat at the luncheon table with me taking a forkful of mashed potatoes with my left hand and jotting down sentences with my right. Rarely did the desk officer receive any comment on the memos that were prepared. If Mr. Ball disagreed with my summary of the conversation, he did not let me know.

Note-taking got me into the White House. Hildy, Harriman's secretary, phoned that the Governor and a New Zealand official had an appointment with the President and I would take notes. I have forgotten how I achieved entry into the White House, except I am sure I did not ride over from the State Department with Harriman. At any rate, I waited in the room next to the Oval Office notebook in hand, but as we went in Harriman said, "Don't take notes; just remember." Afterward, I prepared a memo from memory. I'm glad I don't have to do it today; I remember only that President Kennedy looked remarkably tanned and fit and that Harriman and the official did all the talking.

Harriman held a reception for a Dignitary, and I was asked to draw up the guest list. Hildy phoned that the Governor wanted to know why I had included a certain individual who, though high in the Government, rarely attended diplomatic events. I explained that, according to the files, the Dignitary had expressly asked to see this individual on his last visit to Washington. The file did not say whether the relationship was official or personal, but I thought it advisable to include the person on the list. Hildy raised questions about several other persons, and for each one I cited information drawn from the files. This performance seemed to make a good impression because a week or so later I myself was invited to lunch at Harriman's house in Georgetown.

Getting there after most of the guests had already arrived, I walked up to an affable-looking gentleman and introduced myself. "How do you do," says he. "I'm Earl Wheeler." Gradually I perceived that the group included the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Commander in Chief Pacific, the son of former Secretary of Defense Forrester, and others of like horsepower along with a number of newspaper men. Maybe it was a chance to make my mark, but I miffed it. I did not ask the Admiral for news of the latest 62-gun frigate but attached myself as a silent listener to a nearby group until lunch was served, sat well below the salt, and enjoyed a fabulous red wine. If Harriman's purpose in inviting me was simply to show me a good time, he did it.

William Battle, a lawyer from Charlottesville and a son of a former Governor of Virginia, was appointed Ambassador to Canberra, and I squired him around the Department prior to his going abroad. This meant giving him papers on issues of moment between the two countries and conducting him from office to office. Mr. Battle was a personal friend of the Kennedy family, and as we stepped out of an elevator he hailed Bobby Kennedy and an aide on some errand within the Department. Mr. Battle introduced me briefly, and then engaged the Attorney General in a five-minute private talk. I stood aside. The two men

parted with the customary, "Take care," and Bobby Kennedy started off down the corridor. Abruptly he remembered that I too was present, and he turned back. "Good-bye, Mr. Thrasher." A simple act of courtesy that has stuck in my memory. If he had been running for office that day, he sure would have had my vote.

Riekie and I and thirty other people were invited to a dinner given by General Curtis LeMay for a New Zealand official having to do with defense. The guests were entertained by the Air Force Singing Sergeants while the General enjoyed an El Producto. A sweet-voiced tenor said he would like to sing us his favorite song, *Danny Boy*, and he did, all three verses. Riekie and I and thirty others were invited by the Number Two Air Force General to a dinner for this same official, and the guests were entertained by the Air Force Singing Sergeants. A sweet-voiced tenor said he would like to sing us his favorite song, *Danny Boy*, and he did, all three verses. Riekie and I and thirty others were invited by the Number Three Air Force General to a dinner for the official, and the guests were entertained by the Air Force Singing Sergeants. A sweet-voiced tenor said he would like to sing us his favorite song, *Danny Boy*, and he did, all three verses. The official went back to New Zealand before I had to shoot the tenor, but to this day I cannot see *Danny Boy* on a program without a shudder. I suspect the New Zealander shares my opinion.

At home, technocracy. Since childhood I had been addicted to phonograph records and had progressed from shellac 78 r.p.m.s to vinyl 45s and 33s, so-called long plays. I bought a new toy, a tape recorder with which I could take symphonic and operatic selections directly from radio broadcasts. For \$2.00, I could buy a blank tape on which I could record three symphonies that ordinarily would cost at least \$6.00. This was the base for an addiction that pursues me to this day. If I haven't got it in my collection, I want it, regardless of whether or not I ever intend to play it back.

In February, 1962, Lt. Col. John Glenn rounded the earth three times in the space capsule Friendship 7, the first American in orbit. Under pressure from the United States three rival Laotian factions agreed to a cease-fire and coalition government, and in July fourteen nations signed a pact in Geneva guaranteeing Lao freedom and neutrality. Regardless, civil war in Laos resumed less than a year later. A special task force on Vietnam was set up, involving input from State, Defense, and other agencies. Although Australia-New Zealand were concerned with the southeast Asia situation, I was never a part of this group nor was I in the line of communications on Vietnam matters. I cannot claim to have been an informed observer of United States policy decisions, but my impression is that it was some time before Washington appreciated we were engaged with an enemy of consequence. It was taken for granted that once the Vietnamese realized we could release our full might, they would knuckle under.

Conference. Among the numerous international organizations I had never heard of was the South Pacific Commission, made up of the United States, Great Britain, France, Australia, and New Zealand. Among the insects of the world I had never heard of was the rhinoceros beetle, so-called not because it is fond of rhinoceri but because it has two horns on its snout. One of the purposes of the South Pacific Commission was to combat

the depredations of the rhinoceros beetle, which is the size of a pack of Camels and likes to bore into the fronds of coconut trees. Representatives of the Commission met once a year at its headquarters in Noumea, New Caledonia, where it maintained a small, modestly budgeted staff working on economic, social, and health matters affecting island territories of the Pacific.

As desk officer, I was nominally in charge of Departmental relations with the Commission, but I paid it little attention because it was a purely advisory body and because Southwest Pacific Affairs included a civil servant, Frances McReynolds Smith, who took care of Commission matters and wrote authoritative articles about it in publications such as *The World Book*.

A meeting of the Commission was due to begin on October 15, 1962. Jim Bell thought it would add to my effectiveness if I were to go along with Frances to the meeting. I guess it was I who thought it would add to my effectiveness if the trip were expanded to include our embassies in Canberra and Wellington. My reasons were that such expansion would acquaint me with the conditions under which our people were working and it would be a pity to come so near to Australia and New Zealand without glimpsing them first hand. For though I was aware that distances in the South Pacific are vast, nevertheless New Caledonia, Australia, and New Zealand look "near" to one another on the map. I have forgotten whether or not Jim Bell was enthusiastic about the idea of extending the trip. In any event, he gave his approval, and I set out on a journey in which I was to do myself little good and much harm.

The Mocambo, about two miles from Nandi Airport in Fiji's island Viti Levu, was a thatch-roofed rambler with a sort of barracks-type luxury, everybody exceedingly bowing and scraping, and bushy-haired busboys wearing what to my eyes were skirts. The trip uneventful. One sits in the jet looking at clouds and scarcely aware one is moving, Los Angeles in four hours, Honolulu in five, and Fiji five more. En route I read Michener's *Hawaii*. It took me less than a day to get there, it took his missionary characters 297. At Nandi I went on a tourist ride but ended with no memories of Fiji other than coconut palms, a mongoose that scuttled across the road, and some boys who drummed on a hollow log to summon people to church. The U.S. Commissioners were three: a businessman from the midwest, an educator from California, and a government worker from Guam. They got no compensation beyond reimbursement of expenses.

The French Transports Aeriens Intercontinentales flew us to New Caledonia. Noumea lies thirty miles from the airport, and we drove through dispiriting country, with little cultivated land. The landscape was dry and given over to a tangle of leathery trees interspersed with scrub pines and banana plants gone to stalk. The road struggled through foothills of a frowning mountain range. I was told that if you cross the range to the north coast, which can be done at only a few points, you come upon tropical rain forest, such as you expect in a South Seas isle. New Caledonia is not noted for coconuts or breadfruit or papayas, though it has them, but for its nickel mines and smelter, which I did not get to see.

The Commission occupied The Pentagon, a five-sided building used by U.S. forces during World War II. Located at Anse Vata Beach, it was two miles from town, but frequent transport was provided by tiny buses, like magnified jeepneys. The Pentagon had seven offshoots or wings in one of which I was housed, a damp tunnel-like structure whose ceiling was peopled by leggy spiders the size of dinner plates. Another wing was an assembly hall, not air-conditioned but louvered to catch breezes, in which the daily meetings were held. The tables were grouped in a large rectangle and behind them sat the delegates buttressed by placards, microphones, and simultaneous translation earsets that permitted each delegate to speak in his own language. Back of the delegates sat the advisors, for us meaning Frances, me, and George Gray, our Consul from Suva. I had expected coat and tie and was unprepared when everybody else turned up in soft shirt and shorts with knee socks. The French were represented by a chap sent from Paris and by the Governor for New Caledonia, with the former doing all the talking. Since he had been limited by Paris to certain bounds, the Frenchman spent a good deal of time saying no and tended to be the person most sought after. The British were represented by the Governor of Fiji, who was known to be retiring in a few months, and by the Governor of New Hebrides, who was known to be designated as the new Governor of Hong Kong. As such, this genial gentleman had the potential to be Extremely Important, and I was taken aback when on the fourth day he invited me to lunch. It was a spur-of-the-moment, last-minute invitation, and I pleaded a previous engagement, but I should have broken it to seize the opportunity. Needless to say, the Governor did not invite me again; governors do not give you a chance to turn them down twice.

We advisors said nothing during the meetings, and I have to admit that I also abstained from the strategy sessions of our delegation. I took the view that Frances knew everything and I knew nothing, and this was just plain stupid. It did no harm to the outcomes of the Conference, but it emphatically did not help my image as officer in charge of South Pacific affairs, and it comes under the heading of I wish I had it to do over again.

Noumea's shops huddled in a cluster around the main square, a dispirited park that yearned for rain. Except for a few recently built structures, the town's buildings were toast-colored boxes in the fashion of the Empress Eugenie. Part of the High Commissioner's mansion was built for a general in the Crimean War and brought to New Caledonia from Russia. Social activities ranged from the populace to the high 'n mighty. On our first morning, George Gray and I bussed into town at dawn in search of a hash joint that would give us a cup of coffee. A yokel directed us to a Chinese shop selling kerosene lamps, jackknives, and evaporated milk, and in the rear of this was a room with benches and tables where we joined Melanesian workers from the docks drinking bowls of cafe-au-lait and eating slabs of bread. After breakfast, we called at several airlines on consular matters. Other times there were a reception by the High Commissioner held in that same mansion imported from the Crimea, parties by the Secretary General and the presiding chairman of the Commission, dinner at the home of an economist from the New Zealand Reserve Bank, and a grand ball at which I got to wear the tuxedo I had been in doubt about packing.

Interspersed with these were unofficial affairs, among them a meal with one of the simultaneous interpreters. This lady sat in a glass booth at the Commission sessions and rendered instantaneous translations from French to English and vice versa. She described it as a spontaneous process. The French words flowed into her ears and the English from her lips. She never answered my real question, but I guess I never asked it, how she managed to translate words that had already been said and at the same instant listen to fresh words in process of being spoken.

One last thing about Noumea, a visit to the aquarium founded at the Baie des Citrons in 1956 by Dr. Rene Catala. This has flourished to become a world-known attraction, but at the time it was struggling for funds. Dr. Catala had contrived to pipe seawater into his tanks to support a representative population of small organisms. A feature was a coral reef that in ordinary light was a cold shellbank but under ultra violet became alive with coral extending themselves to gather lunch. I remember, too, a chambered nautilus, a mollusc that bobbed upright and emitted an occasional burp. A living fossil, the creature has been doing nothing but this for thousands of years and apparently intends to keep on doing it until the Martians invade. Looking at the varied forms of life, one of our Commissioners voiced the universal question: "What is the meaning of it all?"

Down Under. I quitted the Conference on October 22, 1962, leaving Frances and the Commissioners to carry on. At Sydney I was met at the airport by Consul General Larry Vass in person, and this occasioned me some uneasiness. I knew him from Washington and once did him a small favor, but as I remarked: "I am not accustomed to being met in person by Consuls General." Mr. Vass fed me lamb chops at the Royal Yacht Squadron Club, gave me a tour of the Consulate offices, and put me on the plane to Canberra. Ambassador Battle was off on a trip, but the Deputy Chief of Mission lodged me at his home. When I had settled in, there was a quiet gathering with the top officers of the Embassy, and it began to dawn on me that my notion of a casual tour of U.S. posts while I happened to be in the neighborhood was capable of being misconstrued. Before departing Washington, I had notified Embassy heads by cablegram. I had talked to a former DCM from Canberra and had explained that my purpose was simply to get acquainted with local conditions. It did not occur to me that a personal call from the Washington desk could ring alarm bells. Was I Sneaky Pete seeking evidence of malfeasance while masquerading as a friendly tourist? Did I bear a message of note from the Secretary of State? I was accorded amiable hospitality and given VIP treatment, but I was also questioned closely if casually. I attended a staff meeting of section heads and told them I had nothing special to report, I called on several Australians in External Affairs, I was taken to lunch at the Commonwealth Club and to a buffet dinner for several members of Parliament, and at my expressed wish I was accorded a visit to a sheep farm although shearing had been finished and there was little to see. This last, I know now, took some effort to put on, but I did not appreciate that I was being a nuisance at the time. Then came an event of world significance.

President Kennedy's radio address of October 23 was relayed by the Australian Broadcasting Company, and we listened with sober realism to his statement that the United States had photographs of Cuban-Russian missile bases capable of sending

nuclear bombs into U.S. territory. The President imposed a naval blockade and threatened to invade Cuba if the bases were not dismantled. Were we on the brink of nuclear war? In the afternoon I accompanied Embassy officers to the Australian Parliament to hear Prime Minister Menzies make a statement on the President's message.

A day later I flew back to Sydney. I was taken to a yacht club, given a ride that I didn't really want on some rich bloke's twin diesel craft, and then dumped on my own, not that I am complaining because I had far more hospitality than I deserved. I killed time over the weekend and found it a difficult task because all activity in Sydney came to a stop on Sunday. I took the ferry across the Bay and rode a bus for miles without any clue as to what I was looking at. That afternoon I flew to Wellington, four hours in the air if I remember correctly, and was put up at the residence of the Ambassador.

I had some sort of message from Governor Harriman for the Ambassador, but it could just as well have been conveyed by letter. I talked about things in general with the Deputy Chief of Mission and several other officers, and I accepted an invitation to call at the Ministry of External Affairs, a doubtful move because contacts with Foreign Affairs were the Embassy's domain, not mine. I renewed acquaintance with Charles and Moire Cruikshank, formerly of the British High Commission in Ottawa. In many of my activities I was overseen by the Deputy Chief of Mission, a veteran civil servant who had lateralled into the Foreign Service, and I have to confess I definitely did not please this distinguished lady. When I say distinguished, I mean it; she had received several Departmental awards. Grave of mien, she did not cotton to my casual some would say flippant style, and while she did not rebuke me she could not conceal that I did not appeal to her way of doing things. Years later, this lady and I happened to attend a reception, and she deliberately crossed the room rather than speak to me.

When I asked the administrative officer about transportation to Auckland, I was told that the Ambassador was putting his station wagon and chauffeur at my disposal as there were packages to be fetched from our Consulate there. The drive took us through hills of grass and herds of sheep to Rotorua. We arrived too late in the day for a tour of the hot springs, but I sort of sneaked in on foot by myself although I did not dare go too far for fear of getting myself poached. Next day we reached Auckland where I called on our Consul before flying back to Nandi, Fiji, on October 31.

I had proposed driving from Nandi to Suva in the consular van, which made the run once a week. George Gray discouraged me, saying it was an all-day trip over rough roads. I flew in a plane the size of a Cuban cigar and, sitting behind the pilot, had a lesson on how to land. You just point the nose of the plane at the runway and come on down. At Suva I again perceived how my visit was being over-interpreted. George took me to drink kava with working people, introduced me to Ratu Mara who was to be prime minister in days to come, arranged for tea with visiting Prince Tungi of Tonga, and (to my dismay) got me invited to lunch with the British Governor, whom I had met briefly in Noumea. The affair was formal. George unloaded me punctually at Government House, I was escorted by a military aide who joined the Governor and Lady at table, I told the Governor that I had chatted with the new Secretary General of the South Pacific Commission while in

Canberra, and I came away relieved that I had not drunk from the finger bowl. On the morrow I flew in the tiny plane back to Nandi, caught Pan American to Honolulu, and was in Washington on November 6. While I was being the social lion, Krushchev had agreed to withdraw the missiles and dismantle the Cuban bases. The United States ended the naval blockade on November 20, 1962, and everybody started to breathe again.

