

9th July 1962

1.30 am Left York station

6.00 am London. Met rest of group in garden of St. Botolphs Church Hall, Bishopsgate, breakfast in garden.

9.30 am Left Dover for Ostend, 3 and half hours. We were herded onto the boat like cattle with no seats available and were not allowed on deck.

Rush to board train at Ostend; compartment to Cologne with 2 English student teachers. Had practically a fight to get couchettes for the night; eventually in with 2 English economic students from Edinburgh, one English pharmacy student at Nottingham and one American who told us his entire life history in 5 minutes flat and then said casually, "Oh, I'm American, by the way ! "

Slept very well.

10th July. Awake in Munich 6.am. Had breakfast, very expensive. Stopped at Salzburg, then through gorgeous scenery, snow still on high peaks. Haymaking on tripods, maize, some wheat and barley.

2.00 pm. Yugoslav border; held for two hours, visas and so on. Beginning of Yugoslavia rather like Austria, hay drying in vertical stacks under roofs. Travelled along river Sava to Belgrade.

12.30 Belgrade to Skopje 8.30. Dinner in Yugoslav style; salad, veal, soup, excellent beer. Breakfast in packages, tinned meat, fish etc:

Followed river Vardar which forms the Axios in Greece. The train became hotter and more unhygienic. Took two hour passport checks at both frontiers, very tedious.

Arrived at Salonica around 3.30. Took bus into centre, having deposited two English chaps at National Tourist Office. Caught bus to Sednes.

Met Poppy and parents once again, it was really like returning home, everyone has been so friendly. met Cool, Anthill and Mary. Had a good supper of egg and chips wit apricots which are in abundance. Strolled down road with girls, retired early. It felt strange having only one sheet to cover me.

12th July. Went off on bus to Triad to the beach, after visiting the Institute and having coffee with Lita and Juanita. Met some students from University studying engineering. The sea was was wonderfully warm and it's heaven to be back. Rather bumpy bus ride back, slept late in the afternoon. Spent evening listening to Lita's son Antonio playing his guitar. Drank ouzo, almost like brandy, burnt throat. Spent night rushing to and from toilet, result of overdose of apricots.

Friday 13th July

Went into Salonica at 8.30 with Poppy. Looked round the market, sent PC off home. Went round St.Sophia church (7th C) and St.George ((4th C) , the latter is an empty shell with

some remarkable mosaics, patterned birds and flowers. Stopped under Galerius Arch (15th C) built by Venetians. Returned home and went for the afternoon to Trade. Met John and Mark, returned book "the Unfair Sex" and went for drinks at a cafe. Waled round University Farm. Retired early.

Saturday 14th July

Got up at 6 am and caught an early bus to Salonica (Vardar Sq.). Started walking on Kavala road; walked about 3 miles on very dusty road because they are building a highway there. Few cars or lorries. A couple of men offered to take us back to Salonica for a few days and then to Zavala, very dicey ! Many cars full up. Eventually got on lorry to Kavala, 161 km. Stopped for water. Drove by lakes Koroneia and Volvic and through village of Elefteroupolis to Kavala. Very attractive, set on two hills; Byzantine fortress on hill top. It is the centre of the tobacco industry, so we passed many tobacco fields en route. A lorry driver dropped us on a beach but it was rather dangerous for bathing, hidden rocks and quite large waves. I must have trodden on a thistle bush as my feet are full of thorns. Were troubled by local Kavala youths so we eventually retreated and had some lemonade in a cafe. Attempted to hitch-hike but very little traffic, about one vehicle every 5 minutes. Got a lift from two vets as far as the X-roads near Chrysoupolis, they gave us their telephone number in Salonica. Picked up by familiar type in Mercedes, drove through driving rain storm to Xanthi.

Xanthi. Arrived in the rain, it was almost like a shanty town. Had an omelette in a cafe for which we were grossly overcharged. Hitched another car to Komatani (Olympia). The driver and his friend stopped in Portalago, a fishing village. The road had been diverted through villages on a narrow strip of land between the sea and Lake Vision. Church of St.Nikolaos rises out of the water. Given coffee.

