

Thursday 12th August 3am

Left Oxford at the start of our 9000 mile journey to Peking, after frenzied day of packing and repacking. Drove in turn to Dover which we reached about 8am after a brief stop at John Mans in Beneden. It is his Mini which we are taking to Moscow while he uses John's Aston martin for the summer. We have painted a map of our route on the side of the car, which causes considerable interest throughout the journey. This part I am writing about 14 days later so there are likely to be some omissions. We arrived too late to catch the boat from Dover to Ostend so had to take the Boulogne ferry, about 70 minutes.

Made all haste on reaching France, stopping for about two hours for lunch and to bask in the sun where the corn was being combined nearby. (Combine Harvester named "Notre Dame Auguste") Stopped in Ghent to buy sleeping bags for John and David, also pots and so on, in a place they were selling old Nazi helmets. Spent about an hour outside a tunnel in Antwerp, then joined a motorway which eventually leads to Moscow. Found a campsite near Liege; corner of wheat field, very muddy !

Friday 13th August

Passed Belgium/German border; they thought I needed a visa for Jersey, British Colony ? !! Drove at 50 mph, non stop via Hannover and Berlin (through which we were not able to pass because of having to get double transit visas. Delay of about three quarters of an hour at East German border (cost five marks, single) Great contrast over border; very little traffic, no advertisements, just lorries and a few tourists. Frankfurt au der Oder border. Gorgeous view over river Oder with harvest moon, rather spoilt in a way with floodlights and sentries on bridge.

Entered Poland rather slowly, plenty of drunken Poles around but we were unable to find the source of their drunkenness as all the cafes and pubs were shut. Found an ideal campsite in a forest; made a fire although it must have been after 1am, and had beans. By this time we, John and myself, had discovered that David has an insatiable appetite and sleeps for long periods in between. This race of Yorkshiremen is a race apart !

Saturday 14th August

Could observe Poland more easily in light; peasants at work in fields and villages, very reminiscent of Turkey. Offered yoghurt and milk in exchange for biros, given eggs as a sort of bonus. Drove onto Poznan where John and David were able to get a rate of exchange of 200 zoteks to the pound instead of 67 at the border, from an English Pole who had relatives there. Walked around market, horse-drawn vehicles mainly; good looking horses, plenty of bone and quality, dish faces. Vegetables mainly toadstools but apparently mushrooms and bitter cherries. Few clothes very poor quality. Met a stranded Pole outside Poznan whose car had a cylinder blown out. Interesting to note that none of the Poles would help a fellow countryman who had once left Poland for the West. Saw plenty of nasty accidents en route; one French red sports car with back buckled up and an enormous lorry with a motor cycle flattened under its front tires. hardly surprising since lorries seem to drive on one light and horse-drawn vehicles with no lights.

Warsaw. Arrived about 7pm. Plenty of advertisements on modern building for one thing,

P.K.O. Wondered about its meaning and we made up Edward Lear -type verses about its anonymity. The city is in the throes of re-building still, after the war. Magnificent Post Office where we had a soul-destroying time of choosing between many beautiful and various stamps and PCs. Building massive in marble but hideous colors of salmon pink and green. Attempted to reach the frontier, after an encounter with an anti-Russian Pole. Reached frontier at 11.30 pm only to find it closed so camped in damp terrain near river; frogs, mosquitoes and wild mint !

Sunday 15th August

Crossed frontier, river Bug; amusement when I sketched the guard, he wanted a sketch of himself to keep. Long stop at Intourist, pleasant personnel but one cannot hurry-up these people , we find it the same everywhere. Busload of English jobs arrive with exclamations, "Oh, are you English too, how nice." Their traveling egotisms were slightly deflated when they realized how far we were going . Our baggage was carefully looked over , especially books and papers but nothing in particular came to their notice. Passed through Brest, small town, no old buildings. Road continued without bends for 200 miles, good surface but one is apt to doze off and fail to notice passing peasants. (Polythene bags fetching about 10/- each.) Tried to take photo of large statue of Lenin in village but was stopped by aggressive youth with red arm band, obviously party organizer or equivalent. All the bridges guarded by sentries with fixed bayonets. Next village was a contrast with groups of workers who enquired about the car and praised English-Russian friendship in a long speech. Drove through Minsk , wide streets , very little traffic , depressed population and all the buildings were new. Collected blocks of peat from roadside, mainly wheat, millet, vegetables and forest. Campsite at Smolensk closed but amicable policeman with nothing better to do , got an old woman to open the gate. Realized we had lost two hours and that it was now 1am not 11pm !

Monday 16th August

Campsite provided cooking facilities but WCs and washbasins were rather dirty, as is the case from now on. Showers only on in evenings.

Road to Moscow. Forest lined , boys selling mushrooms by roadside , these still look like toadstools. (have to be boiled then sautéed in fat) Long view of Moscow, very attractive in rosy evening light, university standing out predominantly like a spread-out skyscraper. Drove round Moscow to Red Square which was just as I had imagined , wonderful gold-onion domes, tipping red and white towers. We just drove through and continued to the campsite which was a mud bath, having got the car lodged once, we were given a permanent tent. Drove into Moscow again and to the Metropol where we found an Americanized bar with equally americanized loud-mouthed people; very expensive and nothing to show for it except vodka and dance. Committed first motoring offense by driving across Red Square which is closed to motorists. Worth the view of the brilliant illuminated red stars on the building around the Kremlin. Some policemen stopped us but we got off with "tourists license."