Funeral. I wrote a memorandum about my trip which maybe somebody read before it got dunked into the files, and I went back to being desk officer. If adverse reports came in from the field about my trip, my antennae did not pick them up. As the months went by there were numerous changes in personnel, beginning with the unexpected death of Arthur Emmons, deputy to Jim Bell, and his replacement by Dave Cuthell. When George McGhee became Ambassador to Germany, Governor Averill Harriman moved up to Under Secretary for Political Affairs. Roger Hilsman took over as Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs and in due course was succeeded by William Bundy. United States involvement in Vietnam increased. This still did not affect my desk directly except that on one occasion I backstopped administrative arrangements for a conference with Australian officials over which Secretary of State Dean Rusk presided. A new ambassador to Wellington was appointed, and in the course of escorting him through orientation I again went to the Oval Office to take notes while the designee talked with President Kennedy.

With Karen in her senior year, we drove to Swarthmore and Barnard for interviews, colleges which she had not the slightest interest in attending. She graduated from Woodrow Wilson High with good but not sensational marks in June, 1963, and entered the University of Maryland at College Park in September. Her friend, Frank, went off to Clemson, and they drifted apart. Since Karen had no career goal, I recommended that she study economics on the ground that she could say almost anything and somebody would agree with it, but she opted for business administration and then switched to arts, whether commercial or fine was not clear. Under Maryland's archaic organization, this fell within the College of Home Economics, and she had to take courses in how to manage a household along with her art studies.

Intensive negotiations were undertaken to conclude a Status of Forces Agreement concerning establishment of a naval post on the west coast of Australia. A team of lawyers from the Pentagon argued with a team of lawyers from State about terms of the Agreement, working day and night, sometimes until 3:00 a.m. One State Department lawyer whose health was precarious died shortly after the agreement was signed. Personally, I found it physically impossible to keep up day-to-day tasks and remain on until the wee hours. Ambassador Battle and the staff at Canberra also worked to exhaustion to get the SOFA concluded.

On August 3, 1963, a 24-hour hot line was set up between Washington and Moscow to facilitate emergency consultation between the heads of governments. This device became the hinge for several fanciful movies. I recall one in which the U.S. President, too late to intercept a nuclear bomb that has been sped toward Moscow, telephones the Soviet premier and agrees to let him wipe out New York City as compensation. The movie

didn't say whether or not that President was re-elected. On August 28 more than 200,000 persons marched for civil rights down Constitution Avenue and to the Lincoln Memorial, where Dr. Martin Luther King addressed the crowd. And then, catastrophe. November 1st the government of South Vietnam was overthrown and President Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother, police chief Ngo Dinh Nhu, were killed. November 22 President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas.

World leaders flew to Washington to attend the funeral. Canberra was represented by the President of the Australian Senate. I drove with him, Ambassador Beale, and a chauffeur in the procession of limousines from the White House to St. Matthews Cathedral on Rhode Island Avenue and waited outside because the church was packed to overflowing. The Duke of Wellington is credited with saying: "The good diplomat takes advantage of every opportunity to urinate." Having time on my hands, I stopped in at the Mayflower Hotel. After the hour-long service, we picked up the Senator and Ambassador and resumed our place in the procession, back to Constitution Avenue, around the Lincoln Memorial and across the bridge to Arlington Cemetery. Having had no chance to void themselves, my two envoys were most uncomfortable, but they stoically rejected my suggestion that we pull out of line and stop at the Department of State. Thus, even this moment of high tragedy, the funeral of a president, was not exempt from low comedy. The gentlemen made it through another hour of ceremony at graveside, but on the return trip to the White House they did let me break ranks and lead them to the Department of State, after which we rejoined the procession.

At the White House I was of two minds. Should I continue to escort my charges or should I wait outside? Having no instruction to the contrary, I entered with them. Afterward, Riekie and several friends told of seeing me on television as we went in. I mingled in a large reception room with Prince Phillip, General de Gaulle, Princess Beatrix, Foreign Minister Couve de Murville, President Macapagal, and others of similar calibre. I did not engage any of these personalities in conversation but hovered behind my Senator in case he should need my assistance (he didn't). I accompanied the Senator and Ambassador as they moved down the reception line where Mrs. Jackie Kennedy accepted condolences. When I left the White House I ran into other desk officers from Southwest Pacific Affairs who had decided to wait outside, and I preened myself for staying the course.

Warning. During the Christmas holiday, Karen made pin money by selling gloves at Franklin Simon, a nearby department store. Her marks during the first semester were high enough to let her accept a bid from Alpha Delta Pi, and she moved from the dormitory to the sorority house. We bought a second-hand Volkswagen Beetle to let her run back and forth. Her sorority won the Greek Olympics by triumphing in two main events, the shotput with a water-filled balloon and the hammerthrow with a wet mop.

In January, 1964, came ratification of the 24th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution decreeing that the right to vote in federal elections should not be denied by failure to pay poll or other tax. In July President Johnson signed the most comprehensive civil rights act in United States history. Riekie and I travelled to Charlottesville to attend a speech at Monticello given by visiting Prime Minister Menzies. In August the United States

bombed North Vietnam in reprisal for an attack on a U.S. destroyer in the Gulf of Tonkin, and Congress passed a resolution empowering the President to take military action in response to aggression against United States forces. A rock group from Great Britain called The Beatles had eight gold records for the year.

In the spring of 1964 I received a "Dear John" letter. Having advanced to FSO-3 only two years earlier I had not expected to see my name on the promotion list, but neither had I expected to receive a warning from the Department that my performance was appraised as less than standard. Given that I had received no criticism from my superiors, I asked Dave Cuthell if he had intended to write a derogatory efficiency report. Dave professed astonishment, said he had tried to be objective but had not considered his report derogatory in any respect. Jim Bell had signed the report too, but he was out of town for some weeks and I never discussed the matter with him. The black mark was in my file, and I knew that at my age and position in the promotion pyramid I was vulnerable to selection out.

The question of whether to remain in Washington another year or return to the field was brought up in informal talks with administrative people. As of August, 1964, I had been in the Department four years. I could have stayed at least one more, but admin hinted that field assignment was a good idea, and I went along. I didn't really weigh pros and cons, but I think I had a notion that if I could become head economic officer in a small embassy I could make enough of a contribution to overcome the adverse report, whereas if I continued being just another desk officer in Washington I would have to do something sensational to get off the hit list.

Throughout my career, I had never tried to influence choice of posts but had always proceeded without comment to wherever I was assigned. Now was the moment to change tactics and make my wishes known, but I made no move to do so. About this time, the slot in Personnel that would be making the recommendation was taken over by Cleo Noel, a classmate in basic course back in 1949. Cleo had held consular posts in Genoa, Dhahran, Marseille, Beirut, and Khartoum, and he was amazed at being assigned to Personnel. He ticketed me to fill a vacancy as Chief, Office of Economic Affairs, in our Embassy at Vientiane, Laos. I talked with him briefly by phone and expressed some disquiet because the slot was not really in the Embassy but with the Agency for International Development (the latest name for what used to be the International Cooperation Administration), but Cleo said reasonably that it seemed an admirable slot for an officer of my training and experience, and I could not say nay, the more so since I had no better suggestion to offer.

With Deputy Chief of Mission George Curtis Moore, Cleo A. Noel, Jr. was to meet a fate reminiscent of the barbaric days when tyrants slew emissaries as a mark of contempt for their governments. Cleo, who had served in the Sudan in 1958 and again in 1967, was appointed Ambassador to Khartoum in 1973. Shortly after arriving, he attended a farewell reception at the Embassy of Saudi Arabia for DCM Moore, who was about to return to the United States after three years en post. Six masked terrorists burst in, seized the two Americans, a Belgian, and two Saudi Arabians, and threatened to kill them unless

western powers released within 24 hours extremists being held in Germany, Arabs held in Jordan and Israel, and Sirhan Sirhan, convicted of murdering Bobby Kennedy. The Saudi Arabian Embassy was surrounded by the Sudanese Army forces, but attempts at negotiation were unsuccessful. On March 2, 1973 the terrorists, identified as members of the Palestine Black September movement, shot Noel, Moore, and Guy Kid, the Charge d'Affaires for Belgium. The slayers were eventually apprehended, but because of political cross-currents they were never brought to trial. Ambassador Noel was permitted to telephone the U.S. Embassy shortly before his death. "Any news?" he asked. "No," answered an Embassy administrative officer. "We have been in touch with people and we are awaiting people." "When will the people arrive?" asked Noel, and he was told, "Later that night." Noel said, "That will be too late," and the line went dead.

Twenty-five U.S. Foreign Service officers were killed while on duty abroad between 1960 and 1973, and numerous others escaped attempts on their lives. A number were personal acquaintances, John Gordon Mein killed in Guatemala, Spike Dubs in Afghanistan, Cleo Noel in the Sudan. Consul Temple Wanamaker was shot and seriously wounded while in Cordoba, Argentina; Ambassador Arthur Richards escaped invaders of our Embassy in Addis Ababa by hopping out a window; DCM Chris Chapman dodged a gunman in Paris; Ambassador C. Burke Elbrick was kidnapped while in Rio di Janeiro. Yet there are those who declare that life in the diplomatic corps knows nothing but cookies and striped pants (News Release, Office of Media Services, Department of State, March 1973. Department of State *Newsletter* March 1973. *The Washington Post*, March 3 and 4, 1973.).

Assignment. To return to 1964, I sought to find out by inquiries among AID administrators just what the job of Chief, Office of Economic Affairs, in Embassy Vientiane entailed but was able to glean little concrete information. The Director of the AID mission had the title of Economic Counselor, and the AID mission served as the Embassy's economic section. I was assured that the Office of Economic Affairs was a busy outfit, but although I learned that it numbered 21 staffers I had trouble pinpointing just what they did. They prepared economic and statistical papers, they obtained information on the Lao economy, and they served vaguely as a staff arm to the Director, but that was all I could find out. There were contingents that seemed beyond explanation, a detachment from the U.S. Bureau of Customs, a group of Program officers, a chap without commercial background charged with commercial reporting. My state of mind was not eased when I found out that Bill Thomas, the man I was succeeding, was a Chinese language officer who had taught himself Lao and had had years of Far East experience. These, I thought, were large shoes to fill.

Charles Mann, the Director of the AID mission, happened to be in town, and I made a point of getting together with him. He accepted an invitation to our house and had a drink while sitting on the front porch with Riekie and me. I tried to tell him that I was puzzled as to just what was expected, and he said little more than that I would learn on the job. Mann, I think, was leery of State Department officers as a group, but the tables of organization showed that the position was customarily filled by an FSO, and he was stuck with me as I was with him. We saw Director Mann on two other occasions in

Washington, but I established no rapport.

By mid-August I had stilled my agitation and decided to enjoy the assignment though it might lead to selection out. I learned enough about airline schedules and expenses to decide on traveling the Pacific route (we could have gone the other way around) and to travel via Honolulu rather than direct to Japan. I obtained information about transportation and storage of effects, and I persuaded administration that we had the right to ship our car although it was made in Canada. I became agitated when an AID administrator told me we would lose half our household effects weight allowance and our diplomatic passports because assigned to AID, but a talk with State admin people got this back on track. I began paying closer attention to news about Laos and learned that Prince Souvanna Phouma and the red Prince Souphanavong agreed to meet in Paris on August 24, 1964. I made arrangements with a real estate agent to rent out our house. I was permitted to read the current efficiency report on me prepared by Dave Cuthell and was content. I was less than content, however, with the review of the report by Marshall Green, who had succeeded to the post of Assistant Secretary, and accordingly I called on him, stated the reasons for my unhappiness, and asked him to re-read and perhaps rewrite what he had stated. He acceded, and I went away feeling I could do no more. Riekie, Karen and I had medical examinations and began inoculations. We got passports, packed air freight, got a travel advance, ordered plane tickets and hotel reservations, got new eyeglasses, and bought a white tuxedo jacket. New Australian Ambassador Keith Waller arrived, vice Sir Howard Beale, and I duly met him at the airport, for I continued to work as desk officer almost to our departure. He invited Southwest Pacific Affairs officers to a luncheon at the Embassy residence on the 28th to get acquainted. I thought it a nice gesture. We flew west to the Orient on September 12, 1964.

Chapter 23  
Vientiane  
(October 1964-March 1967)

President Kennedy pronounced Laos to rhyme with chaos to avoid any criticism that he was rhyming it with louse.

- [grapevine]

Wings. From Washington to Los Angeles was 4 1/2 hours in a half empty plane, but from Los Angeles it was the Saturday night special, carrying a mob to Honolulu. Every nook and cranny was filled, and we were scarcely able to stir during the five hour trip, except of course to eat a second dinner. You don't want it and you don't need it, but you eat it because it is set in front of you.

We had risen at 7:00 a.m. on September 19, 1964. It was after midnight Washington time when we hit the sack in Honolulu. A long day, and we were glad we had not tried to go straight through to Tokyo, another eight hours of flying. We holed up in the Waikiki Surf, a bargain I had discovered on an earlier visit, with a sitting room, bedroom, bath, and small kitchen, all for \$12.

In Oahu we took a half days' sightseeing bus tour and were just as pleased it was not longer. Hawaii is proud of its development projects, but it has its downside too. We were surprised to see sub-standard housing and squalid living conditions a short distance from touted Waikiki. We wandered from shop to hotel to restaurant and saw *Night of the Iguana* at the movies.

The eight hours to Tokyo were tedious but without incident except for the cramp and boredom. Things must be dicey when the plane has to buck bad weather. During our hour in the duty-free shop at Tokyo we bought a short-wave transistor that tuned in Communist China just fine. Another four hours to Hong Kong, arriving about 9:00 p.m. their time but 2:00 a.m. ours. Our hotel reservation worked out well, with a car waiting at the airport to fetch us.

Hong Kong was undergoing a tremendous building boom. It was great for economics but hell on the window-shopping tourist because all the sidewalks were torn up. We stayed two days, looking at goods we never bought. Leaving at 10:00 p.m., we were in Bangkok in 2 1/2 hours and were met by Embassy employees. The hotel was not as seedy as at first glance. During our 1 1/2 days in Bangkok we called at the Embassy and took a sightseeing tour. Bangkok, an oriental city with a veneer of the west, contrasts with Hong Kong, a British city peopled by orientals. It sprawls over a vast area with unpainted teak houses, ornate temples and wats, expansive palaces, green-greasy canals, and placid parks scattered aimlessly. Both cities have bustle, but Bangkok's is haphazard, Hong Kong's organized.

From Bangkok to Vientiane took two hours in an Air Lao DC-3, the only propellor-

driven aircraft on our trip. The plane being half-empty, the front seats were put to use by coops of chickens loosely lashed in place. We were met by people from the Embassy and stashed temporarily with Mr. and Mrs. Bill Thomas, our predecessors. Their house was in the Agency for International Development (AID) compound, and it was taken for granted that we would make it our residence. Riekie, however, opted strongly for other quarters, chiefly because the house was next door to that of AID Director and Mrs. Charles Mann, and she was wary of being a gofer under the boss's wife.

In a get-acquainted drive around Vientiane we saw that a major problem is slogging through mud. On our own the second night in town, we made our way to the deceptively named Setta Palace Hotel where we had a semi-French dinner to fumes from the next-door toilet. To get back to our quarters in the Vientiane night we hired samlahs, rickshaws powered by men on bicycles.

Setup. Vientiane is more of a place than its 60,000 population would lead you to believe. It strings along the Mekong to such a length you couldn't really walk anywhere, even if there were unbroken sidewalks. You had to have a car or bicycle or samlah (pedicycle) to get around, and you had to be watchful for other cars, bicycles and samlahs or you would be quickly *ecrase*, which is to say squashed. After dodging cars on Fifth Avenue, Champs Elysees, and Aleja Ujazdowskie, it would have been ironic to be wiped out by a Lao bicycle. The town had one traffic light.

Some of the streets had a strip of paving, but most were just plain dirt, which is to say mud in the rainy season. All, paved or not, were in abominable shape. When a road got to the stage where it had more craters than Verdun, the authorities repaired it by dropping loads of bricks into the deepest holes. They made no attempt to batten down the bricks but just left them in a pile, and as the days and vehicles rolled by the pile gradually smoothed out. The end result was that the road was better off, but you would never confuse it with the Pennsylvania Turnpike. When you drove, you soon became resigned to dodging not only holes and piles of bricks but dogs, ox carts, and buffaloes.