Komatani. Stopped on road to Alexandropolis, saw our first camels, very unusual. Fields of sunflowers, more tobacco and maize. Picked up by another lorry, stopped for coffee. Drove through picturesque mountain scenery ; people more Turkish-looking and churches with minarets on towers.

Alexandropolis. We though it would be impossible to sleep anywhere but on the beach since we arrived around 8 pm. However an English speaking policeman with a chrome-laden bicycle came to our aid and took us to a "Girls Home", where we were made very welcome and able to have a shower, bliss ! Met nice Greek woman speaking French. We could barely get to sleep due to the eagerness of everyone to meet us.

Sunday 15th July

Had a lie in until about 10 am. Walked around the town with tourist policeman and French-speaking lady. Saw church 65 years old, Alexandropolis has little to offer as far as history goes. Went swimming with two tourist policemen to a bay to the west of Alexandropolis. Slept for the afternoon then went out again with the same couple for the evening. During the two sessions we had two proposals of marriage; one to go and live in Rhodes, with air fare paid. The only consolation being he provided an excellent fish lunch and fried calves liver for dinner. Nothing really could have been more romantic; the room, the sea and the balmy breezes, only problem, wrong people !

Monday 16th July

Left the Girl's Home at 8.30. Tried to exchange travelers cheques into Turkish currency but unable to do so. Started walking towards the Turkish border. Our friend the Tourist policeman caught up with us and helped us stop our first hitch, a Ford Van too Ferrai. Had long stop in cafe, watched buffalo bathing. Lorry hitch to X-roads to Istanbul, both ways. met some German boys who were also going in the same direction; very few vehicles, about one every quarter hour. Lorry to Soufflé. Decided to hitch on to Didyotichon. Stopped outside hospital, great attraction. Lift on lorry that made a detour around narrow streets in Soufflé. The road at Didyotichon was being made less pot-holes, versus most of the roads around the area which were very bad. Discovered that the train to Istanbul did not go until the next day so we went onto Pythion. Got a local train to Pythion, rode in the driver's compartment, very special ! Station at Didyotichon was out of town.

Pythion. Met by more tourist police who took away our passports. Staying in hotel, very peculiar set-up. Went down to river Evroos to bathe, loved across at Turkey. Our policeman friend came too. Very shallow water, heaps of frogs, not a very large river but fast flowing. We almost got involved again... no thanks ! Retired to hotel for douche and meal; tried to get fried eggs but ended up with boded eggs. We seem to have a male inmate in the room with us as there are three beds.

Tuesday 17th July

Woken up by hotel porter ! at 4 am to catch train to Istanbul. had to go through customs and retrieve our passports. We boarded the train at Salonica with two carriages; 3 first class compartments, 2 German girls, 1 English architect, and 1 Turkish chap. We travelled first class as there was literally no standing space in the compartments. Managed to get a seat. The others had been travelling for 3 days. They had cut two cows in half through Macedonia (the train, that is) Apparently it took ages to extricate the mangled cows from the front of the train. We left at 5 am and arrived in Istanbul about 2.30 pm. Countryside very bare; a few sunflowers and some rice fields. large herds of cattle roaming the plains. The train became somewhat unhygienic as we passed by Dardanelles round the coast and into the suburbs of Istanbul.

Istanbul alias Constantinople. had coffee altogether at the station. Drove to one hostel that was closed and then to another Girl's Hostel which is like being in an institute; about 30 beds in one room. The room is clean but the toilets and washbasins are disgusting. The Turks are not allowed to use toilet paper, instead they have small taps near the toilet to wash themselves with, very unhygienic. We left about 5 pm to meet the others, crossing the bridge to the more modern part of Istanbul. Spent a frustrating time with Analiss, the German girl who is in the same hostel, trying to find the right meeting place. We met them all eventually and went to a sort of Mexican-style cafe to have beer and shish-kebab (small pieces of meat on skewers with tomatoes and peppers). Went onto a cafe over-looking Asia; it was like fairyland with boats sailing up and down lit up and a large orange harvest moon. had peach and cherry ice cream, delicious ! had a bit of difficulty finding the hostel again, it was extremely dark and suspicious at that time of night, we were glad to get inside. There is no water at present in the hostel.