Tuesday 17th August

This day proved to be our most difficult day of our trip. We had to exchange Progressive

Tours (London agent) vouchers for rail tickets, which proved very complicated and meant that we finally missed the Peking train. We first attempted to leave our luggage at Yaroslavsky Vokzel station but there was no left-luggage apparently or at least we never found it. While John and David went off to get tickets, I spent the afternoon in the Kremlin. One church had coffins containing the remains of all the stars, while the walls were richly decorated in Byzantine paintings and icons. There were so many people, all Russian tourists, that it was impossible to see everything quietly and at a distance. Apart from this all the information was in Russian. The architecture outside was easier to admire, very rich decorations with designs that would look over-powering elsewhere. I then wandered around GUM, a department store, Moscow's answer to Harrods; very crowded and not many good things, clothes and material especially poor. I saw some gold and silver-plated spoons which were about 3 pounds each but have no idea if they were worth it. The only other souvenir items were painted boxes and bowls, also expensive and rather mass-produced. While coming out of GUM, I was approached by two lads who wanted to buy sweaters, this proved to be our undoing. Drank a third of a bottle of vodka and the lads bought a guitar which I managed to swop for a sweater. Met John and David, chaos ensued while my Aran sweater and one of John's was exchanged for a dud 100 rouble note. To make matters worse, time became a vital factor in the operation and we arrived at the station just in time to see the Peking train move off. It was a terrible sight especially as the complications it entailed, meant we would be kept at Intourist for the next three days, sorting things out. There was little we could do except return to the campsite 24 km out of Moscow.

Wednesday 18th August

The people at Intourist were slightly amazed to see us but refused to help this state of affairs, we came to know we would be in for the next few days; in fact we almost might have become members of Intourist itself. Due to the friendliness of one, Ms. Artishevsky (nicknamed artichoke), we were able to get most of the ticket changes etc: we wanted but not without a great deal of time wasted and frayed tempers. Even phoning someone is a major operation; one first has to find the person one wants to phone to ask his or her number, rather like having a whole phone book ex-directory. Not only that but the woman with the only phone directory is always "just out, or gone for lunch."

Thursday 19th August

This day was really an extension of the previous two, clearing up the mess made by our missing the train. There was more of a problem trying to extricate the 35 pounds in travelers cheques, which I had paid unwittingly for soft instead of hard berths. Apparently one can only get back English money on the border. We shall see !

Friday 20th August

Again our time was wasted at Intourist but we managed to go and see the Exhibition of Economic Achievement, rather like a permanent Royal Show, only covering a multitude of subjects ranging from astronomy, electronics, railways, to agriculture, culture and music. The grounds must cover about 6-7 sq.miles and each subject is confined to one building or area; these buildings are monstrosities of architecture, without being new or unique. The cattle breeding/ milk section took up my time; Friesians, Simmental, Ayrshires, Brown Swiss and a red Asian breed. Milk production and fat % seemed excessively high in Ayrshires,

rather doubtful about these records. The cattle were being paraded around a ring in true English fashion.

Our journey to the station had been pre-arranged by Intouristand having left the mini at the British Embassy, we travelled in grand style in Yakuza with a chauffeur. We sat and waited for the train which arrives at a different platform every time, so it is easy to miss it. The compartment consists of 4 berths, fairly comfortable, blankets and sheets provided, with a fourth member of our party being a Russian army captain returning to China. Our luck was in and he turned out to be a very cooperative and amiable chap. There is a supply of hot water which is constantly available and cold drinking water, but the WC and washbasin leave much to be desired. The Russians on the train seem to wear a tracksuit/ pajama outfit in blue woolen stretch material; they don't appear to do much except sleep and eat, which after all is much what we do. Our captain plays chess and cards and has beaten all three of us at the former. Set are available from the restaurant car, not to mention books in French and English as well as Russian, which the steward brings round like a mobile library. Piped music is supplied with bumbling Russian from a compartment further up the train, where a man sits surrounded by tapes and machine but no western music apparently.

Saturday 21st August

It's impossible to believe that when we set out on the longest train journey in the world, nearly 7000 miles one way we would wake up and see the same scenery for three days, while the train moves determinedly eastwards. My views are somewhat merged, only being broken by intermittent slowing down of the train and fifteen minute stops. This train is dead on time to the minute, what a lesson for British Rail! At each station a woman waves a folded yellow flag for where we are to stop and it is always women who tap the wheels under the train with their hammers. They also grease the points and do numerous other jobs on the lines. Our excursions up and down the train are limited; there's no real vantage point except at the end where a very fat dumb-looking man stands resolutely as guard, watching the endless miles of lines disappear from view. Service from our standard is somewhat limited, he acts as a guard at stations, a hoverer in the morning and tea maker at night.