Dogs were everywhere, scrawny and mangy and all of them listless. When I started for home in the evening there were usually five dogs stretched out alongside the building, seeming to say that if U.S. aid was good enough for the Lao Government it was good enough for them. Although the dogs ran in threes and fours, they were too dispirited to snarl at each other. I suppose the heat was as hard on them as it was on humans; by the time the sun reached noon one was thoroughly bleached out. The heat was oppressive, as intense as anything I remembered in the desert, but extremely humid, so that you were in a perpetual stew. We were heading into the cool season, and nights were beginning to ease off, but if it were not for air-conditioned bedrooms newcomers like us would have had a hard time making it.

Lao Government buildings were holdovers from French colonial days, built of thick, toastcolored stone that insulated from the heat. Scattered in unlikely corners were wats and thats, or Buddhist monuments, the wats ornate stone structures housing religious objects, the thats (pronounced tots) obelisks rising to needle points. The housing or

barracks for monks around these monuments was elaborately carved and garishly painted. Otherwise only the houses of the well-to-do were painted.

Housing ranged from palace to hut. The rich lived in mansions of teak and stone, with septic tanks and electric-pumped water towers (the town had no sewerage or water system, although water pipes had been laid in some sectors). The less affluent lived in houses of unpainted teak with tin roofs. People lower in the scale lived in tin-roofed shacks with walls of matting. The poorest lived in hovels of thatch, most of them mounted on stilts over rice paddies from which they harvested a rich crop of mosquitoes. Apparently the people were impervious to bites.

A few shops had plate glass windows, and a few more had glass showcases, but most stood open to the street with wares unprotected from dust and flies. The range of goods was large, much of it U.S.-financed and virtually all imported. Britain, France, Hong Kong, India, Thailand and Japan were the principal sources of imports beside the United States. You could buy Chanel no. 5, Akai tape recorders, BSW motorcycles, Thai silks, and Hong Kong blouses. In the shops prices were plainly marked, and you did not bargain. In the markets, however, nothing was marked, and you haggled. As an example, stalls in the morning market asked respectively 80, 120 and 200 kip for identical plastic coathangers. The "morning" market in the central plaza stayed open till noon and the "afternoon" market at the west end of the business sector stayed open all day. Both offered vegetables, farm produce, dry goods, pots-and-pans and, in the rear, butchers with bloody cuts piled on chopping blocks from which girls listlessly brushed away flies with palm leaf fans.

The Lao people are placid and docile and extremely courteous. Every so often one of them up and assassinates somebody, but you have to allow for lapses. The men wore slacks and sport shirts, the women blouses and wraparound skirts, usually with a pattern in gold woven near the hem. Standouts in the clothes department were Buddhist monks with saffron robes, shaven heads, and black umbrellas. Some of the refugee tribes that had been forced to Vientiane by Pathet Lao military action wore traditional costume, the Thai-dam women, for example, with elaborate headdresses, white blouses, black skirts, and green sashes.

The war seemed remote in this quiet place, but the town was a simmerpot of rumors with those "in the know" predicting a coup every weekend. The Government forces had carried out a limited offensive in July 1964 that rolled back the Pathet Lao, and with the dry season everyone sort of stood and waited for them to counterattack, but nobody seemed too concerned about it.

There were several tennis courts around town, all concrete, and the courteous Lao went out of their way to invite one to play. The best times were 7:00 a.m. and at night if the electricity didn't fail. Other times the heat was too exhausting. The city had two or three good Chinese restaurants, several French and several Thai restaurants, but oddly no Lao restaurants. There were two or three nightclubs, one large and several small hotels with bars, three movies showing pictures in Lao, Chinese, Indian languages and French, and a

prizefight arena gone to weeds.

Vientiane had several settled enclaves that poked inland. The principal poke led past the central marketplace to a four-storey concrete arch of triumph, conceived in 1959 by General Phoumi Nosavan, some say as a monument to himself. If you kept on for three miles beyond the arch you came to the great Buddhist monument That Luang, of which more in due course. The other offshoots led to clumps of houses here and there. Paralleling the Mekong north you arrived at Wattay Airport and the French compound, south to Tha Deua, the "port" where one crossed the Mekong to Nong Khai in Thailand. A separate road led inward to Silver City and Kilometer Six, which were residence communities for the AID staffers, and then to the hinterland. At the time of arrival, travel beyond Kilometer Six was restricted because of security conditions.

Job. Ambassador Leonard Unger's house, gardens, and small swimming pool were in the main part of town on the banks of the river. The Chancery was close to most of the Lao Government offices and the main shopping street. Some two miles farther inland a fenced area contained the AID offices, commissary, community swimming pool, a few residences, and garages for mission equipment and cars, mostly four-door Studebakers. Including staff at field offices at Luang Prabang, Savannakhet, Pakse, Ban Houei Sai, Paksane, Sayaboury and other outposts, AID employees numbered approximately 2,000, the majority in Vientiane.

Born in Germany, Director Charles Mann became an American citizen in 1942, served in the U.S. Army, and joined the Economic Cooperation Administration (a predecessor of AID) in 1949. After assignments in Seoul and Saigon, he became Director of the AID mission to Phnom Penh in 1960, from which he moved on to Laos. In later years he was to go to Kinshasha, return to Saigon, Phnom Penh, and again to Vientiane. Mann's energy was demonic; he never walked but charged, held a tight rein on all aspects of the wide-ranging mission, and maintained a hectic social schedule. Yet, he knew the importance of face in the orient and was a model of tact in negotiations with the Lao.

The Office of Economic Affairs, over which I presided, was a staff arm with the primary purpose of providing studies to help the AID director in developing policy. It did not participate directly in mission activities, that is, it did not erect windmills, drill artesian wells, or build highways. Since the AID mission was in effect the economic section of the Embassy and Charles Mann was both AID Director and Embassy Economic Counselor, the Office was responsible for economic reporting requirements of mission and Embassy, that is, the customary statistical-interpretive reports on imports, exports, industry, agriculture, banking, aviation, and the like. The Office prepared studies on national budget and finance, customs, commercial enterprise, and the administration of the AID commodity import program. It was tied in with administration of the Foreign Exchange Operations Fund (of which more later), the stability of the Lao currency, the tariff on the import-export of gold as a contribution to the Lao budget, and the preparation of a program to develop local small industries (of which the rice mill cited below is an example). The Office of Economic Affairs had also developed into a rumor-tracking center, and here I was woefully inadequate. Bill Thomas, with his Far East

background, knowledge of Chinese and Lao, and wide circle of acquaintances among local businessmen, had become a source of information which I could not hope to approximate.

My staff included an economist, a statistician, an accountant, a budget expert, a secretary-- all of them AID employees--and a junior FSO seconded from the Embassy. It also included a commercial officer, four program officers, and four customs officers, all from agencies neither AID nor State. Which is another way of saying that some of them were CIA.

An article in *The Washington Post* of June 8, 1970 (three years after we had left Laos) acknowledged that members of the AID staff were actually CIA:

*AID Confirms Its Use as CIA Cover in Laos*

"The head of the U.S. foreign aid program confirmed yesterday that CIA agents use the civilian aid mission in Laos as a cover for anti-Communism operations, much to his displeasure...."

AID Administrator John A. Hannah, asked if the CIA uses the mission in Laos as a cover, said: "Well, I just have to admit that this is true. This was a decision that was made back in 1962 and by administrations from now until then, and it is the only place in the world that we are.'...."

Previously, the aid agency has declined to comment on published reports that CIA agents pose as AID rural development workers but actually recruit and train anti-communist guerrillas, detect enemy movements and act as ground controllers for air strikes...."

I shall not comment further except to say that I was not enthusiastic about having CIA operatives nominally under my command. Initially I was listed as some sort of Attache, but I felt this was inappropriate and asked that I be accorded a diplomatic title. After some weeks, Washington saw things my way and changed the designation to First Secretary, Economic. My functional title was Chief, Office of Economic Affairs. The AID administrative people treated me royally, accorded me a representation allowance commensurate with my status as chief, and went along with our wish for housing outside the compound. Far outside.

Quarters. To get to our house, you drove past the concrete arch, turned right at the military barracks, left where the road plunged into a ricefield, then right at the fork and past the friendly house of joy. Another right at the rubber shoe factory and left on the lane made by the absent-minded buffalo, and you had arrived. Among our five neighboring houses were an English communications expert, a family from an Indian mission, a young AID chap who liked to practice jazz drums, and an AID highway engineer.

Our house, rented by AID from the Lao Commissioner of Customs, was a cross between the Taj Mahal and the Hotel Pennsylvania. Entering through iron gates, you walked

through a garden of banana plants, crossed a marble patio big enough for 50 dancing couples, and entered a lobby with a bar resembling a reception desk. The bar had a tap with running water which you dared not drink because it had not been boiled.

Through an arch flanked by Japanese lanterns you came to a living room where you received the duchess to tea. It easily absorbed three divans and a corner piece, two rattan armchairs with matching table, and a cosy nook with another two archairs, divan, coffee table, and two end tables. Cooling was provided by ceiling fans large enough to drive the Pan Am Clipper. Through another arch to a dining room with a table that accommodated twelve armchairs. Because the room seemed empty with only one buffet, Riekie added two more, and the room was still uncrowded. (Furniture supplied from AID stocks.) The ground floor had twenty-five windows and the upstairs the same, all with louvered shutters but none with glass. To keep out the rain you sealed yourself in. Inside each pair of shutters was a pair of screens to discourage bugs, so you spent much time unlatching, opening, closing, and relatching.

Also on the ground floor was a powder room with thunderjug, bidet, sink, and a shower, all plumbing made in Japan. The shower lacked one important element, a drain. Legend has it that when local craftsmen built the U.S. Embassy in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia, they equipped it with flush toilets that ran dead-end into the walls. Maybe that story isn't true, but ours was. We had a shower with no drain.

A marble staircase left over from Ziegfeld led upstairs to a useless reception area with a divan and two archairs in which no one ever sat. Outside was a marble balcony inhabited by lizards. There were two large bedrooms and one small. The two master rooms had air conditioners, and we kept one going at all times to protect clothes from mildew. There was one bathroom, equipped with one of the few tubs in Laos. The tub had a drain.

Back of the house was another house for the servants. This had three bedrooms and bath on the second floor, plus workroom, kitchen, washroom, and bath on the first. There was also a garage. The stove worked on bottled gas, the water heater on kerosene, the refrigerator on 220 volt current, and the washing machine on 110. Power came from the city's newly installed Japanese system, part of Japanese war reparations. We were uncertain whether we were better or worse off than other U.S. occupied houses, most of which had their own generators. Behind the servants' house was a three-storey tower-tank containing the house water supply. Every day we turned on the electric pump for 15 minutes to build up the supply from the well in the yard. The system was great as long as (a) the electricity worked, (b) the pump worked, (c) the rainy season lasted. When the rains ran dry so did the well, and we had to call Maintenance to have the water tower filled from a truck. Having the kitchen separate from the house was a confounded nuisance. The cook fought her way through the kitchen screen doors, across the passageway, and through the house screen doors (for some reason all doors were double) bringing with her mosquitoes, flies, fruit flies, grasshoppers, and the occasional praying mantis. But after all, one had to feed the geckos that scurried on walls and ceilings.

The great question lay in the roads. Near the town they were strips of rutted concrete

wide enough to hold two cars if you put the outside wheels in the muddy shoulder. With each change of street the road narrowed, and at the fork they became pure mud. After the rubber factory they became marsh, and cars went into puddles over the hubcaps. We were told that within a month or so would come the dry season and the mud would become dust. Until that occurred you could not walk to work unless you rolled your trousers to knee and went barefoot. It must be remembered that the motor car was not a mass vehicle in Laos and that in many areas the standard mode of transportation was still the ox cart.

Transport. Though AID ran autos on a regular schedule to bring me and neighbors to and from work, Riekie was a bird in a gilded cage, living in a mansion grand but trapped by the execrable roads. In a pinch I would maneuver past the puddles to the main road and hail a samlah, but Riekie didn't think much of that idea. Our situation eased when a young Frenchman who had an official car loaned us his personal five-year-old Peugeot, a vehicle admirably suited to the rocks and rills of Vientiane because it sat high off the road and had stiff springs. This meant that where Riekie had been isolated she was now only fifteen minutes from town. But bad luck. Returning home from tennis, she braked for a dog and was rammed by a ramshackle taxi. She was not hurt, but the car suffered a bash in the trunk, a fractured bumper, and a jittery tail pipe. It is embarrassing to undergo damage to borrowed property, whether your fault or not. The car was restored to its original condition in good time, but we were somewhat shamefaced about the affair. Our own Ford Galaxie, the one we had bought in Ottawa, did not make it to Vientiane until the last day of 1964.

Communications. Everybody was frustrated by the telephone. Vientiane had a USAID system, an Embassy system, and a Lao Government post-telephones-telegraph system (come to think of it, there was also a French system in there somewhere), and while they were linked in theory they were apart in fact. If you wanted to reach the Embassy from home, you dialed the AID exchange, dialed the PTT exchange, and dialed the Embassy exchange, then the number. Each exchange was supposed to make itself receptive to dialing the next exchange, but each link enjoyed conking out in mid-dial, and of course the crowning exasperation was to get through all exchanges and reach a busy signal. We did have reasonable success getting through to the AID mission, a happy occurrence because something in our luxury abode was always going *pfffft* and we had to ask Maintenance for help. A frequent snafu was that somebody in the menage would fail to turn off a tap and we would have to summon a truckload of water to fill our water tower. Because Vientiane had no municipal water system, houses that had no wells depended on vendors who peddled water from old oil tins. Nor did Vientiane have a sewerage system, merely drainage trenches alongside the streets. With rice paddies and numerous ponds, the region abounded in mosquitoes, and we were warned to adhere to a steady regime of malaria pills. We humans thought them rather bitter, but ants loved them and swarmed over the medicine cabinet.

The following sample of the mysterious East is a translation of an article from a Lao newspaper:

*Taxies' Fares Are All Increased*

All people are in trouble by the cost of living nearly cause to death and now adding with the increasements of all taxies' fares.

Appeared that taxies' fares changed from 30 kips to 50 kips. A trip to Thadua 150 kips to be 200 kips and the other raths are also.

Our reporters get the results from the owner of taxies which they say that the government increased the impot, the vignette automobile and other for double and triple, if they do not increase the prices they have no chance to get money to pay such taxes.

Beside of that the taxies drivers say that the government should not increased the taxes now for the conditions of commodities prices are increased. About roads they say they have not seen the government repaired them in good and the other taxes are all in officials. The government should understand about the people who get hand to mouth differed from officers who get the government's cars, government's gass and also free drivers.

If there further reports on these, we will give on.

AID Program. Shortly after arrival I joined other AID and Embassy officials in a ceremony for opening a rice mill. The mill was equipped with machinery brought in under the U.S. import program, and the proprietors invited the Ambassador and me and other big shots to get it on stream. The machinery was encased in that wonderful wood, teak, which needs no paint because it is resistant to weather and termites. Power was supplied by a steam engine that, after getting into motion on oil, burned hulls from the rice it milled and thereby fed itself, a sort of perpetual motion. The dignitaries went around shaking hands with each other while a Lao orchestra made *chonk-chonk* in the background. Somebody gave a speech in Lao and sent up a string of balloons as a symbol the enterprise was floated, somebody cut a ribbon with a big pair of shears from a silver bowl, glasses of champagne were thrust into our hands, and we wandered around inspecting the mill with only a few of us understanding what we were looking at. The steam engine began to go *rigidity, rigidity, rigidity*, drivebelts flapped and clapped, wheels whirred, and rice poured. We clambered in and out of walkways, tracing the rice from bin to sifter to mill to second sifter to second mill and so on, sampling each stage of the process to the final product, neatly sorted into whole rice and broken rice, and then we went home with souvenir bags of rice in our hands and champagne in our tummies. The mill failed within a year. The idea had been that the owners would send trucks to rice farmers miles around to collect the paddy, but the farmers saw no reason to change from the tiny mills close to their homes, and the elaborate centralized mill ended up idle.