Wednesday 18th July

Waited until 9 am to make phone call, arranged to meet at 2.30, set off for the Bazaar. It was absolutely fabulous; a maze of arcades, each pertaining to a certain trade; metals, clothes, carpets, shoes etc: etc: it was out of this world, all the metals being worked on the premises. We met Analys with her Turkish friend in a carpet shop. I was going to buy a prayer rug but I changed my mind and bought instead a fabulous carpet for 12 pounds. This Turkish man was a student from Munich and realizing out money difficulties cut down the price. We met John and Mark again, they had hitched from Salonica to Istanbul, lucky devils ! I persuaded Mark to buy a carpet as an investment and twin to mine, we might flog the two at a future date. We took photos wearing Turkish dress, sitting on Turkish carpets. We got back and tried to catch a bus to the other end of the city. It was impossible and so hot that we finally gave up and got a korush, a sort of joint taxi they have here. You just pick up people en route who share the fare. We waited an hour and a half for Mustafa, where we had been told where to meet him, then left feeling very annoyed. He owns a Turkey tile shop. We also tried to get a Turkish bath on our return but it was closed. Mustafa failed to turn up at 7 pm, so we caught a taxi to the same cafe of the previous evening. We went over the Ata Turk bridge for a change, but the driver tried to charge us 7.5 lira but we beat him down to 5 lira. Came back by bus directed by German teacher.

Thursday 19th July

Set off early to see the Aya Sophia Mosque but it was closed so went to see the Blue Mosque which was gorgeous; blue tiles around the wall giving a reflection. Built between 1609 and 1616, it is the only church in the world to have 6 very graceful minarets. Went to the Bazaar, bought a square of cloth 15/- and two rings 5/- and wandered around the jewelry department. Tried to have a Turkish bath but had forgot soap, it looked most peculiar with a lot of old women sitting around. We met Mark at the post office, John was ill in bed. Went to a cafe in the Bazaar for shish kebab. Looked around the Surley Maniwa Mosque (1550 - 1557), cream and black design.

We talked about the problem of societies in the world; how few women are seen on the streets in Turkey, they are treated as inferior and must stay at home. They are only allowed in balconies around the centre of the mosque. No wonder we get such strange looks when we move around the city, the men must be desperate. Under Islamic law the men are required to go to the mosque five times daily, and pray on the side facing mecca. The Koran is read from a high pulpit by a prayer leader. There are thousands of low hanging oil lights, fabulous sight. At the Blue Mosque sits a man who was cut through his middle, how he survives, I don't know. Another law among Muslims is the circumcision of young boys around 9 year of age. This is a great ceremony where all friends and relatives are invited and the child's bed is decorated with flags.

We walked back to the Aya Sophia Mosque which is now a museum, paid 150 kuras to enter. Originally constructed by Constantine 347 AD, destroyed in Niko Rebellion 532 AD and rebuilt, dome collapsed in 557 AD and was again rebuilt. It was made a museum in 1935 under orders of Ata Turk. It was unlike the other mosques because it was a church before. Uncarpeted and very cool with a lovely dome of mosaics. Took a bus down to the walls of Istanbul, built in the Byzantine era. Visited Mosque of Faith, built in 1470 under Mehmet 11. Returned via TMTT booked bus ticket to Izmir 35/-. Apparently girls in Izmir don't like Wright's Coal Tar soap, they complain of the smell !

Thursday July 20th

Got up at 7 am and caught the 22 bus from bottom of hill to Aruavulkoy up the Bosphorus. Found house of Ziya's grandmother; very small and wooden but commanding a lovely view over Bosphorus. After breakfast of chai (Turkish tea) with bread and cheese, (they are a Greek family), went over to Ziya's sister's family, alias his brother in law, where we had more chai and biscuits with parents, sisters, cousins etc: We all went swimming in the Bosphorus. Came back for an enormous lunch; meat rolls, stuffed egg plants, mince meat pastries, melon and peaches. Spent the afternoon listening to a variety of mandolin and violin playing. Then we walked up over the hill to view Istanbul and Bosphorus from a height. Caught bus up the Bosphorus as far as it goes, viewed Black Sea in distance. Came back, had little supper and returned to hostel digging dirt fast. Istanbul is a very unpleasant place once darkness's has fallen.