Sunday 22nd August

Everything that is reminiscent of a Sunday morning except the boiled eggs, toast and papers; we lay in until 12 o'clock local time. We seem to have gained three hours in no time, although the station clocks still register Moscow time and the train is still punctual. The country is flat with pastures and steppe, occasional plough and broken by clumps of trees. At some points there are stretches of water, on which ducks and geese thrive, large fat birds, must be a Siberian variety. We crossed into Siberia after the Ural mountains; the country is far less bare than I had imagined, plenty of potential for steppe-type farming, I can imagine large herds of sheep, cattle and horses roaming these vast areas. Small villages dotted along the railway track with little wooden houses and sunflowers towering by painted windows. We have made the acquaintance of a Russian English speaker in the next compartment. Although an ardent Communist, we find we have much in common and she is very friendly. Her knowledge of England and English is remarkable, although she comes from Chita, a small Siberian town, she owns 37 volumes of Dickens and has read more English classics and modern authors, than any of us. She is 25, married with a son, having had a whirlwind romance of six days.

Monday 23rd August

The country is beginning to undulate more, with dense forests of silver birch, which seem to be the predominant trees here. hayfields are scattered in the clearing , rather reminiscent of Austria, without the mountains. Stopped at Krasnoyarsk for 15 minutes, a large town with large timber yards and a great railway bridge (like the Fourth Bridge) spanning the Yenisei River; this was apparently built by the young Communists, among other things. Crops of oats and potatoes among others in forest clearings.

Tuesday 24th August

Woke up to rain and Lake Baika, having stopped at Irkutsk for 15 minutes. The town seemed large but our stop was somewhat early so there was little to see through the rain. The lake appeared through the mist, with mountains stretching away into the distance. The lake itself must be one of the largest lakes in the world; it drains into the Artic Ocean and the Pacific and is over a mile deep in places. We couldn't decide whether it was fresh or salt water because there appeared to be large deposits of salt along the lakeside. The woman from Chita brought in some small nuts, which are gathered from local fir cones and roasted over fires. These nuts are found only near Lake Baika. Most of the day has been spent alongside the lake with occasional clusters of people holding up mushrooms or berries for sale or just shifting the salt or mending the line. Other more desolate patches show where the waters have risen and receded leaving primeval forests of silver birch, hanging with roots exposed. The whole country looks very wet, though this is accentuated with the rain. Slightly more hilly landscape now with bushes (which kind I can't decide)

John and I climbed into the engine cab at Ulan Use, a vast 250 ton machine with gigantic red wheels attached to a hissing frame. The steps up into the cab were an obstacle in themselves and the inside was a maze of green paint, brass and red levers. The engine driver, firemen and stoker turned out to be very friendly and had no objection to our staying in the cab when the train moved off. It averaged about 40 mph over 150 kms, with intermittent blasts on the whistle; the firemen added some substance like graphite to the whistle for some reason or another. We were given seats next to the furnace which looked like a hot bed of hell, when opened. A constant screw in motion kept the furnace raging and transporting coal automatically from the coal truck behind. These men seemed a race on their own, far removed from ideas or propaganda, just part of the steam engine and like the dying race of steam engine drivers in England. On our return from the engine, we found that half the train was searching for us, while David in an unnatural way was packing in case he had to wait for us at the next station. Although somewhat reprimanded , everyone treated us as returned prodigals or heros, obvious envious of our experience.

Wednesday 25th August

At last today, the beginning of the true steppe as i have imagined it; open land in rolling hills and plains, stretching to the horizon, covered with numerous grasses and wild flowers which would be a treasure trove for any botanist. Occasional herds of sheep and cattle watched over by solitary herdsmen on Mongolian ponies. In other parts there are pathetic attempt to cut the steppe grass for hay, but all this by hand and most of it must be leached by the weather. Most of the unassuming villages scattered over the steppe are camouflage

for the intensification of Russian troops along the Chinese border. Apart from a few scruffy soldiers, one would not be able to recognize this force. Our friend Vladimir departed at one of the towns near the frontier and we went on to Zabaykalsk , the Russian side of the frontier. Here we descended for usual passport control etc; and met a Danish couple who had unfortunately left their passports in Irkutsk and had been bound to the station for three day, unable to go anywhere. I managed to get back the 34 pounds from Russian currency, which was quite a surprise at the frontier post !

The gauge on the railway changed and the train disappeared for what appeared to be a complete new undercarriage. Our problems really started with the Russian customs who turned everything upside down including our most personal articles. The films caused the most trouble as David admitted having taken a bridge and station. They took away his film (undeveloped) and promised to develop it and send it to Intourist in Russia. Of course this is both impossible and impractical , so it's doubtful if he'll see it again. John and I pleaded with them about our films at present in the cameras and they spent several minutes trying to make us take them out. However, I swore that they were only pictures of Moscow and they eventually believed us. They went through every other paper and case we possessed before departing; ironically they missed copies of National Geographic and Time.

Our train then proceeded through a heavily guarded area to the Chinese frontier, where a pleasant change greeted us from the burlesque Russians. With the utmost politeness, they inspected our passports, taking particular note of things like makes of cameras and watches, and making us count our money in front of them. They even bothered to knock on all the closed doors along the corridor. We went into a very colorful waiting room where eye-catching samples of silks and lacquer tea sets were on display. There was also a large selection of Chinese propaganda magazines in several languages, against US aggression in Vietnam. We boarded the train with a new dining car and staff, although we of course had been having all our meals out of suitcases, which by this time has mostly gone. But somehow one's appetite diminishes as the journey lengthens, perhaps it just because we sit around each day.