Our first try at entertaining was a dinner for five Lao couples named Lapphouné Khamvongsa, Souvanthong Panglamphanh, Chau Vath Mokham, Theung Phimphrachanh, and Oompheng Champhanavong, plus two French couples. We were warned that the Lao might accept but not show, not accept but show, show but not bring their wives, or show before and/or after the scheduled time. We had a horrible feeling

that if we did get the names correct, the electricity would fail. All went well, except that we had not realized the ladies were not expected to take part in conversation. They huddled like a school of minnows edging from a shark, and Riekie quite knocked herself out trying to talk to them, a difficult task as one of the wives had a little English, one a little French, and the others only Lao. The fact that the ladies did come, however, was a minor triumph in itself.

An important consideration in giving a party was water. All drinking water had to be boiled and then passed through filters. If you give a party for 50 people who drink Scotch and water for three hours, how much boiled-filtered water will you need?

Our communication with the lowland Lao (those living near the Mekong) was usually in French, though a number spoke English. Few Americans spoke Lao. I took a couple of lessons but never got beyond how to tell a samlah to turn left. A tongue that is sung as much as spoken, Lao is readily picked up only by those with background in tonal languages.

Arrangements. An American Community Association provided facilities and services to employees of the Embassy, USAID, United States Information Service, and contractors. Many of the facilities were located within the USAID compound, notably a swimming pool, recreation hall, restaurant, movie, commissary, and post exchange. An American school operated at Kilometer Six and a dispensary at Silver City. Severe medical cases were evacuated to Bangkok, usually to the Seventh Day Adventist Hospital. Under an arrangement with the Government of the Philippines, Filipino personnel provided a dental clinic for the Lao and us. Commissary supplies and PX items came largely from the U.S. Navy Commissary in Bangkok, most of it by rail to Nong Khai whence it was barged across the Mekong to Tha Deua. Perishable foodstuffs and mail arrived on Commissary flights that did the round-trip to Bangkok three times a week. As the planes went out virtually empty, you were allowed to fly to Bangkok on a space available basis, but as they came back full of cargo you had to make your own arrangements for returning, by train, commercial air, or if you were truly intrepid by bus.

Aircraft under contract to USAID frequently made maintenance flights to Tainan in Taiwan, with a stopover in Hong Kong. The journey to Hong Kong took about seven hours. Again where space was available, you could fly to Hong Kong provided that you came back in the same plane. Usually you could stay three or four days in Hong Kong.

USAID planes flew regular "milk runs" to posts within Laos carrying supplies for AID personnel and the hill tribes. Vientiane staffers were allowed to go along when space was available. Shortly after arriving in Laos, Riekie and I got on the list to fly to Luang Prabang, where the King of Laos resides, but were bounced at the last minute because the plane was full. Riekie did, however, get to visit Ban Houei Sai on the Burmese border. Mrs. Barry Dexter, the wife of the Australian Ambassador, whom we had known in Washington, flew to Ban Houei Said on an official trip and invited her to come along.

That Luang. A that (pronounced tot) or stupa is a pointed (columnar) reliquary, that is, a

shrine containing or exhibiting a relic, that may or may not be part of a wat or Buddhist monastery. The imposing That Luang, built in 1566, sits in a compound surrounded by a cloister or covered passage outside of which are other structures such as assembly halls, the whole resting in an expanse of scrub and dust the size of two football fields (See Charles F. B. Wilding-White, "Luang Prabang and Its Temples" in *Arts of Asia*, Vol. 6 No. 1, January-February 1976, pp. 55-57.). In the good old times, the King of Laos would be lifted aboard his elephant and amble the three miles from Vientiane to That Luang in about six days, pausing frequently for adulation and libation along the way. Nowadays, a festival or celebration is held in November which is partly a religious observance and partly a carnival with sideshows and barkers.

The custom had evolved for foreign nations represented in Laos to mount exhibits throughout the That grounds alongside the commercial booths that offered hand woven cloths, wood carvings, bows and arrows, silver vessels, musical instruments, and the gew gaws and knickknacks that one usually finds in carnivals. The exhibition halls were primitive affairs made of rough-hewn planks or bamboo, most with bare boards but the more pretentious with floormats. Communist and capitalist missions vied for the hearts and minds of the Lao people. Red China, which had exploded an A-bomb on October 16, erected an imposing pavillion filled with photographs of joyful workers supplemented by a few objets d'art such as one finds in San Francisco's Chinatown. The U.S.S.R. exhibit was limited to a few skimpy displays; we suspected that it had to be revised at the last minute because of the ouster of Nikita Kruschev on October 15. France's elaborate hall was filled mostly with model electric trains, why I don't know. The USAID-USIA exhibit was outstanding. Our technicians built a rustic house in Lao style situated in a miniature farm replete with plants and animals. Next to it we mounted a movie screen showing pictures of U.S. projects. Ours was far and away the most popular exhibit. The Lao populace straggled among these exhibits, some in coats and ties, some in turban and sarong, ranging from French-educated sophisticates to hill tribesmen for whom Vientiane is a megacentre. Alongside the exhibits was a small army of food vendors. Some had enough space to set out crude tables, but most squatted on the ground nursing small charcoal stoves and selling charred meats on sticks, large leaves rolled into tubes containing baked rice (one eats the rice, not the leaves), and a dozen scaly edibles which to my western eyes were nameless. Over the whole rose a cloud of smoke and dust, and the air was heavy with the smell of fires, food, people, and urine. The vendors were not raucous; they did not urge you to step right up folks and put down your kip but just hunkered down and waited for you to come to them. There were also a few lucky dips and games of chance where you could win a bicycle if you picked the right number, and perhaps in some of the stalls under the noses of the police the customary gambling went on despite a formal prohibition from the Prime Minister. The fair continued for ten days as we could testify because our house was half a dozen blocks away and we could hear the loudspeakers blaring until 4:00 in the morning.

Personnel. Ambassador Unger went back to the Department in December and later became Ambassador to Bangkok. His replacement, William H. Sullivan, was no stranger to southeast Asia, having served in Bangkok, been desk officer for Burma, and assisted Governor Harriman in negotiations on Laos. Later on, he was to be Secretary of State

Kissinger's deputy in the final Paris peace negotiations to end the Vietnam war and was to become Ambassador to Manila and then to Tehran at the time of the overthrow of the Shah. His Deputy Chief of Mission was Emory "Coby" Swank, also with experience in the far east and a former special assistant to Secretary of State Dean Rusk. In due course Swank became Ambassador to Phnomh Penh.

The Chancery was located perhaps a mile from the AID compound. My relations with Embassy personnel were arms-length largely because I did not push them. I was First Secretary, Economic, but the Embassy's economic section was the AID mission. The junior FSO on my staff roomed with a junior Embassy political officer and was more at home in the Chancery than I was. I stopped in at the Chancery two or three times a week but had only desultory chats and cultivated no close relationships. Thus I was not chummy either with my own FSO crowd or with my peers at AID. This is not to say that Riekie and I did not have cordial relations everywhere but that I never made as much of my Embassy status as I should have. On the other hand, we developed friendships with a number of Lao at the Stadium tennis courts. Most of these, however, were junior management, not movers and shakers of policy.

Industry. Thakhek (also called Khammouane) is about 200 kilometers southwest of Vientiane as the ruby-throated, double-chinned sapsucker flies. It's farther away if you stay within Lao territory, that is follow the bend of the Mekong, but the plane flies across Thailand and makes it in about an hour. I was one of a party inspecting a cement plant that was started in 1957 with magnificent equipment brought in from Switzerland, but which ran out of funds and never turned out as much as a pound of cement. The purpose of the inspection was to help decide whether the U.S. aid program should step in and finance additional equipment to get the plant into production. We stayed from nine until two, long enough to walk through the plant and the quarry supplying its limestone. The verdict on further financing was a tentative maybe. I was to visit this plant again months later. I sat in the co-pilot seat of the two-engined Beechcraft on the return. Fascinating is the takeoff. You hurtle down the dirt airstrip and abruptly it occurs to you that you are at the end and there are trees in front of you and why doesn't somebody DO something, and then you have cleared the trees and look, Ma, I'm flying. Afterwards you stuff your heart back in your shirt.

At various times I inspected a cigarette factory, a rubber sandal factory, an ice plant, a sawmill, and a match factory. I believe the only industrial establishment in Vientiane that I did not visit was the candle factory. In all industrial establishments, the Lao system is to bring the whole damn family along. The wife may assist in some phase of the work or may just cook some sticky rice for lunch. The children sit. Lao children are extraordinarily passive; they will stay planted in one spot all day, a good thing where you are surrounded by mechanical saws or cigarette machines or furnaces for stewing rubber. Can you imagine turning a bunch of American kids loose in a match factory?

Shootemup. On January 9, 1965 we attended a dance that included in the guests three rival Laotian military leaders, Generals Siho Lampouthacoul, Kouprasith Abhay, and Phoumi Nosavan. In April 1964 Kouprasith and Siho had held neutralist Prime Minister

Souvanna Phouma virtual prisoner in his own home in an attempt to get things their way. The ruckus was straightened out with the help of Ambassador Unger, but the generals continued to bicker. Nevertheless, at the dance all three were jolly, jolly, and General Phoumi even took the microphone and crooned a Lao love song. Within a few weeks they were shooting at each other.

A skim of history may be helpful in identifying the cast of characters. Back in the 14th century a muscleman named Fa Ngum held sway over Lane Xang, stretching from China to Thailand-Cambodia. In successive generations Lane Xang split into three kingdoms, Luang Prabang, Vientiane, and Champassak. The three warred with each other and with Burma, Annam, and Siam (Thailand), and by the early 19th century Siam was pretty much in charge. France got into the action late in the 19th century. The kingdom of Vientiane sort of disappeared somewhere along the line, leaving the houses of Luang Prabang and Champassak as contenders for the throne of the territory we call Laos. All right, all right, there was also a mountain kingdom of Xieng Khouane, but we're trying to keep it simple. In April 1946 Sisavang Vong of the house of Luang Prabang was recognized as King and his rival, Prince Boun Oum of Champassak, agreed to be content with the life title of Inspector General of the Kingdom. A constitution was drafted that accorded Laos a sort of independence within the French Union of Indo-China.

In September 1951 a Laos-United States economic aid agreement was signed, and in November 1951 Prince Souvanna Phouma (House of Luang Prabang) became prime minister for the first time. He was to be in and out of office over the next twenty-odd years. The Geneva accords of 1954 reaffirmed Laos as a unitary, independent state. For this sketch we ignore the most important element of the modern history, the growth of communist power, to concentrate on internal dissension. On the last day of 1959 five generals, headed by Phoumi Nosavan, overthrew the government, but were held in check by western governments. In August 1960 a young Captain Kong Le (whose third wife was the niece of one of the five generals) overthrew the government again, and Souvanna Phouma, who had been out for awhile, once more became prime minister on a policy of neutrality.

The Soviet Union decided to play, too, and established an embassy in Vientiane. For a time the United States became disenchanted with Souvanna Phouma because he was supported by the Soviets. Fighting broke out again, and Souvanna Phouma decamped to Phnom Penh in Cambodia. The western powers recognized Prince Boun Oum while the Soviets continued to boost Souvanna Phouma. In April 1961 the United States established a Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) in Laos. After sporadic fighting, plus continued diplomatic maneuvering by outside powers, Souvanna Phouma was returned in June 1962 as prime minister of a coalition government that included the communists. The coalition soon fell apart, and the communist representative fled to North Vietnam. Prince Boun Oum took a long vacation in France, leaving General Phoumi Nosavan the acting head of the right. This brings us back to April 1964 when Generals Kouprasith and Siho imprisoned Souvanna Phouma in his home, insisted on a shakeup of the cabinet, and stripped General Phoumi of many of his privileges. All of this took place before our arrival in Vientiane.

On February 1, 1965 one Colonel Bounleuth sent two companies of troops to occupy three points in Vientiane, the airport, national stadium, and radio station, and declared that the government had fallen. Government emissaries, plus foreign diplomats, urged Bounleuth to desist, while General Kouprasith readied his command at Chinaimo, ten kilometers to the east. Under pressure, Bounleuth called off his revolt, but soldiers clumped throughout the city, some with yellow kerchiefs, some with blue kerchiefs, and some with black berets, indicating the general to whom they adhered. That evening, Riekie and I went to a reception given by the Bank of Tokyo and then to another at the home of our Public Affairs Officer. In the buzz of talk were questions as to what Siho and Phoumi would do, for Bounleuth was known to be Phoumi's man, and it was surmised that Phoumi had put him up to the revolt.

When I started to work on Tuesday, February 2nd, our housekeeper insisted that I leave by the little gate, and she padlocked it behind me. Whether I took the car or not, I always used the big gate, and I was puzzled by her action. The reason, we deduced later, was that the servants knew by grapevine that trouble was brewing and they wanted to discourage stray passersby from entering our house. They did not warn the old master (me) he might be heading into a booby-trap, however, but let him blunder on his way. When the car that had picked me up got near to the concrete arch, the driver was stopped by soldiers and had to talk his way past them to the USAID compound. The soldiers had set up machine gun emplacements around the arch and had blossomed forth with yellow kerchiefs as identification. Bounleuth had reneged on his promise to leave the airport and radio station and was maintaining an attitude of defiance. The foreign diplomats renewed their pressure, and the day ended with only sporadic shooting by trigger-happy soldiers and supposedly another agreement that Bounleuth would back down. I returned home in the evening without incident, but when our housekeeper left she insisted on locking the gates behind her. She did not come back next day, but we were not alarmed because it was a Vietnamese holiday.

On February 3rd I went off to work leaving Riekie alone in the house. I arrived without trouble and then found I could not get back. As the sun rose, so did hostilities, and soon the air was filled with the crack of rifles, the rattle of sub-machine guns, and the thumps of mortars and field guns. As the day wore on, I spoke several times to Riekie by telephone, for amazingly our temperamental system held up. She said that crowds of soldiers had appeared out of nowhere, the tiny road was filled with jeeps and trucks and tanks, and men were deployed in the vacant field next our house. Later in the day, she reported considerable shooting in the vicinity, and one stray shot chipped the house. Toward the close of the day AID personnel went to fetch her and other dependents who were living in isolated communities.

Soldiers planted guns around the monument, two blocks from the compound, and banged away happily. In a situation like this, you hear lots of noise but have trouble finding out who is shooting at what. A spotter plane for one of the factions circled overhead most of the day designating targets. Eventually we determined that the main concentrations were on the radio station, the police station, General Phoumi's house north of the arch, and the

police barracks farther out the same road. General Phoumi decided to move openly against the Government, and General Siho supported him. To the east General Khamkhone, a Phoumi supporter, moved troops from Paksane, a town farther down the Mekong, to Tha Deua.

Phoumi's strength, however, was more paper than real. Advancing from Chinaimo, General Kouprasith's forces sent a few shells toward Tha Deua and halted General Khamkhone's advance. Colonel Bounleut's men at the radio station were quickly knocked out, and his troops at the airport surrendered without fighting. His chaps exchanged their blue scarves for yellow, and presto! they were working for Kouprasith. Phoumi stood siege in his house for a time, but in the end he and Siho fled to Thailand, and the revolt was over.

At the Embassy and AID we were busy manning radio posts, developing information on the welfare of our personnel, and trying to persuade the combatants to stop their nonsense. Our women and children were brought to the mess hall and slept on chair cushions scattered on the floor. The shooting died with darkness, and in the night came heavy rain to dampen the fighters' zeal.

Thursday, February 4th, found Phoumi's house in ruins, the police station and the neighboring Pan Am office devastated, and the police barracks outside town in shambles. We returned to our house. It had not been invaded, and little by little things returned to normal. By the end of the month the government had been reshuffled. From Paris, Prince Boun Oum acceded to the ouster of General Phoumi Nosavan and to putting the government back to where it was in 1960 before the revolt of Kong Le.

One result of the revolt was to make us realize how vulnerable we were. A stray shell had crashed through the roof of another embassy and killed a diplomat. Had a similar misfire struck the mess hall in our AID compound when it was filled with women and children, we would have taken serious casualties. We had relied not only on the good will of all sides but also on the accuracy of the soldiers' aim. We were lucky to get off without harm.

General Phoumi retreated to Bangkok where he was linked through his wife to Somebody Important. In late March 1965 his supporters tried to seize power in Thakhek and the Province of Khammouane, but the uprising fizzled out and Phoumi faded into history.