Friday July 21st

Had a cup of chai downstairs then caught the 86 bus to terminus near city walls. Went to view mosaics in the Kariya Mosque (5 - 12 Cs), there were also some frescoes, all very well preserved; the mosque was a church before being turned into a mosque. The mosaics are of the orthodox type. In mosques images of Mohammed or Allah are never portrayed. Took bus back to Aya Sophia, visited the Sultan's Palace (Topkapi Palace). This was a group of irregular buildings built in bit between 1453 - 19 C according to the wishes of various sultans; most of the rooms full of jewelry , armory, precious jade, vases etc: We walked around the grounds and had another delicious ice cream, then wandered around the Bazaar. Bought cigarette holder of Meischaum stone unique in Turkey. It's a white soft stone, easily carved, I hope of some value 6/-. Came back and rested, then went out in search of food for tomorrow. Had a Turkish bath, hot water at last ! Sat on wooden stool in steam-filled room and poured hot water from stone bowls over ourselves; it was marvelous and a real treat as we were feeling very tired and dirty. Some Arabs have arrived so probably the reason for our room move; Turks and Arabs don't mix. Last night in Istanbul. Annalise nearly had us in hysterics with her story about our Turkish carpet friend trying to hold her hand in Oriental night club.

Saturday July 22nd

Woke up at 6 am and took taxi to Jet office (name of bus company). We were late in starting and by the time we had picked up numerous people and baggage it was about 8.30. We had to wait a further 30 minutes for the ferry across the Bosphorus to Asia. Many little men selling their wares especially one funny one with a wire basket who went to no end of trouble but couldn't sell us anything. Drove to Izmir and back along opposite strip of coastline to Bursa. Here we stopped for lunch, just about time as the coach was not all that comfortable, bad roads. Bursa is rather a nice town towered over by Mt. Olympus (Uludag) which had some snow on top. had omelette for lunch after much discussion . The country became very mountainous and barren; in the valleys sunflowers, wheat, maize and peach orchards predominated, some tobacco. Passed by Lake Apolyant to Belukesir, picked up extra passengers. Turned inland to Sindirgi, stopped at wayside cafe where goat's milk yoghurt was drunk ravenously by the other people on the bus, we drank some slightly fermented fruit juice. There was a goat lying on the table with a dog and chicken around, very lovely. Passed onto Akhisar and up some very mountainous roads to a cafe at the top which had little to offer except a few tomatoes but we had some tea. The toilet was the

most amusing thing of this place, a diverted steam passing under two cubicles between two bricks which were the only way of standing above the flood. The music in the bus became a little loud so complaints were made appropriately. Canted to Manisa (a mining town), then to Izmir. We were stopped by a police patrol and all the people who were "extra" on the bus ducked down between the seats while the police came on board to inspect the number of passengers. From here the road became very mountainous until Izmir. Arrived with no one to greet us until Edward arrived and direct us to a hotel and bedroom for the two of us; very nice and hot douche.

Sunday July 23rd

Had a lie in for a change. Edward came about 10 am bringing a friend called Freddie who was almost an Elvis Second. He was an Italian Turk who wore a pink shirt and Elvis-type hair-style, more Italian than Turk. He carried around a transistor portable which played out tinny American records; imagine that among ancient ruins ! Went to view the ruins at Bergen and to see the ancient city of Pergamum with remains of Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman civilizations. Two very nice theatres. had to take a car to the ruins which we shared with two Swiss boys, it really was very hot. Went onto ruins at Acheption. Sat drinking for an hour then returned about 8 pm. Went out to Turkish night club; some fantastic semi-nude dancers in red tights. Freddie became a little too familiar for yours truly, although we danced a sort of jive. Had a little trouble before returning to hotel at about 2.30 am.