Thursday 26th August

It seems strange to be traveling through Red China, it is just how I imagine it; hot and swampy, we've been plagued with flies and mosquitoes all night. The country is well cultivated where possible, mainly maize, melons, beans, potatoes and some large reeds which they cut for straw. The "coolie" picture is certainly not obliterated in the new regime; mud houses flourish alongside brick ones. Part of the flat plain is just marshland where a strong warm wind appears to blow continuously. We have met an elderly French-Chinese gentleman with his daughter who only speak French but are very friendly and have offered us a meal, though when this will be, I don't know. We reach Peking tomorrow morning , not tonight as we had thought. We stopped intermittently all day; colourful stations with large red banners. Also got acquainted with a Swedish boy who speaks eight languages. He is more left wing than the Russians and belongs to the National Society party in Sweden and has broadcast against the USA and against racist policy in the USSR. Although he won a scholarship to both countries, he was not allowed in either and in fact is on the FBI blacklist. Now he is in Peking for two years on yet a third scholarship to study Chinese, all paid for by the Swedish government. The other oddity is a Madagascan who wants to become a Chinese nationalist; lived in Sweden and elsewhere, quite subdued until he entered China, now no-one can stop him talking.

We had an excellent Chinese meal with chopsticks; each person is given a bowl of rice to which one adds from a selection of communal dishes, omelette and beef mixed in sauce, green peppers and pork, duck, carrots, tomatoes and onions sliced, followed by jasmine tea. All in all a very satisfying meal supplied to us by the Chinese gentleman.

Friday 27th August

This is the real China; vast horizons of paddy fields, full of fresh green rice. Even donkeys now tread the paths by these fields while men with coolie hats work knee to waste deep in the mud and water. There is still a large amount of maize, flaxen jute. On the side of the train are vast mudflats reaching to the sea, so that when the sea does come in, salt can be reclaimed from it. Now mimosa trees, unfortunately not in flower line the route, cotton and beans can also be seen in patches.

Arrived at last at our destination, though there are fields right uptown Peking. Lovely new station in pagoda style. Met by Luxingshe chap speaking impeccable English, who organized the luggage and got us a taxi to the hotel. Lack of cars but not of horns was my first impression. Several English makes, particularly Standard Vauxhalls. Plenty of bicycles and rickshaw traffic in all directions. Large wide street, the Avenue of Everlasting Peace, runs the length of Peking, about 17 kms, not the amount of traffic or people you would expect from a capital city. We had difficulty in explaining our problems that we did not want to spend 19 pounds a day, but with the help of our very friendly interpreter managed to get the money refunded and enabled us to stay on at this admirable hotel.

Met an English Director from Blue Funnel Shipping Company, who gave us the cricket score on meeting, closely followed by BBC news bulletin from Charge d'Affair here. There is no British Embassy, since we don't recognize Formosa or something like that. He gave us several useful tips and invited us for drinks this evening. There is a lovely painting in silk on my wall of wild horse, wish I could take it home! Had a blissful bath and washed several clothes, sent some to the Chinese laundry! Walked back from Luxingshe along the wide street which I still don't know the name. Old men, probably grandfathers minding children in cages on wheels. Arrived back at hotel in time for drink with shipping man. Had some large beers then a mad game of billiards and then dinner; sweet and sour pork, egg and tomato soup mixed with vegetables, noodles and chicken and Jasmine tea. Retired to bed early.M

Saturday 28th August

Breakfast of fried eggs, toast, butter and tea, quite anglicized! Went by taxi to Office of Charge d'Affair of UK; very army type behind desk, apparently (we learnt later) judges everyone by the length of their hair. He was a sargent-major in the Marines; we could assess this by the shine on his boots and squareness of shoulder. Met the Consul, Mr. Blisson who was always shy and unassuming but obviously in the know as far as his job was concerned. He offered to get us a Mongolian visa and also invited us to dinner tonight, very helpful. We walked slowly along the wide roads bordered by mimosa and mulberries, with plenty of dragon flies whirling around. Arrived at the main shopping area via no.9 bus; very embarrassing for John and David to have everyone leaping up to offer seats to them, apart from me. This is the case in shops as well, where foreigners always get preference. Mr. Thomson (shipping director) told us however, that colored people are not liked by the Chinese basically, however much the political views are united. Had lunch at a rather scruffy cafe and again embarrassed by the attention focused on us; screen of sheeting put

up to shield us from other customers and a table made immediately vacant in an otherwise full cafe.

John and I went shopping while David returned to the hotel. Bought chopsticks and lacquer bowls but our main find was a large department store where John bought a yak coat, while I fell for ocelot/puma or similar skin, which I could have had made up into a short coat within a few days, total cost about 20 pounds but what a bargain ! Fantastic tailors, I had my first fitting within half an hour. Returned by rickshaw to hotel, wonderful feeling, about 1/6 each.