Recap. On March 19, 1965, six months to the day after arrival, I recapitulated our situation in a letter:

"You may talk about Vientiane in either a gloomy or polyanna frame of mind, depending on mood. You may think of heat, dust, flies, and stinking rice bogs, unpaved streets, uncertain water supply, boiled and filtered drinking water, lack of sewerage, and a warning never to eat raw vegetables unless they can be peeled. You may think we personally can claim inconvenience at the least. We have been fairly sick with tummy trouble, our gardener has died of malaria, we have been robbed, and we have huddled

with the rest of our U.S. colleagues in our mission while Lao soldiers popped off rifles, machine guns, and mortars at each other in a modest try at revolution. If you are glum, you can make out a good case of having to put up with many hardships.

"On the other hand, there are many less healthful posts than Vientiane, posts where there is risk of far worse diseases than tummy trouble and malaria. Here we have adequate front-line medical attention, with quick transport to Bangkok hospitals in case of serious illness. We are beautifully housed in a handsomely furnished mansion with electric refrigerator, kerosene hot water heater, butane cook stove, and charcoal grill over which our Vietnamese cook turns out delectable shishebab. We have our own well, the Vientiane electric supply is reasonably dependable, our AID mission provides remarkable service whenever some gadget breaks down, our commissary is supplied by air from Bangkok with essential foodstuffs, the local shops have a range of goods at reasonable prices thanks to U.S. and other foreign aid, the Lao are friendly and courteous when they are not shooting at each other, and Riekie has lots of tennis to fill her day."

Bangkok. Karen, on summer leave from the University of Maryland, arrived in June, 1965. So did a succession of Big Shots from the States necessitating my attendance, and Riekie had to fly to Bangkok alone to meet her, the two of them coming back to Vientiane on Thai commercial air. After several postponements caused by the press of office business, the three of us drove to Bangkok for a holiday in July. The actual driving, about 350 miles, was less complicated than the red tape of getting the car out of Laos and into Thailand. For every hour on the road we spent 30 minutes in some official's office.

The vehicle ferry across the Mekong ran six days a week and quit at 4:30 p.m. On a Tuesday afternoon I drove to Tha Deua, spent an hour in the Lao Customs, waited for the ferry, agonized about getting the car with its long fore and aft overhang aboard without knocking the bottom out, stopped at Thai Customs after leaving the ferry, stopped again at the main Customs in Nong Khai, and stopped another hour for the Nong Khai Police. I left the car at our USIA office and returned to Tha Deua by motorized sampan, whence I taxied back to Vientiane fifteen miles away.

Wednesday morning the three of us taxied to Tha Deua, crossed by sampan (the climb up rickety wooden stairs without railings on the Thai side was an adventure in itself), reported to Thai Immigration, and were on the highway by 9:30. But ten kilometers later we hit a police block that took up 30 minutes and then, in accord with instructions, we checked in with the police at Udorn. Since that used up more than an hour, we were not really under way until 11:30, with the greater part of our trip before us. To avoid driving at night with dogs, buffalo, carts, and jitneys clogging the road, we pressed all the way regardless of the stifling heat. We reached Bangkok after 7:00 p.m. with night falling over an unfamiliar city, but luckily we stumbled into a pleasant hotel to ask directions and decided to put up there.

In Bangkok we were routine rubberneckers, took a bus tour of Buddhist temples and a boat tour of the floating market, shopped for Thai silk, ate sumptuous meals at several good restaurants, and paddled in the pool of our hotel. We were not terribly taken with

the city. Bangkok sprawls like Los Angeles, the climate is hot and sticky (how did Anna and the King of Siam endure all those petticoats?), the traffic conducts itself in a manner truly frightening, and you are somewhat shaken by the hand-to-mouth existence of street vendors and boat people. These are superficial impressions; it would be rewarding to live in Bangkok and get more of a feel of the city than is possible to the three-day tourist.

The floating market is of interest, though it is now so tourist-ized that one almost feels the hawkers in their sampans are mechanical props out of Disneyland. You bus from the hotel to the great Chao Phraya River and proceed downstream for half an hour by motor launch. It adds to the atmosphere if rain falls and the boatman scrambles over the open roof trying to arrange sheets of canvas to ward off the wet. The river banks are lined with warehouses and markets and small drydocks, tugs strain upward with produce-loaded houseboats occupied by multi-children families, occasional sampans are pushed by Sisyphus-like figures standing in the rear with single oars, and here and there little brown boys swim in the brown water.

The motor launch turns into a creek rimmed by huts and godowns, and the floating market begins. As you proceed up-creek the sampans become more numerous, laden with fruits or vegetables or charcoal or bamboo, and you wonder where they can be paddling. After half an hour the creek becomes so shallow you transfer to a flat draft speed boat with a long-stemmed outboard propellor and go churning with water gushing under the bows. Because the stream is filled with tourist boats, each raising its own bow waves, there are thrilling moments when the boats threaten to swamp each other as they pass. You keep going interminably until the sampans become so thick and the traders so busy handing each other bananas that your speedboat can no longer thread its way. Here you turn and land at a tourist trap where you may buy Thai silks, bronze wares, toy snakes, and Coca Cola. It is actually a pleasant tourist trap, with prices the same as elsewhere in town. You may watch girls working at threading skeins of silk yarn onto bobbins or shuttles, and using the shuttles in hand looms that weave the yarn into cloth.

We got started on our return to Laos early in the morning and arrived at Nong Khay in comfortable time to cross by motorboat and find transport to Vientiane. I arranged for the car to be shipped back the following day.

World. September 1964 the Warren Commission report found that Lee Harvey Oswald was solely responsible for the assassination of President Kennedy. The following month the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for advocacy of nonviolence. In the same month, Communist China became the fifth nuclear power by exploding an atomic bomb, and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev was forced out and replaced by Aleksei N. Kosygin. In November President Lyndon Johnson swept to re-election over Republican Barry Goldwater. The United States announced a general policy of bombing North Vietnam in support of South Vietnam in February, 1965. Malcolm X was shot and killed while speaking in New York City. The United States flew in the first combat troops, 3,500 Marines, to Da Nang in March, and ordered our men into their first full scale combat offensive on June 28. In late July the President announced that there were 125,000 U.S. troops in South Vietnam and that draft calls would be doubled. In

August came a riot in the Watts area of Los Angeles that resulted in 34 deaths and \$200 million in damage. A region-wide power failure caused a blackout that extended from Pennsylvania to Canada, affected over 30 million people, and stranded 800,000 in New York City subways. Pope Paul VI visited New York City on October 4, the first time a Pope had come to America, and delivered a personal appeal for peace to the United Nations.

F.E.O.F. The Foreign Exchange Operations Fund (FEOF), a joint endeavor to help stabilize the Lao national economy, began operations in January 2, 1964, nine months before I arrived in Vientiane (This discussion of the FEOF is drawn largely from Clark Joel, "The Foreign Exchange Operations Fund for Laos: an Interesting Experiment in Monetary Stabilization." *Asian Survey*, vol VI, No. 3, March, 1966. Mr. Joel, a Program Economist in the Office of Economic Affairs, was a member of the team that drew up the agreement establishing the Fund.). The Lao economy had experienced rapid inflation, chronic balance of payments disequilibrium, and an excess of import requirements over foreign exchange earnings. Governments in such a situation frequently try to impose exchange controls. Instead, in accordance with recommendations made by a visiting International Monetary Fund team, four nations--the United States, Great Britain, Australia, and France--set up a fund to offset the disequilibrium, with resources coming almost entirely from aid grants, at least half of them from the United States. Japan joined as a contributor in 1965.

The idea was that each year economists would figure out the foreign exchange requirements of the Lao budget and ask the governments of the four powers to contribute enough foreign exchange to meet them. A unique feature was that currencies would exchange freely. You and your pal Joe Spivis could walk into any bank with a suitcase full of kip and walk out with a suitcase of dollars in accordance with your needs or whims. If the economists' calculations were incorrect and the Lao Government and/or private sector overspent on imports, demand for foreign exchange would exceed the supply provided by the Fund, and there would be a flight of capital from the country. The amazing thing was that the Fund worked accurately for several years. Supply and demand found a classic equilibrium. There was no black market, and *Pick's Foreign Currencies* listed the Lao kip as one of the stable monies of the world.

The strategy of the stabilization program was to keep the Government from overspending the annual budget, meet major import needs through commodity import programs providing essential commodities (rice, petroleum products, utility vehicles, machinery) at a fixed rate of exchange below the free market rate, and supply foreign currency through the Fund. Initially there were three commodity programs, with letters of credit for \$8 million from the United States, \$2.8 million from Great Britain, and \$300,000 from Australia; the amounts were adjusted annually. The fixed rate for the import program was 240 kip to the dollar. The goal for the open market rate was 500 kip to the dollar, and these rates were successfully achieved.

The Fund sold foreign currencies equivalent to \$7.9 million in 1964 and approximately \$11 million in 1965. The amount needed for 1966 was projected at about \$16 million,

with approximately \$11 million to be provided by the United States. How long the Fund might have continued to function had it not been for the deteriorating military situation is a matter for speculation.

The Fund was run by a salaried manager, French for the first two years, British thereafter, whose performance was reviewed by the five powers. Much of the supervision fell to my office. Our budget and economist staff members prepared frequent studies that were used by the AID Director in reviewing program operations with the Lao Government. A touchy point was the spread between the commodity import rate and the open market rate. This differential had to be kept narrow enough to discourage re-export of essential commodities for sale at a profit. Since the open market funds could be used without restriction, retail shops in Vientiane and other Lao cities were well supplied with silks and woolens from India, hifi sets and tennis rackets from Hong Kong, bicycles and Scotch whisky from Great Britain, and perfumes and champagne from France. Under its program of essential commodities Australia even supplied a limited number of Holden passenger cars. The limitation on imports lay in the amount of kip available, and an additional brake (other than budget restraints) was supplied by tightening bank loans. It is interesting to surmise what the powers' reaction would have been if there had been a run on the Fund, but luckily such a crisis never occurred.

Around and About. In March 1965 I got a seat on a "milk-run" flight to Luang Prabang, and this time I was not bumped. The plane was a DC-3, trimmed for cargo and equipped with canvas benches along the sides in order that crates, boxes, and oil drums could be piled in the center. We flew across the flat plane north of Vientiane into the jagged foothills and after half an hour put down at Vang Vieng, a village re-taken from the Pathet Lao in 1964. The capture of this village and the surrounding country re-opened the road between Vientiane and Luang Prabang, that is, it would have re-opened the road if the road were still useable. USAID was in process of making engineering studies to see what must be done to get the road open again.

From Vang Vieng we threaded through mountains another half hour to Luang Prabang. Circling over the town before touching down, I saw that it occupies a peninsula like a finger formed by a small river that flows into the Mekong. Since it is hemmed in by rivers it has little room for growth, which perhaps explains why after centuries the population is still only 15,000. Moreover, the finger's surface is split down the middle by a ridge atop of which perches a golden that (tot) to the glory of Buddha. You land in an airport the other side of the little river. In 1964 the little river in flood, buffeted by the backwash from the tremendous Mekong, topsy-turvied the concrete and steel bridge that linked airport to city, and we had to cross on a temporary bamboo-and-plank affair that would probably be swept away at the next flood, at which time people would go back to what they have been doing for centuries, crossing by ferry.

The Prime Minister of Laos resided in Vientiane, but the King resided in Luang Prabang. His Majesty flew down to Vientiane for state occasions, such as the opening of the National Assembly, and then hurried back to his Vaduz in the mountains. Luang Prabang was also the religious capital. Somebody told me it has 34 wats and thats, but I think he

under-estimated. If you are interested in the representations of the Buddha you will have a field day in Luang Prabang. You will also have a field day if you are interested in Lao art, because the art is principally in the religious domain, notably carvings and paintings on temple doors, buttresses and roofs. Other than the palace and the wats, there's not much to Luang Prabang.

The city was a bit cooler than Vientiane because of the altitude, but it had the same dust and the same mosquitoes and the same potholes. There was, however, a comparative scarcity of dogs, only one per block as against five in Vientiane. There was also less contrast between the masses and the classes. The King was handsomely housed in a well groomed, honed, and painted royal palace, quite unlike the neglected barn he occupied when he came down to Vientiane. There were a few sumptuous villas nearby, but everybody else lived in happy shabbiness, like much of Vientiane, though without the marked contrasts between the wealthy and the poor. His Majesty eschewed pomp except on ceremonial occasions. Strolling along, I came to a parked limousine. Looking at it closely to find out the make, I became aware that the back seat was occupied by a diminutive lady who gave me a stately nod, and I realized that I was looking at Her Majesty the Queen, unattended. I put my fingertips together, made a respectful bow, and retreated, but I might well have popped in and said: "Howdy, Queenie, whatcha doing tonight?"

I climbed the 338, or was it 9,268, steps up the mountain to the great golden that overlooking the city. I walked through several wats and photographed His Majesty's back as he was striding away from the royal wat. I talked with a French businessman who had lived in L.P. for thirty years and was longing for the good old days when he was the nation's largest exporter of benzoin, which is a solvent for volatile oils from flowers for perfumes. I talked with a missionary who made weekly visits to the nearby leper colony. In a silver shop where artisans hammered out goblets and ashtrays I bought an ornate silver bowl for Riekie. At ten that night the town fire engine sent up a mournful wail; two of us jumped into a jeep and followed it, which gives you an idea of how much there is to do at night in Luang Prabang. The fire laddies were unable to find the fire and were eventually told it had died out. I listened to a member of the AID station speak wistfully of the great capital, Vientiane, where there is electric power twenty-four hours a day (maybe), fine restaurants, glittering movies, a brilliant social life. The grass is always greener elsewhere.

One angle to Luang Prabang I considered myself lucky to escape. The Lao new year falls during April, and is celebrated by splashing your neighbor with water. No matter who you are or what your finery, you are liable to find yourself drenched. The tradition holds in Luang Prabang, and the entire diplomatic corps, in procession to call on the King, gets sloshed. Happily, although I was senior on the diplomatic list, I was not quite senior enough to be included in the group that made the ceremonial trip to Luang Prabang. Not that we were exempt in Vientiane. To get to our largest AID housing community, Kilometer Six, you had to go through an army check point. During the water spree the army would stop our people at the check point, invite them out of their cars, and pour buckets over their heads, sometimes the interiors of the cars as well. An added drawback

was that the festival comes at the end of the dry season, meaning that the supply of fresh water is limited. Thus, you could find yourself hit with stagnant water that has lain a week in some ditch. Riekie and I had luck during our three years and were sloshed only once.

We made three trips to Hong Kong, taking advantage of the space available on planes flying to Taiwan for service. The Hong Kong authorities admitted us on condition that we go nowhere else, that is, you could not ride to Hong Kong and then buy a ticket from Hong Kong to another destination. This stipulation that you had to return on the same aircraft had a comic sequence in at least one instance when a plane was found to need major overhaul. Passengers who had planned to stay two or three days in Hong Kong had to remain two weeks until the plane came back. Another condition of the space available flights was that you shopped for other Vientiane staffers. If you had a large number of shopping commissions and attended to them conscientiously, you had little time for yourself.

The planes were usually C-46s or C-47s with bucket seats along the sides and crates and propellers lashed in the middle of the floor. Once we flew in a Hercules, the tail end of which opens to permit entry of cargo of great bulk; another time in a Caribou, about which people kidded us: "If Riekie has ever served as rear gunner on a bomber, she won't be at all uncomfortable in a Caribou." You had to wear jackets and sweaters and topcoats, for the Caribou is not heated, and we emptied ourselves as much as possible just before takeoff, for it has no toilet.

En route to Hong Kong on one trip we put down at Da Nang to refuel. Before starting again, the pilot inspected the engine and discovered a cracked manifold. Because we had no authorization to enter Vietnam, we travellers were required to remain in the U.S. officers' club at Da Nang for several hours while repairs were effected. Da Nang a beehive; jet bombers and fighters, prop transports, helicopters, and routine craft like our C-46 hustling in and out. Coming back several days later, I sat in the navigator's seat from Da Nang back to Vientiane. Our pilot headed not inland but out to sea and did three tremendous circles, gaining altitude all the while, before pointing the plane's nose toward Laos. As we approached the mountains we hit thick fog, and the pilot asked the co-pilot for the height of the tallest mountain in the range. The co-pilot did not know, and I watched as the compass did another complete revolution and the altimeter rose over 10,000 feet before we headed west over the mountains into the fog that snuggled up to the windshield. At full throttle most of the way, we were making 120 knots. About an hour from Vientiane I saw the pilot reduce throttle and feather the props, but all the same we kept gaining -- 130, 140, 160 knots -- and the pilot pulling back on the throttle. We were going down hill, and if the throttle had not been reduced we would have been into a power dive.

I developed a cyst on the lower lid of my left eye. Our dispensary doctor had a go at it but found that the fibers were involved with the muscles of the lid and recommended that I go to a specialist. Riekie and I took a commissary flight to Bangkok where I had the cyst cut out by a Harvard-trained Thai ophthalmologist. I was more terrified of the taxis in

Bangkok than of the operation. If there's any possible traffic risk to be taken, a Bangkok taxi driver will take it. We had to make the drive to the airport three times, and I damn near had twins. One of the taxi drivers was so exhausted from his long day that he kept falling asleep at the wheel at sixty miles per hour.

Getting back to Vientiane from Bangkok was always catch-as-catch-can. Sometimes you could be fitted onto a commissary flight that was not quite filled with cargo. Or you could return by Thai or Lao Airways, but these were uncertain. On one occasion I turned up at departure time and found the plane had gone off an hour earlier. The schedule had been changed, but the airline had not bothered to post it. Or you could proceed by train, an overnight journey in a sleeper. On one of these I shared the compartment with a genial Lao farmer who packed the compartment with parcels wrapped in reeds that he was taking back to Laos. He was saying good-bye to his wife, daughter, and son when I entered, and all of them were sprinkling hairy lichee-nut shells on the floor as they said farewell. When you got off at Nong Khai, you took a samlah to the boatlanding in town, made a precarious descent of the rickety stairs to the water's edge, crossed the Mekong by motor sampan, and scrabbled for transport into Vientiane from Tha Deua.

Career. From the outset it was obvious that my style of working did not find favor with Director Charles Mann. He liked to bare his saber and charge up San Juan Hill, whereas I preferred to slog with the infantry, the more so since I was feeling my way with AID procedures. Plus this, the interface between Lao budget and the commodity import-FEOF program entailed forecasting, a phase of economics in which I had no training and was therefore dependent on my staff. Hanging over my head was the adverse efficiency report I had received while working in Washington. All the same, I clung to a hope of winning more confidence in due course, and this hope was somewhat bolstered when a State Department inspector spent two weeks in Vientiane, reviewed my file, and said nothing derogatory about my performance during our interview.

Shortly after his departure came time for preparation of efficiency reports. In May 1963 the Department of State revised the regulations and decreed that efficiency ratings should not be shown to Foreign Service employees at the time of their preparation by the rating officer. Nevertheless, according to the directive, it was incumbent on the rating officer to discuss frankly and fully the strengths and weaknesses of the performance of the rated officer. Nothing was said to me about my efficiency report or about my performance, but a contact in the Embassy who had access to the draft report told me it was so extremely derogatory that the writer had been persuaded to revise it on the grounds it might be dismissed because of bias. Hearing this, I decided my only chance of avoiding selection out was to get back in the stream of work with which I was familiar, away from AID. After talk with another Embassy officer (who may or may not have known I was aware of the adverse report; how devious these affairs can get!) I wrote a letter to a contact in Washington Personnel asking that I be considered for assignment as chief economic officer at my next post. I never received a reply.

Mann left Vientiane in 1966 and was succeeded by Joseph Mendenhall, an FSO whom I had known casually in the Department as an intense officer who found it difficult to

laugh. Mendenhall had overseen Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) affairs in the Department and afterward had served several years in Vietnam. My relations with him were correct, but we had no personal common ground, and I soon saw I was making no progress toward improving my situation. Mendenhall and his deputy, of course, had access to my personnel file. When you arrive at a post and are told that one of your staff is a dud, it takes a remarkable performance by the employee to overcome the adverse impression. My only hope, as I saw it, was to finish my tour at Vientiane and take on another assignment for which I was better suited.

Partly because of "wristonization," that procedure under which Civil Service personnel were lateralled into the Foreign Service, the structure of the Foreign Service became lopsided, with a logjam of officers in Class 3 and only a few slots available in Class 2 for them to move into. The administrative people tried several remedial measures, notably offering inducements to persons in the top groups to retire. Plus this, they arranged for reverse wristonization, that is, for Foreign Service personnel to transfer to Civil Service positions for which they were qualified without taking Civil Service examinations. Trying to see ahead, I completed some requirements and obtained a Civil Service rating by mail, in case I should have to apply for a job elsewhere in government.

Rocket Day. By May, the end of the dry season, the Mekong shrinks to a deep channel on the Thai side leaving sand flats on the Lao side. You can walk from the Lane Xang Hotel almost a mile across a sandbar that the rest of the year is six feet under water. In May the Lao celebrate the Day of the Birth, Enlightenment and Death of Buddha by holding a rocket competition. Societies or clubs build house-high rockets, transport them to the river bank, and fire them from a bamboo rack.

About noon on May 4 the crowd started filling up the five blocks that run beside the Mekong, and by two o'clock the mob had jammed elbow to elbow and was flowing across the expanse of sandbar like lemmings over the tundra. A bamboo lean-to scaffolding had been erected on the bank to serve as rocket launcher, and poppas, mommas and kiddies clustered around the launcher in a profusion of confusion. Spectators who chose to be sedate sat on the banks. On the street, bands of raggedy mummies with blackened (or sometimes whitened) faces danced to the wheeze of khenes (bamboo pipes) and the clash of cymbals. Trucks brought the rockets to the river's edge, home-built affairs of bamboo with warheads loaded with black gunpowder, the whole wrapped in gayly colored papers and bearing banners with names of sponsoring organizations. Dignitaries sat in a canvas-roofed reviewing stand on the street, but unless they were in the front row they saw nothing because the populace blithely invaded the seats and blocked the view. There were heat, dust, jostling and flies, but everybody was in a good humor, for was it not a holiday?

As each rocket's turn came, the sponsors would lift it from a truck, form a procession, and carry it to the launching stand. It would be propped against the scaffold, and the crew would worry it into place while clowns would dance around it with their khenes and cymbals. After perhaps fifteen minutes of preparation would come the big moment; everybody would clamber down, there would be some attempt to clear children from the

base, a slow match would be lit, and the multitude would *aaaah* as the flame made its way upward. Results were mixed. Sometimes the fuse would be more explosive than the rocket, and there would be unexpected snorts and puffs. Sometimes the rocket would emit abortive bangs and send up clouds of grain-filled smoke that blackened faces and reddened eyes. Sometimes it would heave itself agonizingly off the launch and flop in the sand with terrifying gasps of smoke. One whopper went up twenty feet, levelled off parallel to the ground, and hurled itself almost into Thailand. And sometimes the rockets performed as intended and lofted into the clouds. Happy Rocket Day! After some four hours, everybody went home grimy and sweaty and pleased as kids at Barnum and Bailey's.

In the evening the people remembered the purpose of the festival, to honor the Buddha. We went to a wat and watched a group of saffron-robed monks lead a procession of candle-bearing devotees three times around the temple while a bell clanged and a voice intoned a chant over loudspeakers. Rocket day is also customarily celebrated with fertility rites, but some society or other complained to some authority or other, and nowadays the practice is limited to rural areas.

Tin. In October 1965 I joined Ambassador Sullivan, Director Mendenhall and four others in the twin-engined C-51 Beechcraft on a two-hour flight to Saravane, which is in the southeast on the edge of the Ho Chi Minh trail. The objective was to visit tin mines near Thakkhek, but we never made it because of ceremonies. The Saravaners lined up in a queue along which we honored guests walked and collected gifts, ranging from handicrafts to rocks. Although I avoided the queue by appointing myself to take snapshots (which did not turn out), nevertheless I was given a bunch of flowers by a village maiden. Our party entered the military headquarters for a briefing by the local commander, after which we flew to Thakkhek, an hour to the northwest on the Mekong. The schedule called for us to change to a helicopter and fly to the village of Na Kan for lunch and then to the mines, but a hitch developed when it was learned that the Thakkhek commander had appropriated all supplies of helicopter fuel. We were delayed until Ambassador Sullivan could negotiate release of a drum of fuel with which to make the trip. Then we helicoptered over the mountains--a stupendous sight--to the village, but became so involved in welcoming ceremonies, drinking of la lau (rice liquor) in a ritual that required you to slurp a certain amount, and a luncheon feast at which Prince Boun Oum na Champassak made a speech, that we never did get to the mines. We were back in Vientiane by 6:30, in time for the Ambassador to host a dinner at his residence. You have to have stamina to be an ambassador.

Royalty. The That Luang fair of November, 1965, offered more amusements than those of the previous year, adding two daredevil rider shows, a girly-girly show, two platforms of taxi dancers (equivalent to ten cents a dance, that's what they pay me), and believe it or not, a genuine ferris wheel. The Red Chinese attracted throngs with the simple device of a large outdoor movie screen showing films of acrobats, jugglers, and tightrope walkers.

His Majesty King Savang Vathana came down from his hilly capital and held a reception which I and other members of the diplomatic corps attended in black tie. All the Lao

dignitaries were done up in decorations and sampots, those baggy wraparound pants. We guests stood around the Mekong palace grounds in serried ranks assembled, and the King ambled past smiling graciously and shaking hands with those in the front row. We witnessed peasant dances, including a Lao version of the *tinikling* we had seen in Manila, the dance where bamboo sticks are clapped together and the dancers hop in and out, except that the Lao version (maybe it's Thai too) is more complicated. Then came classical dances, those stately measures where the dancers wear ornate headresses and pose their hands like birds and butterflies. I found these and the accompanying music exquisite, but I am sorry to say a number of the distinguished guests could be seen asleep in their chairs. After the dances all hands charged to the bar, for we had not been offered anything up to that point, following which came assorted snacks and dancing for the entire group. The King retired early, but protocol decreed that I and fellows remain until Ambassador Sullivan left; protocol decreed that the Ambassador remain until the Crown Prince left; and as the Crown Prince took a notion to practice the *tinikling*, the hours were wee before the Ambassador and us staffers could go home.

Local. To improve the town in honor of National Army Day and a pending visit from the Prime Minister of Thailand on March 28, 1966, the Vientiane authorities tore down the evening market and replaced it with a park, installed a second traffic light and got it to work, and ripped out a row of shanty huts in back of the morning market revealing the most squalid, filthy eyesores conceivable, an absolute cesspool. How people lived in these quarters without getting the epizootic is incredible; probably they did get it. An innovation was the installation of post boxes on street corners. Till then, you had to make your way to the one and only post office building in the center of town. Whether or not the new boxes did their job is open to question; nobody we knew had the courage to drop a letter in one and see if it got delivered. The new water system which had been building for some years, part of Japanese reparations, came on stream, and several taps in our house burst from the unaccustomed pressure. Of course, we continued to boil and filter all drinking water as nobody suggested the new water was safe.

As part of the festivities for the Prime Minister, (oh, yes, we got to shake hands with Prime Minister Thanom Kittikatchorn) we were invited by Lt. Col. Sing Saisana (of the royal house of Xieng Khouane, an area held by the Pathet Lao) to a whooptedo at the Army barracks at Phone Heng, which was one of the places that was severely shot up in the February, 1965, coup attempt. We were seated at the table of General Kouprasith Abhay, and we spent a pleasant evening watching the guests dance the lam-vong, the ballroom imitation of classical dancing where you wander around making vaguely graceful motions with your arms while holding your hands in the shape of a lotus blossom. At these dances the Lao ladies will consent to drift around the floor with you, but most of them scurry back to the flock of ewes as soon as the dance is over. I danced with the wife of a French diplomat, and she requested earnestly that I waltz only to the left as she had never learned to whirl to the right.

My office at the AID mission was immediately next to the mission conference room. Somebody procured a new table for the conference room and discovered that the new table was so long there was insufficient space to squeeze behind it. The solution was to

extend the conference room two feet at my expense. Forty workmen descended on a Saturday with the avowed purpose of chopping off my room by the following Monday. A week later I sat with wet plaster all around and a coat of dust over all. An intriguing question was whether or not anyone had figured out how to get the new long table through the conference room door. Eventually the muddle was worked out.

Four members of the U.S. Davis Cup tennis team came to town under a cultural exchange program, ostensibly to give exhibitions for the Lao. Jim McManus, Herbert Fitzgibbon, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Riessen, and Mr. and Mrs. Clark Graebner. Mrs. Carol Caldwell Graebner was third-ranking woman player in the United States. Sally and Marty Riessen, a handsome young couple, put up at our house, and I was interested that they asked for no special diet or training regimen. Indeed, because a round of receptions and bashes was held for the group throughout the three days, it's a wonder they didn't depart in considerably less effective physical shape than when they arrived. They flew away to more exhibitions in Bangkok and Rangoon.

Apropos of nothing, I wrote the following beautiful poesy on a sort of bet:

Line me a bower with roses and phlox,  
Alternate lao-lao with Scotch on the rocks,  
Offer me durian in hands of phusaos,  
Sing me of paradise, sing me of Laos.

One of our chaps held a Mongol barbecue, consisting of platters of raw beef sliced thin. You take some beef in your chopsticks and heap it in a Chinese bowl. Then you add soy sauce, onions, lao-lao, rice wine, bean paste, and any other drool that happens to be handy. You take the mess to the charcoal brazier and dump it on the grill. It was amazing how many of the guests stood down wind while doing this so they barbecued themselves as much as the meat. You turn the beef over a couple of times with your chopsticks, then tuck it back into the bowl and into yourself. You are astonished at what a good cook you are.

The Banque de l'Indochine sent a bundle of dollars and checks to Wattay for shipment to New York. Robbers hijacked the bank officials at the airport, threw pepper in their faces, and made off with \$420,000 in currency and \$200,000 in travel and personal checks. A few hours later the robbers were intercepted trying to cross the Mekong, and the valuables were recovered.

At a discotheque held by the Ambassador, I danced with the beautiful Mrs. Omura, wife of the Japanese First Secretary, and she said, struggling gamely with English: "You know mowie staww James Twawwt?"

I said: "Whaddja say," and she says, "You know mowie Staww James Twawwt?" We kicked this around until I got to the point where I said: "Yes, I do know the movie star, James Stewart." She said, "You look like him." I pointed out that James Stewart is very tall, and she said in French, which she spoke as courageously as English, that yes, he was

much taller than I am but just the same I look like him. I said cautiously, "James Stewart is very good looking, isn't he," and she said enthusiastically, "Yes, yes, yes!" I said: "I hope he is your favorite movie star," and she said enthusiastically, "Yes, yes, yes!" I said something about being a cowboy, and she said: "All of us at the Japanese Embassy think you look like him. I think you look like him. My husband thinks you look like him. Ambassador Wada thinks you look like him." Ambassador Wada was a cross between an unemployed samurai and the Lord High Executioner, and I was sorry to have him brought into the conversation. The music quit at this point, and I was unable to pursue the matter further. Mrs. Omura was about half my age.

When I went to the dentist at Operation Brotherhood hospital, I found the following sign on the door:

OUR DENTAL CLINC WILL CLOSED  
ON THAT LUANG FESTIVAL DURING  
4 DAY START 26 TO 29 NOVEMBER  
EXCEPT THESE DAY WE ARE WORK AS USUAL.

What would you have done? Gone away? Waited to see what would happen?

A major annual event was the signing of the agreement renewing the Foreign Exchange Operations Fund for the coming year. The way the protocol worked was that the Lao Government handed each contributing government a letter saying We propose you do so-and-so. Each contributing government (Australia, France, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States) handed back a letter saying in effect We acknowledge receipt of your letter which says so-and-so, and we agree. Thus, the texts of the two letters had to be identical. For the ceremony on January 11, 1967 I got hold of the Lao letter in advance and made sure its text corresponded to the one I was preparing for our Ambassador to hand to the Prime Minister. The British First Secretary, new to Laos, neglected to do so until one hour before signing time, then discovered that the Lao had left out a whole paragraph. He had to charge to Foreign Affairs and get them to type the letter again in time for the ceremony. The dignitaries congregated in the Prime Minister's house, the Ambassadors on one side and the P.M. on the other, speeches were made, the letters were signed and swapped, and afterwards everybody swigged a glass of champagne. During the champagne a Lao official sidled up to me and whispered, "We forgot to date the letter we gave you. Please insert the date." That's diplomacy.