Mr. Blisson picked us up at 7.30 as arranged, pity that the British Consul can't be better represented than in a Ford Anglia. Met his wife and visiting Dalmation (dog not human) she was quite friendly but not really a diplomat's wife. She has hunted so have some common ground. Pleasant meal with beef, beans, carrots, tomatoes, and cucumbers and a French white wine. John Boyd, another consulate official was also there.

Sunday 29th August

David and I set off down Morrison Street to do some shopping. David remained unimpressed by the furs but bought a hat. Found a marvelous silk shop where I bought Dodo a dressing gown and wooden yak. Met John for lunch at the same cafe as the previous day. He arrived plus Chinese/ Frenchman and daughter. David departed for his afternoon rest, while we searched for a loo; the only public ones had small low cubicles with no doors, rather public in the extreme, the squatting sort too ! We bused to Peihai Park. There was a lake and crowds of Chinese enjoying their afternoon. We climbed slowly to the top of the hill, from which one had a panoramic view of Peking. One side the mountains framed, as in a Chinese painting, by firs or perhaps the firs were planted to look like a painting. The pagodas of yellow glazed tiles with red walls, each had a line of figurines around the edge; at the end the figure of Prince Chin on a hen, traditionally unlucky to keep inside a house. We had endless cups of tea at a very scenic restaurant, while the sun slowly set over the distant mountains. We went down to the lake again where we hired a small rowing boat and drifted across the lake, often meeting courting couples, the only place in Peking that any sort of affection is displayed. Our intention had been to visit a restaurant on the other side but on arrival found it was just another tea house which sold pork -pie sized pies containing some inedible fruit in side. Rowed back again only to find we were the last boat left on the lake so we had to tie up ourselves. Returned to hotel late to find a rather tired and annoyed David.

Monday 30th August

It's strange to think of everyone in England swarming off to the seaside in bumper to bumper queues on Bank Holiday. It is observed by the British here but somehow it doesn't seem the same. The shops here close only once a month, they have a rota system of staff. We wandered over the Forbidden City all morning; it is a feat of symmetry as each part of the palace unfolds from rooms into courtyards to pagodas. The coloring are burnt sienna walls, orange and yellow glazed tiles and green and yellow ornaments. Apparently only the Emperor was allowed to wear yellow, red was for festivals, white for mourning, blue for the masses, which still seems to be the most popular colour on the street. At nearly every doorway stands magnificent lions, a female with her paw on a cub, the male with a paw on a ball. These are in stone, marble, bronze or other metals. In some courtyards are cranes

and giant tortoise, while decorations on pillars and screen seems to be mainly of dragons in gold. Each doorway has a raised step across it, apparently to prevent evil spirits entering while the doors themselves are massive red affairs with bronze studs and lion head knockers. The emperor's apartments are some distance apart, he must have been carried from one to the other, while large bronze caskets of incense burnt along the way. The last Chinese Emperor is apparently still alive and has worked as a gardener for years, with periods of prison and torture but is now very old and devoted to writing his memoirs. He is brought out of mothballs to meet occasional visiting dignitaries. We spent the afternoon shopping with Mrs Blisson who took us to some fantastic shops down narrow streets, we would never have found alone; full of vases, pots and jade, others contained just silk scrolls. Bought a little jade horse and some jade horse stamps.

She then offered to take us round the Temple of Heaven which was an ornate blue-tiles pagoda-style, different from the other but the same style. Large posts at the entrance have stone clouds on either side. The emperor was carried from the entrance along a straight line of large marble flagstones, to the altar which is a raised circular marble platform, quite plain with low carved pillars around it. The light was fading when we got there and an army camp nearby was tuning up its band for a musical soiree. An old man walked by with a singing bird sitting on a perch attached by a piece of string around its neck. It's apparently unusual to see one out of its cage. We returned hurriedly to go out to dinner with Mr. and Mrs George; a Chinese style meal served in the Charge d'Affairs residence. It seemed incongruous to be eating with chopsticks under Constable's "The Haywain" and the Queen's portrait.

Tuesday 31st August

Had to call at the British Embassy (Charge d'Affairs Office) to arrange about our outings. I've abandoned the idea of getting a staying visa for Mongolia; it takes three weeks, which is too long. We took a bus out to the Summer Palace, must be about 45 kms. Passed the zoo en route. This Palace is built on a hillside with mountains as a backcloth and a large lake underneath. We climbed the hill to the temple on top which contained a large gold Buddha, several other lesser buddhas flanked each side. On returning to the lake John and I took a boat across under some exotic Chinese bridges, to the other side; the sun was very hot and plenty of insect life hovered over the water.

We returned at 6pm to go to a party being given at the Charge d'Affair's house for a group of Chinese students who were going to learn English in Ealing. Met the acting Charge d'Affairs Mr. Wilford who was very friendly and introduced us to some English teachers and secretaries who in turn invited us back to their respective flats for a meal and some coffee. A very pleasant evening was had by all. They earn about 30 pounds/week plus flat, houseboy and ayesha. They remain in one place for a year and all their belongings are shipped out by the Foreign Office.

Wednesday 1st September

This was an Embassy visiting day; Polish, Russian and others who had visas which had expired came for renewals. Had lunch with a delightful French couple, who John knows, Mr and Mrs Angrewy. They were not so enthusiastic about life in Peking, especially the social side. They had some delightful pottery and sets of books and tapes. We returned via Morrison Street where I picked up my gorgeous coat, that I think must be made of Signany

? tiger. Had a phone call from English woman, Margaret Hides who had just arrived and was feeling a little lost, as we were. Gave her some tips and arranged to meet at breakfast. There was a terrible rainstorm as we met John Boyd, who was going to drive us to the Ming Tombs. We set off in his Triumph Herald convertible; unfortunately the rain spoilt a rather gorgeous sunset. We passed through a large stone gateway leading to the Valley of the Tombs, then passed a marvelous line of marble animals; elephants, camels, lions, horses and so on, standing or lying alternatively, they looked very ghost-like in the car headlights and moonlight. We sat on top of the open car, with the wind rushing passed along the way that the Chinese emperors made their last journey. It was difficult to see the tombs, except their outline but they apparently descend to a depth of over 50 ft. There is only one open tomb, the rest are still sealed from inside the tomb. We ate a great pie seated on top of a stone turtle, as well as other good things for a great Ming Tomb picnic. John Boyd certainly has a good cook ! Returned to his flat for coffee, then home.

Thursday 2nd September

Spent the morning in hotel fixing last minute arrangements for John and David. Sarah Bliss picked us up at 1 pm and we drove out to the Great Wall. it is over 70 kms away up winding roads into the western hills. They are covered in grass but heavily indented by erosion. We picknicked in a valley by the side of the China/ Mongolian railway. The gradient is so steep that the tracks have to be watered on the way down to prevent the wheel from burning. The road narrows considerably as one nears the Wall, which appears as impressively as it did in those history books so long ago ! Patches of the Wall are sprinkled at intervals over the Western hills but the part you can walk on, has been built up and is very impressive. We climbed onto the Wall, at time almost vertically, one needed to go on all-fours where there were no steps. At intervals were watch-towers until the summit of the permitted section, which must have been one and a half miles from the base, beyond this foreigners without permits are not allowed. We retraced our steps even more awkwardly down again, I had to do it in bare feet to get a grip.

We returned to Peking with no time to have Peking Duck but the Bliss's kindly invited us for supper; scrambled eggs, and offered to drive John and David to the station. We collected their luggage from the hotel; momentarily it was sad to see them depart. From now on I'm on my tod !

Friday 3rd September

Mrs hides kindly invited me to share a car with her and visit the Summer Palace again and the Temple of the Sleeping Buddha. The latter was a delightfully compact Temple, with a large obese Buddha in the first section surrounded by his attendants and fantastic wild-eyes half man half god creations with spiked head-dresses and rolling eyes. The Buddha in each temple got larger until the last one contained a reclining Buddha filling the entire building.

We went on to the Summer Palace where I rowed around the lake. We stopped at the zoo after this to see the famous pandas; these were all asleep but the three babies were gorgeous. The zoo has a fine selection of Manchurian and South China tigers which are difficult to distinguish between. The first zoo that I've ever had to walk through disinfectant into the cat house. Returned to find invitation to the Bliss's ; met up with the English teachers again, 10 in all of us sat down to dinner that was duck.

Saturday 4th September

Mrs Hides again invited me out to the Forbidden City. A French film crew was there shooting a film with acrobats from I think an opera company; several girls twirling plates on top of stick and doing somersaults at the same time. The setting was very impressive in a courtyard in front of one of the temples. We walked on into Peihai Park and then back for lunch. Caught the no.3 trolley and 32 bus to "the Ghetto" where Reg, Walls, Frank and Leo live; had a marvelous swim although the weather was colder, the pool must be almost uptown Olympic measurements. had supper in their cafe which is attached to the compound. The whole place is complete, with no need to go outside for provisions or entertainment. There is a communist-minded English section who keep to themselves and who apparently discuss Vietnam at every meal. The Chinese seem to prefer an out and out Conservative to a left-wing Socialist; anyone approaching their own views makes them uneasy. The teachers are out there for 2 years at the invitation of the Chinese government. There's one Englishman of 73 who, after his wife died, decided to take up teaching around the world, stating with China, very full of life. Returned on a late bus to the hotel; one thing about China is that women can go anywhere, anytime, without trouble or fear.

Sunday 5th September

Decided to visit the Friendship shop and the Peoples' Bazaar. The wind had whipped up by this time and it's easy to understand how awful it must be in winter when the weather is cold. All the dust is blown whirlwind-style into your face, clothes and hair, jeans seem the optimum dress. The Friendship Shop is only for non-Chinese, containing some nice jackets but not much else. The Bazaar was also disappointing, rather like Selfridges of Morrison Street. Also spent part of the afternoon in search of more shops but had instead to walk through a maze of backstreets under the shadow of the old city wall. A maze of smaller and smaller streets containing houses opening into courtyards, many with old Chinese facades and stone lions guarding the entrance. They seem incongruous with grubby children playing around with slits front and back in their pants, obviating the need for nappies. The little dust streets contain a host of knife sharpeners, grocers, bakeries and so on; each house has a portable stove which contains a kettle, which is constantly on the boil. I must have walked miles backwards and forwards trying to find a way out. Eventually ended up in a little antique shops that had a dozen assistants; bought a wooden Chinaman on a horse for Minko, which I think she will like, about 7 pounds but worth it.