Highway. According to the map of Laos, a road runs north from Vientiane to Luang Prabang, the royal capital. In fact, the map says that Route no. 13 runs from one end of Laos to the other, but we are concerned only with the Royal Road section, completed by the French in 1943, and since 1961 allowed to go to weed. Books said you could drive Vientiane-Luang Prabang in a few hours. In verity you could drive as far as the Nam (river) Lik and then you ran into wilderness. In April 1966 the chief of the mission's public roads section took several of us for an inspection of the Royal Road as far as the Nam Lik.

In December, 1960, Colonel Kouprasith Abhay's right-wing forces had attacked Vientiane from the south, trying to drive out the neutralists led by Captain Kong Le. The outnumbered neutralists evacuated by the Royal Road, pursued reluctantly by General Phoumi Nosavan, who had come up from Savannakhet. So slow was Phoumi, despite overwhelming superiority in men and armament, that Kong Le crossed the Nam Lik 95 kilometers away without hindrance and blew up the French-built bridge. One of the first tasks of AID's roadbuilders was to restore the bridge; the opening ceremonies had been held about a month before our trip. At the time, Kong Le was making his headquarters at Vang Vieng, 155 kilometers above Vientiane and mid-way to Luang Prabang, and the area north of the Nam Lik was still neutralist territory.

About twelve kilometers (clicks) north of Vientiane the paving ends and you ride on dirt. The road slices through rice paddies, villages of thatch, fields of bananas and palms, and acres of scrub bush and trees. Over all sifts dust, brown and gritty and insistent as talcum, and when it mixes with your sweat it makes a better pancake than Max Factor. Naked brown children shout "O. K.!" as you drive by, which is much better than Yankee Go Home, and buffaloes ignore you with lots of lassitude. When you come to a village with more thatch and dust and languor than most you have reached Phon Hong, the focal point for an AID Cluster or group of communities being helped into self betterment. Here our caravan diverted 10 kilometers for a look at the Nam (river) Ngum.

This flows south from hills near the Plain of Jars, bends east where it joins the Nam Lik, and heads for the Mekong some 20 miles below Vientiane. The great Mekong Development plan, conceived in 1965, called for a dam to be finished on the Nam Ngum in 1970, but to visit the site would have required crossing the river by ferry, and since we could not spare the time we retraced the road to Phon Hong and resumed our journey north on the Royal Road. The Nam Ngum dam was an early step in a United Nations concept, with cooperation from 28 nations, to control the waters of the Mekong (National Geographic, December, 1968, p. 744), which was to be greatly, perhaps permanently, delayed by the southeast Asian conflicts.

You enter hills, and with a few turns the character of the road changes from an open window on the countryside to a ribbon of sand and gravel locked in by dense bamboo forest. Bridges become frequent, short spans that take you over gullies which, bone dry now, become torrents in the rains. Because many of these leftovers from the French were made of shivery timbers, the engineers had bulldozed detours around them until they could be replaced. The road is hard-surfaced and all-weather but not paved. The French roadbed is being followed, and the only changes are to widen to an average of seven meters and to straighten out curves where "eyeball engineering" indicates improvement. Just short of the Nam Lik we came to the roadbuilders' base camp.

Here were set up half a dozen mobile homes, hinged so they can be folded flat for overseas shipment but can become "permanent" housing once set up. They were brought over by a contractor who built a road between Thakhek and Nam Candinh, then were bought by AID and barged up the Mekong to Vientiane, when they were trucked to the Nam Lik. Equipped with furniture and plumbing, each trailer had two bedrooms, a

common living room, bath and frigidaire, quarters for two men (the families stay in Vientiane). Electricity from the camp's own generators provides air conditioning. A separate trailer serves as a common mess, and here we had a short beer and a hearty lunch before pushing on to the river.

When Kong Le destroyed the bridge, he blew out the further span without damaging the mid-stream abutments or concrete supports. The engineers threw across a low level bridge to get equipment and materials to the far side, widened the concrete supports, and replaced the blown-up span. The low level bridge was to be taken out before the river rises with the rains. Beyond the Nam Lik gangs were working on the road, following up the advance men who were pushing back the stands of bamboo. It was remarkable to see a grader, its blade up-tilted, smoothing the side of a cut like a barber trimming a man's head. Fascinating too the putting in of a Bailey bridge. These come in structural sections, like Erector set parts, and you can make them any desired length by bolting sections together. The men assemble them on rollers, and when they are ready to be laid from one abutment to another a tractor hitches a tow from the far side and tugs them into position. Because the nose of the bridge tends to dip as it is being tugged across, a special forward section is built on at an upward angle that lets it easily come to rest and permits the whole structure to be dragged into position. The angled section is detached after the bridge is secured. All that remains then is to add flooring.

Farther along we came on men pushing back the bamboo forest. A bulldozer nudges up to a tree and rips it out by brute force, then shoves it into the forest and sweeps out bamboo for ten meters as it goes. Hand labor follows up the bulldozer, cleaning out small growth. Where the debris is heavy, there are huge rakes mounted on tractors. To give our party an idea of what the old road is like, we were driven beyond the farthest point reached by the work crews. The bamboos, thick as whiskers, moved in on the road and arched over it to form a tunnel blotting out the sun. The world dwindles to the road snaking ahead and the living wall on either side and overhead. One hundred feet into the bamboo growth and you would be hopelessly lost. They say the Ho Chi Minh trail is like this, a network of roads wide enough to carry trucks but completely blocked from view of planes trying to intercept. The road was still moist from last year's rains. The early section was wide enough for two cars, but farther along it narrowed to single lane. The French used to alternate it one-way part time.

We were able to drive to Van Vieng during the dry season. After the road is through it will be possible in all seasons. There is an outside chance the road might be finished as far as Van Vieng before the rains set in, depending on how early they come. The toughest part of the road, lying in the mountains between Van Vieng and Luang Prabang, was to be tackled in 1967.

Provinces. VIPs from Washington streamed through Vientiane as the months sped by, among them Vice President Humphreys, Senator Teddy Kennedy, Senator Tydings of Maryland, World Banker Eugene Black, columnist Joseph Alsop, newsman Pierre Salinger, head of Continental Airlines [James] Six and wife Jane (do I mean Audrey?) Meadows. In August, 1966 an AID bigshot turned up in connection with renegotiation of

the F.E.O.F. agreement, and the Boss decided that I should go along with a party on an orientation tour. The first day was a repeat of the drive north on Route 13 as far as Phone Hong, the nucleus village of a cluster of nine villages. The cluster concept was akin to the fortified hamlet idea that was tried in Vietnam, but without the armed forces element. The cluster of villages participates in aid distributed by the mission, and the villages share common items such as road builders or cement mixers and join in common projects such as small dams. We made a courtesy call on the *chao muong* or mayor of the village and stopped for a talk with the young community development advisor, an AID staffer stationed at Phone Hong. He told us of his frustrations, like the blacksmithy that has been held up by local politics, and his pretty wife (expecting their second child) fed us slices of cake. This young couple lived in comparatively affluent circumstances, with a neat wood house on stilts, a generator for electricity, an electric pump for water, and access to the metropolis of Vientiane for supplies. Nevertheless, theirs was a lonely life, with only one other American couple near by, and no diversions except the bouns or festivals given by the villagers. Many AID community development advisors lived under far more primitive conditions in remote areas. As on my earlier trip, we drove to the Nam Ngum to have a look at where the great dam is to rise in 1970 and returned to the Royal Road to proceed to the Nam Lik. We had lunch at the road construction camp and hurried back to Vientiane.

The following day we flew in the Beechcraft to Pakse, the second largest city after Vientiane populationwise and commercialwise. Most of Pakse is on a peninsula formed by the confluence of the Se Done and Mekong Rivers. Part of it spills over to the opposite side of the Se Done, and there is a one-way bridge between the two sections. You can also cross the massive Mekong to Thailand, but you have to take a ferry.

Pakse was the headquarters of an AID Area Coordinator, in charge of AID operations in six provinces -- Wapikamthong, Sedone, Saravane, Attopeu, Champassak, and Sithandone. He drove us 60 kilometers north to Khong Sedone, the capital of Wapikamthong, and we met our young community development advisor and made a courtesy call on the *Chao Khoueng* or governor of the province. We lunched on *soupe chinoise*, omelette and sticky rice at an open air Chinese restaurant while all the kids in town gathered round to stare. We drove a bit farther on the road that is being pushed through to Saravane, looked at bridges, *groupe scolaires* (schools grades 1 through 6), and a civic action training center for military personnel. We got back to Pakse about 6:00 and put up at the mission guest house, a sort of dormitory that was comfortable enough but offered no chocolates on the pillow. The traveller who has no access to the guest house must put up in an oriental hotel, Pakse's only other accommodation.

The third day we drove east toward Paksong. (By now you've figured out that you mustn't confuse Paksane, Pakse, and Paksong.) The road pointed to the Bolovens Plateau, the country's most fertile area, rising to some 4,000 feet, and providing coffee, tea, pineapples, strawberries, and rubber in addition to the usual rice, bananas and manioc. The Bolovens had been in the hands of the Pathet Lao or communist faction for years, but with completion of the road government forces were able to travel in convoy between Paksong and Saravane in the east, close to the Ho Chi Minh Trail. We drove until the

mud became so thick we were in danger of getting stuck. We looked at groupe scolaires, bridges, a dispensary, two small dams, and a village of Pu-Thai, one of the primitive tribes. The thatched shacks were just high enough to sit up in, and many of the women were bare-breasted, which is not usual among most tribes. We drove back to Pakse in time to fly off for Vientiane at noon. Thus does one get to "know" a foreign country.

Flood. Karen joined us in June to spend a second summer in Laos, working at a little job painting name plates for the mission and attending so many sociables that she came down with a mild case of dengue fever. About mid-August, 1966, we began to realize that the seasonal rains were unusually intensive, continuing for days without a letup. The Mekong rose steadily, and people began to talk of sandbagging the banks to protect the town. Our house stood on a height that drained the water away, but the town and the airport were vulnerable. Karen was scheduled to set out on her return trip on September 2nd, but by the last week in August we began to worry that planes would not be able to take off.

The skies continued to drain, not only in Vientiane but at Luang Prabang, Ban Houei Sai, and upper reaches of the Mekong, and the old River gathered volume as it gurgled to the sea. Estimates put the rise at 35 feet, and growing. Our house was secure on our slope, but the road to town deteriorated and our water supply was threatened. As the downpour continued, many of our personnel had to leave their houses; in due course a couple who had to abandon their home moved in with us. The ferry to Thailand discontinued operations because Nong Khay, the village on the Thai side, was flooded; on the other hand, boats that ordinarily landed at Tha Deua now could sail and unload directly into Vientiane. On August 30 the river flowed in earnest over the road between Vientiane and Wattay, and it was obvious that the airport was going under. The head of AID Transportation warned me that if we waited until Karen's scheduled departure date he could not guarantee transport would be available. After checking with our Executive Officer and learning that a helicopter would be at That Luang near our house on other business, Karen made a hasty departure from Vientiane on August 30, proceeding by helicopter to Wattay and then to Udorn, where she caught a train into Bangkok. She flew on to Beirut and London, staying with Bill and Louise Armstrong, my former boss in Ottawa, and got back to Washington in time for the start of the University.

"August 31, 1966. Rain comes down steadily, no deluge but a steady weeping that mires the roads and mildews the clothes. The Mekong rises higher and higher, and there is talk of sandbagging the banks to protect the town. The townsfolk and our office will be in bad shape if the rain keeps up like this a few more days. We will all be in bad shape if Wattay Airport swamps as we are dependent on air transport for mail and much of our supplies. With our house on relatively high ground, we are safe as regards inundation but we have problems getting in and out and in maintaining water supply and fuels -- electricity, butagas for cooking, kerosene for hot water. The AID maintenance people are supplying water and gas, but the city electric plant is on low ground, and we fear it is only a matter of time before the current is cut off. We are in better shape than many of our people who are having to shift out of their houses. Among them is Ambassador Sullivan himself, whose home is smack on the river. With boats sailing directly into Vientiane, there are ample supplies of foodstuffs but the problem is to move them over the flooded roads to

Kilometer Six and other communities.

"September 4, 1966. We are at the stage where we don't know whether the flood is tapering off or the worst is yet to come. Vientiane is now a series of small islands separated by floodwaters. Sunken areas have become ponds, and slight rises stay dry, like atolls. The dike along the banks in the center of town still holds, and the two main business streets remain dry. The next block inland is flooded, and since our Embassy chancery is at that point we are operating with a skeleton staff on the top floor. The old canal has swelled into a lake some 200 yards across. High-standing motor trucks can traverse it, and there are small boats. Then comes a dry area off which lies the AID compound. Since this is low ground it risks being flooded, but the mission has built a wall of sandbags which to date has held out the water. The Embassy and AID headquarters have shifted to makeshift stations at That Luang. Two of the roads to That Luang have become impassable, and the third has water flowing over it. Helicopters land and take off at That Luang, ferrying supplies and providing transport between the city and our main residential area, Kilometer Six. Conflicting reports come in about the state of the River at Ban Houei Sai and farther up, close to the Burma border. There is no danger of a flash flood, and there will be ample time if evacuation becomes necessary.

"Our technical divisions -- the guys who know how to do worthwhile things like stack up sandbags or operate communications or distribute rice -- have duty posts where they carry out useful tasks. Useless people like me write one telegram a day and sit around in hopes of being helpful. Most of these intellectuals are sequestered at Kilometer Six to keep them out of the way.

"To get downtown from the AID compound, you proceed on Lane Xang Avenue from the concrete arch until you come to the lake that extends to the far side of the morning market. The water is waist deep, and to cross it you must go either by boat or by a truck that sits up high enough to keep the engine dry. The waters have gouged holes in the roadway that make the trip increasingly hazardous. When you get across the lake you find sandbags stacked all along the road. The truck takes you on the Route Circulaire past the Chinese Embassy nearly to the old afternoon market before you reach dry ground. Here the shops are doing business as usual. Some shopkeepers have moved goods to upper shelves, and some have built waist-high brick walls, but most just wait for whatever comes. There is no hoarding of goods, but food prices are up. Rice has jumped from 70 kip to 120 kip per kilo, with little to be had even at that price. There are still vegetables and fruits and also some pork and buffalo. Walking to the riverside, you find the Mekong held back by a two-meter high dike that has been thrown up by our people, Public Works, and the Army. Thus, the business district sits placidly between the terrific Mekong on the one hand and the lake that has seeped up out of the old canal along the Route Circulaire on the other.

"A block from the Route Circulaire is our Chancery, flooded on the ground floor but with the communications unit operating on the upper floor. Ambassador Sullivan and officers have moved to a house near That Luang, and are linked with the Chancery by radio and (theoretically) telephone. A Marine sergeant takes a motorboat from the Chancery to

Avenue Lane Xang and proceeds by car to the sandbags that hold back the lake at the morning market. He crosses the lake by a second motorboat to the USIS office and proceeds by car to the second lake beyond the concrete arch. Here he takes a third motorboat that lets him off near the Japanese Embassy, now up to the second floor in water, where yet another car is waiting to take him to the temporary headquarters. To carry messages back to the communications unit in the chancery he retraces his, er, steps.

"Riekie works with a public health unit giving cholera and typhoid inoculations to Lao children. She pacifies the child and swabs off a spot on each arm with an alcohol sponge. A Lao Army technician hits one arm with a repeating typhoid inoculator, one of those machines that can give lots of inoculations like a sort of gatling gun without having to change the needle or charge up the hypodermic. Riekie then soothes the child while a nurse hits the other arm with a regular-type hypo for cholera. Riekie comes home quite bushed after a morning in the sun but heroically returns to her swab in the afternoon.

"Nong Khai is under water except that the airstrip is said to be still operating. The ferry has suspended operations because there is no place on either side of the river for it to land. Helicopters bring in supplies, and our commissary in the compound stays open. Commissary vans serve Kilometer Six. Our communities at Sunset Village and Rainbow Village are under water, and the people have been moved to Kilometer Six. If the AID compound floods, the houses in the compound will be untenable. In such a situation, we may have to evacuate people to Bangkok. Such a migration could affect up to 2,000 Americans.

"September 7, 1966. There is optimism that the flood has reached its peak and is on the down grade. Luang Prabang has registered drops in river level for several days, and yesterday Ban Houei Sai showed a decrease for the first time since the trouble began. The AID compound still holds out. A shuttle service has been set up between the compound and That Luang using six-wheeled trucks. Going in the opposite direction, a makeshift bridge has been put up over the sandbags at the far side of the morning market lake so that one can go directly to the business district rather than travel around by the Route Circulaire.