Returned back for our evening eating Peking Duck. Joined by Italian doctor and his Dutch wife, An Italian friend of theirs representing Fiat, Margaret Hides, and Vivian Mc Iver, (Irish over here on scholarship). We went to the old Peking Duck restaurant where the meal was as follows:

Appetizer - liver, kidney, pate all from duck, curried pieces of duck with salad. Main dishes: roasted duck dipped in a sort of duck chutney, with stick of onion rolled in a little chapati, eaten as a sandwich, toasted liver, very crisp, dipped in a pepper and salt mix, roasted pieces of sesame seed buns like hamburgers. All rich and delicious, followed by strong Chinese transparent liquor, slightly sweet and very intoxicating. The whole lot was accompanied by beer, and we were provided with warm flannels, perfumed with oil to wipe our hands and faces. One didn't really feel like doing anything afterwards except going to sleep. had a drink of coffee in the bar and that was all. The meal came to about 1 pound a

head, which was not out of way and the meal very delicious. i would like to eat it every night. Franco, the Fiat agent, has eaten donkey's brains, from a skull, south of Canton and cats ears in Nanking.

Monday 6th September

Went by taxi to the China Shipping Company to arrange with Miss Bring about my trip from Shanghai she was absolutely charming and regretted I was not staying for the 1st October Celebrations. Met a Mexican girl called Maria, married to a Frenchman and living in Cambodia (sounds like something out of a musical); They have a rubber plantation there, she is absolutely charming. Margaret, Maria and me went to the antique shop to collect the wooden man, they both bought quantities of jade, I wish that I had such financial resources at the moment. Drove onto the Temple of heaven which looked even better in the sunlight. There was strong wind blowing the whole time. had an enormous lunch with sharks fin soup which is very expensive here, about 1 pound for four people. I wasn't very impressed, it didn't taste at all fishy.

Sara Blisson came up and took me to the custom clearance place for my ornaments. Catherine, her daughter, cried the whole way there and back; a tendency for overseas children to be spoilt. had dinner at the hotel and a drink with the Martellis and their ever hopeful Italian friend who was starting to pester Maria as well as me.

Tuesday 7th September.

Found out that I need a visa for Japan then that I didn't know; nobody really seems to know. Maria and I took a series of buses out to the Ming Tombs; it turned out to be a day's bus ride by the time we had got off one after another. We arrived there and had to walk about 3-4 kilometers to the Tombs. They are scattered over a wide area composing of one valley which extends about 10 miles. Only one tomb is open. The museum is more worthwhile than the tomb itself, which is of modern construction deep in the ground, from which the cold penetrates through the atmosphere as one descends.; the gold plates, porcelain jars, gold and pearly head-dresses are beautiful and in very good condition. There must be a fortune still buried in the valley. We tramped back along the road, squatted by the bus stop like the natives (squatting is a national pastime in China); there is a noticeable lack of seats because of it. we waited about half an hour sitting in the middle of the road where the shade was, which gives one an idea about the lack of traffic, a road equivalent to our A40. We took ages getting back, finally doing about 4 miles in a rickshaw, which cost about 3/-, very cheap.

Margaret, Maria and self went to the circus, where in a small tent there was the greatest variation of acts I have ever seen; ranging from acrobats, bears, monkeys, dogs, trapeze artists and so on. One notable Chinese feature was a display of red flags and crude examples of soldiers and sheaves of corn. There was a display of people dressed up as Chinese cats, very good. The audience was very responsive and at the end a Russian delegation got up and presented the chief performers with bouquets of flowers; this seems to be the standard friendship symbol here.

Had dinner with Margaret, Vivian, Maria and Mr. Casella, a Swiss/ Italian chap who had just been to Inner Mongolia and many part of China, normally out of bounds to foreigners. We joined a group of English businessmen in the bar, which ended in a room to room party, the

only form of entertainment available in Peking. it must be boring doing business in a country where everything starts and ends with work. Reached bed very tired and with a hangover from varying qualities and quantities of Chinese wine.

Wednesday 8th September

Went with Margaret and Maria to the zoo, where the pandas were showing much more activity than last time; they are really natural show-offs, especially early in the morning. I had to return to the hotel to ring up about my Japanese visa, the phone lines make even English people sound Chinese. Managed to get Sara Blisson to sort things out in the end; it's necessary to have a signed document stating that no visa is required for Japan.

I spent 2 hours on the bus backwards and forwards; it's interesting to see Chinese life from their level instead of being whisked past in a car. The main thing that strikes one is the uniformity of dress, blue trousers with a white or black top, a skirt is so unusual that it's worth a second look. Both sexes, old and young dress like this; grandmothers and grandfathers look after the children entirely, more often the latter, presumably while the wife goes to work and the grandmother does the housework. The children are pushed around in prams like cages on small wheels, often by a bent old grandmother with bound feet, so small that the appearance is of a pair of triangles.