"Yesterday I set out by car from That Luang for the business district. Most gasoline filling stations are under water, but I had a full tank of gas and nowhere to drive except to the That Luang island. I left the car near the submerged Japanese Embassy intending to take the motorboat ferry. It had broken down, so I joined another AID man in a home-made coracle, big enough for two Lao paddlers and two passengers at 50 kip per head. I sat down facing backward, and we had not moved 20 yards from shore in the wobbly, teetery craft before I wished heartily I were back. Motorboats generated bow waves that washed over our gunwale, which stood two inches above water, and my fellow passenger baled with a Coca-Cola can. Coca-Cola makes the best balers. The waters raised the coracle so high we could reach up and touch telephone wires, a situation I found not at all reassuring. We would not have drowned if we had gone into the drink, but I was mighty glad to reach the next dry strip.

"We walked five blocks to USIS and got a ride in the cab of a six-wheeler into the business district. On the return trip I again rode in a truck, this time in the back. When a truck comes along all the populace -- man, Jack, Jill -- scrambles into the back, and I too swarmed up the tailgate. It was not as easy as I expected, and I would have fallen back if a Lao boy had not hauled me in. We had to wait in the water while crossing the lake because of a stalled truck ahead of us, and I was amused to see our modern transport overtaken by a small boy riding a buffalo. So it goes. No matter which island you are on, you feel you must shift to another, and to do so you use any sort of transport you can scrounge.

"There is hope that the crest of the flood has been reached and that from here on it is downhill. Those whose houses are under water face a long wait before they can move back in, from ten to thirty days depending on conditions. Some water will soak into the ground and some will evaporate, but the river must go down before the water can drain off. That means large ponds and marshes of stagnant water with unpleasant smells, myriads of insects and mosquitoes, and colonies of frogs and snakes. Already our people are telling tales of snakes they have killed. With houses vacant, there will be temptation for looters, and this will add to the losses already caused by water. We are in for an unpleasant time. Riekie and I are especially lucky in being untouched by water or vandals.

"September 21, 1966. The waters have shrunk from the fields, and things are moving toward normal. The Embassy staff has moved back into the Chancery. The Kilometer Six road is in tatters but open to traffic, and so are the other two roads from the That Luang area to town. The lakes and boats are gone, the helicopters limit their flights to carrying essentials between That Luang and Nong Khai, and bus service has been restored to Kilometer Six. City water has been re-connected to our house, the electricity flows heroically, and our house guests have swabbed out their own place and gone back. Mail deliveries are uncertain as no planes can land at Wattay, but supposedly mail will be delivered by helicopter. Tests are being made of the landing strip at Wattay to see if the foundations were damaged or if it is merely a matter of waiting for the subsoil to dry.

"September 28, 1966. Vientiane is a mess. The streets are mounds of dirt, and since dust is covering everything, we who have just swum through the flood are now wishing for rain, light rain, that is.

"October 10, 1966. Vientiane is gradually straightening itself out. Some of the streets that were ruined by flood waters have been smoothed over although not repaved, and the mud has been scraped out of the morning market. The city still has a long way to go before it can get back to its usual self. Although the airport is still in bad shape, it can handle C-47s, and commissary flights have been resumed."

Future. October 5, 1966. My assignment to AID was not to exceed 30 months. Month 24 came in September, and I was notified that we would not receive transfer orders until January, 1967. Not that we would be transferred in January but that we would not be transferred before then. As is customary in personnel matters, the full story was withheld,

but the situation can be pieced together something like this. I was a Foreign Service Officer of Class 3, that is, third class from the top. Each class had a number of yearly within-grade steps. In Class 3 there were seven, and I was now at the fifth. If I were not promoted to Class 2 after going through the seven steps, or if I were rated in the lowest ten percent of my class as regards yearly performance for two successive years, I would have to retire. In my first year in Vientiane, I worked for a Director of a very different temperament from mine, and I drew a very adverse efficiency rating. I did better in the current year, but the adverse rating was in my file. Since my rank was such that I would have to be assigned as chief of section in most posts, ambassadors personally reviewed my file before agreeing to accept me. When they saw the adverse report, they decided I was not the man for them, and so there was no new post for me. The Selection Boards were meeting and would be in session until December. They would render a judgment on my future on the basis of the current efficiency rating. If their judgment was favorable, I might remain in the Service another year. If unfavorable, I might have to retire. The odds are that it would be unfavorable, despite the improved rating, because of the surplus of officers in Class 3 as compared with the number of slots available in Class 2. If this analysis were correct, I would learn in January whether I had a future in the Service or would have to seek other employment.

R&R. Long before the Flood we had put in for Rest and Recuperation leave, and we set out as the rosy-fingered dawn thumbed its nose at the departing night on October 20, 1966. We took the commissary flight to Bangkok and caught a Malaysian Airways Comet jet that landed us in Penang in less than two hours. Malaysian Airways treats you well. The stewardesses are sloe-eyed Malay ladies dressed in curved batik and Revlon, and every time the plane goes down or up they give you a gumdrop. The island of Penang is mountainous, and because there are no worthwhile roads across the mountains one skirts the edge. The hotels cater to those who want whispering trees and plashing waves, and if you are looking for roulette and spicy floor shows you have come to the wrong place. We paid \$25 Malay (or about \$8 U.S.) for a double room and breakfast. We were discouraged from swimming by finding numerous Portuguese men-o-war stranded on the beach.

We took snaps of fishermen casting their nets. Seven men held the net at Point A, and seven others held the other end at point B, 50 yards farther along. A small boat rowed the center of the net out to sea. The men on the beach hauled it in, performing with rhythmic grunts. Each man had a rope tied around his waist, and he would hitch the rope onto the end of the net to assist his hands in tugging. As each hauler got to a certain point inland he dropped his hold, circled around to the water and hitched onto the net again, resuming the rhythmic grunts. This continued nearly an hour before the net came fully ashore. The yield of small fish half filled a bushel basket. The men rested awhile and tried it again, and when we came back to the haotel about 4:00 they were just knocking off for the day. Healthful and not too strenuous work in pleasant surroundings, but I doubt that it was particularly remunerative.

We rode the cable car to the top of Penang Hill, some 3,500 feet high, in many ways reminiscent of the ride to the Peak in Hong Kong. The trip to the cable car required

frequent changes of 30 cent buses and debates with Riekie about which bus not to take, and the day went rapidly.

A two-engine Friendship Focker that put down at Ipoh and Kuala Lumpur let us off at Malacca about ten in the morning. I changed some money at a bank and there ran into good old Ginger, the manager. Ginger didn't remember me, although he tried hard, but I used to play tennis with Ginger at the Polo Club in Manila some ten years previous. He told me he had been manager of the branch at Malacca for eight years, had a fine house with a view, and played tennis regularly. "The club is pretty awful, but the Dunlop boys (rubber) fix me up, you know." I imagined Ginger would manage the branch in Malacca until retirement, when he would return to England and become the subject of an Agatha Christie.

Albuquerque came out of Goa with a fleet and took over Malacca in 1511. Possession of the town gave the Portuguese control over the Straits of Malacca, through which ships had to pass to get to Java, and thus gave them a monopoly of the spice trade until the Dutch outmaneuvered them. The Portuguese built extensive fortifications which the Dutch pulverized around 1641. Today there are only three buildings, or fragments of buildings, left from the Portuguese days. There are also buildings from the Dutch occupation, but their only distinction is that they are painted red, which for unexplained reasons was the Dutch custom. We inspected a small fort and a Chinese temple and were supposed to see fanatics walk on hot coals, but they never screwed up their courage to the point of starting to walk. Perhaps just as well. We also went through a rubber plantation. We enjoyed Malacca although it was not as pregnant with historical relics as I had expected.

The Fokker carried us to Singapore, and we put up at the fabulous Raffles Hotel. All others pale beside it. Apart from the hotel, we did not get much out of Singapore. The sightseeing bus did not seem to know many sights, and otherwise we toured shops not quite so varied as those of Hong Kong. In a Singapore newspaper we read that the day after we left Vientiane the commander of the Lao air force had bombed Vientiane. The following day's paper said briefly that the commander had fled to Thailand, so apparently we missed another revolt by taking leave.

From Singapore we flew to Kuala Lumpur. We called on Ambassador Jim Bell, my former boss in Southwest Pacific Affairs, and were invited to a reception for a group that had come to make arrangements for a coming visit by President Johnson. Stefanie Bell, who remembered Riekie fondly from Washington, asked us in for a drink the following evening, but we stayed less than an hour out of respect for the pressure attendant on a visit by the President. Back to Penang and thence by jet to Bangkok, staying with Hope and Ben Robinson. Ben had recently been transferred from Saigon, and they had moved into an apartment overlooking the Victory Monument. On October 28, we saw President Johnson lay a wreath at the Monument although our view was not too good because security people required us to keep all windows closed.

Two days later we turned up at the airport for the Thai Airways plane to Vientiane and

were told the time had been changed and the plane had already gone. The next plane two days later. So to the railroad station, where the best I could do was two upper berths. We got into Nong Khay at 8:00 next morning, wrestled with samlaahs to immigration, negotiated our way across the Mekong, argued with a taxi to Vientiane, and arrived home pooped but content.

General Ma, head of the Lao Air Force, operated an independent command out of Savvanakhet in spite of long continuing attempts by the generals in Vientiane to bring him under their control. There were many currents and personal feuds, and something caused him to blow his cork. On October 21st his planes from Savanakhet had swept over Vientiane, dropped bombs on military posts near Wattay, Chinaimo, and Phone Keng, and strafed the military headquarters in the heart of town. Presumably the targets were the commanding generals of the Lao armed forces, but the victims were mostly student officers who received direct hits while in classrooms at Phone Keng. About 30 were killed and some 25 seriously wounded. The generals were not harmed. After this slaughter, General Ma flew to exile in Thailand, but rumors of another coup floated for some time. The red ants were seen engaged in a tremendous battle with the black ants, and that always presages a coup. Didn't the seers predict disaster when Souvanna Phouma refused to do anything about the stolen dragon eggs and sure the Mekong went on flood?

Orders. At the end of two years on post in September, 1966, I was due either for home leave or transfer, but orders came through for neither. On January 23, 1967, at my request Personnel sent in a request for home leave pending reassignment, and figuring that some kind of word would have to arrive sometime I started selling off personal effects. According to my insurance company, our Galaxie Ford had a replacement value of \$200, but under regulations I had the right to ship the car home at a cost to the Government of about \$900. Accordingly, I sold it to a chap from the French mission for that amount. Orders arrived February 28 authorizing us to quit Vientiane any time after March 1st and to report for duty in Washington in June. My new assignment was as economic officer on the Indonesian desk in the Department. Thus as an FSO-3 with two years heading a desk and two years heading a section, I was returning to a position I had occupied as an FSO-4. The signs were not auspicious, but if I were selected out why didn't they just say so? Nothing to do but wait and see.

When you are located halfway around the world, you can choose between returning to Washington via the Pacific or the Atlantic; each costs the same. We decided to go via the Atlantic with a side trip to South Africa to see our relatives and bear the extra airfare ourselves. Our route was to be Bangkok, Bombay, Nairobi, Johannesburg, New York, and Washington. We were given the usual round of good-bye parties, culminating in a grand affair hosted by Mendenhall at which I made a farewell speech in French to Lao high officials, and we left Vientiane March 30, 1967 on a commissary flight. At home, the Pentagon announced that 9,008 Americans had died in Vietnam in 1966 and that U.S. troop strength stood at 380,000.

After two pleasant days with the Robinsons in Bangkok, we turned up at the airport and were told that our 9:15 TWA flight was delayed. We switched to Alitalia and arrived in

Bombay just in time to see our connecting flight taxiing to the runway. We were offered a hotel room but chose to stretch out on an airport bench because another flight was due in only five hours and we figured we would need one hour to get to the hotel and another to get back. The five hours turned out to be seven, and we flew Air India into Nairobi too late to catch the connecting flight to Joburg. Perhaps just as well, as we would have been dreadfully tired to have gone straight on. Air India put us up in a pleasant hotel, and we rested comfortably, although we saw practically nothing of Nairobi. British Air carried us to Joburg at 9:00 the following morning, where we were met by the family.

Chapter 24  
End of Career, Start of Career.  
(April 1967-Ubiquity)

"Though little, I'll work as hard as a Turk,  
If you'll give me employ...."

- *The Farmer's Boy*, old song

We spent ten pleasant days in South Africa, visiting Didi and Jack in Middelburg, Janet and Janus in Johannesburg, Karel and Gertie in Meredale, Hendrieka/Jackie and Jean Paul/Hennie in Standerton, and Henk and Rentia in Pretoria, departing each family group just in time to keep from wearing out our welcome. We flew on South African Airways from Jan Smuts Airport on April 13, 1967. At that date South Africa had not yet been branded a pariah nation, and the plane put down at Leopoldville, Lagos, Accra, Monrovia and Dakar before heading over the Atlantic. In later years South African Airways was to be forbidden landing rights and would have to fly nine hours into Isla do Sol, off the coast, and another eight hours into New York. Still later, of course, landing rights in the United States were suspended altogether.

Although we arrived at dawn and were in Manhattan by 9:00 a.m. the hotel admitted us at once and we had a nap before making our way to the State Department Reception Center to telephone headquarters. For I had been handed a message to get in touch at once when we entered the reception room at the airport. I talked to a Personnel man who seemed reluctant to give me information except that I was not to proceed on home leave but was to report to the Department. When I pointed out that we had elected to travel via the Atlantic and that if we had chosen the Pacific we would now be on the West Coast on leave, he said that this was realized but that my assignment would be changed. I could interpret this cryptic stuff only as signifying that I was indeed being Selected Out.

We passed the weekend in New York visiting friends and ogling the Rockettes at Radio City Music Hall. Journeying to Washington by train, we put up at a hotel, and I got in touch with Personnel on the morrow. Curiously, the person I talked to was Patty Byrne, a fellow classmate in basic course back in 1949. Patty was to become ambassador to Ceylon, but at the moment it fell to her to give me the axe. We had entered the Service together, and now she was seeing me out. I was invited to take voluntary retirement effective July 31, and if I did not avail myself of the invitation I would have to take involuntary retirement. She scheduled an appointment for me to work out details the following day.

In that retirement interview there was momentary panic when I was told I did not qualify for a pension because of insufficient service, but this was straightened out when it was established that Personnel had left some five years out of my record. The situation as finally worked out was that I would draw a pension a little less than half my regular salary and that I would be free to use my leave in looking for another job. One point that was not stressed at the time but that I came to appreciate in later years was that the

pension was entitled to annual cost-of-living adjustment. As salary scales were soon to triple, we would have been hard up if forced to rely on the original pension amount.

Karen and her room-mate being out of town, we were able to occupy their flat near the University of Maryland for a few days. I contacted the tenants of our house and was pleasantly surprised when they agreed to vacate within two weeks, allowing us to occupy our own dwelling full-scale for the first time. We devoted the next weeks to sprucing up the house and looking for a job.

My position was similar to that of many people in Washington, for example, military personnel who qualify for retirement after twenty years of service and then seek other employment. We had many advantages: a house with a 5 3/4 percent mortgage, a sure though modest income, a daughter half-way through college, and a yen to work albeit given that I was then 52 years old I was a bit long in the tooth. All the same, I let myself settle into a blue mood because I felt I had been fired. I was helped out of self-pity by Fred Leatherman, a retired Foreign Service officer who worked in the Department's special service for outgoing personnel. He took the trouble to give me a pep talk, pointing out that I was not fired but honorably retired like numerous others. Well, I would gladly have risen to be an ambassador, but somehow I could never find a President of the United States who had any interest in the idea.

Everybody has his own way of looking for a job. Having been employed since 1938, I was out of practice, and I wasted much time calling on people who had no authority to do any hiring. At one time I had hopes of joining the Federal Reserve as an economist, but this fell through and I continued to look. The break came during the latter days of July when my resume caught the attention of someone in a research outfit, and I was taken on as a research associate with the Center for Research in Social Systems with the initial assignment of writing chapters in books on how to get along with foreign (non-United States) peoples. Since the starting date was August 1, I was able to keep working without loss of a day. Thus did I embark on another twenty-year career, this time in the mysterious realm of social sciences research where institutions pay people to prepare papers for F&F or Filing and Forgetting.

*End of interview*