Spent the afternoon at the Friendship Stores where Maria bought yards of material; most of the other material was not good, although cheap. Satchmo, Maria and I got lost in a maze of streets. Viewed all Satchmo's buys n return, he and Maria certainly know how to pick up good jade.

Thursday 9th September

it was pouring all morning , made my damp way by bus to the Ocean Shipping Company, had to walk back one stop in the rain; all the pavements became slippery with mud and great puddles appeared everywhere. Discovered that the next boat to Japan from Shanghai is 1st October, too late, so I've decided to go to Canton and then Hong Kong instead.

Met Satchmo at the Llama Temple where we were greet by a llama in a raincoat and wellingtons, which rather shattered my image of saffron robes. Walked through different temples where Buddhas in stages of sleeping, waking, obesity and humour sat in golden splendor , flanked by wooden attendants and priests with red drums and snake skin musical instruments, in an atmosphere of burning sandalwood. Pictures, bowls with lotus flowers, enormous stone cats, wood carvings of incredible intricacy were among the maze of decorations. The crowning glory was a sandalwood Buddha about 50 ft high, with white gleaming eyes and hands clasping great wooden painted flowers. The temple was built in tiers around it, rather similar to an Elizabethan theatre.

We discovered an antique shop nearby where Satchmo bought a pair of the most beautiful snuff bottles, in pink with intertwining blue dragons, cost about 8 pounds but would be worth 50 pounds back home. I rashly bought a superb vase for 6 yuan or 1 pound but will have to ship it from Hong Kong. I must be mad ! Everyone else has admired it greatly but I'm not sure if I can get it home unbroken. Took a bus to antique lane after lunch, bought a jade bracelet 16 yuan, or 35/-. maria returned home from the Great Wall, she was furious to discover we had been shopping, she and Satchmo have a private race to buy things. Had a

small party to see everything and to bid Margaret and Maria goodbye, since they are going to Cambodia together.

Friday 10th September

After seeing Margaret and Maria off, I bought a suitcase which gave me the incentive to go mad and fill it with goat and bear rugs. I wish I could have bought 10, but bought 3 in all, only 16 yuan (35/-). Vivian and I tramped the back streets behind the Wall, followed by a local party leader (i think); this is the first time this has happened, he stopped Vivian taking a photo of some children and cleared the area of people when I wanted to take some roof-tops. He abandoned us outside his territory. Did get a picture of a tub full of crabs which people buy primarily to eat and secondary to give children to play with; I've even seen a baby with a crab on a string attached to the end of his pram. It is a pity that in another decade all these old attractive streets will have vanished in the progress programme.

Came back in a rickshaw. Had an interesting discussion at dinner with Satchmo and Vivian about the effects of the new China; the strengths and unity of these people when directed in certain channels is phenomenal. For instance, when they decided to exterminate all the flies and other pests; for three years they campaigned against flies, children were rewarded by the weight of flies they killed, there are virtually no flies in China now. At the same time, mice, rats and nearly all the sparrows were exterminated, the latter chased by crowds till exhausted, then beaten to death. After a while they decided that maybe sparrow helped to keep down the flies, so they stopped the killing. The children, as in Russia, become pioneers, then consummates then communists. Each child here has a red necktie if he or she has achieved a good standard of work and deeds and thus becomes a pioneer.

The lack of travel by people in China is interesting. It stems from the idea that a man must die in his own village or the place he was born, it is a terrible disgrace if he does not. Also there are 52 different nationalities in China that have for centuries kept to themselves. Now that these must fit together, the government wisely packs groups of people, either an entire village or community from one area to a remote one so they will immediately settle down, as oppose to individuals being transferred into a group of foreigners. The food problem stems from this; each district has entirely different recipes, and one will not eat the others.

The lack of cars is not only one of economic but also one of uselessness to the ordinary Chinese, who commutes by bus or bicycle within his town, but has no wish to go further. At weekends they all come into their offices to play cards; for holidays they stay at their home or office. Thus the foreigner has a basic problem, apart from the security one, when he wishes to travel.

Their organization ability is shown by a group of pioneers who planted 500 trees overnight, this week, as well as one mile of flower beds; a group of school children aged 7 -10 built their own classroom and swimming pool. They are sent to work in the countryside so that country people get to know them and vice versa. About 60% of university graduates are sons of peasants. A dangerous bourgeois minority still, anyone with adverse political views is refused a place but there are no failures the other end. Couple are discouraged from marrying until nearly 30.

MaoTse-Tung is the father figure as oppose to Chou En-Lai; he dominates every tree scene, bookshop and words spoken by the people. He is apparently more and more retiring to his writing and becoming a figure on a pedestal, as if already dead.

Saturday 11th September

Satchmo and I wandered around the back of the Wall taking photos with a telephoto lens he has; all the advantages in this country, being able to take pictures of people across the street. Bought another bracelet which I shall probably see for 10 yuan (25/-) had lunch with Vivian before he starts the homeward trip to Intourist. I must note down some of the inefficiencies of that Place. Spent the afternoon shopping and looking at the minorities section of the store; this is a department store that deals exclusively with Chinese minorities. Said goodbye to Brian (polyethylene plant engineer), who bequeathed Nestle's milk, coffee and biscuits to me. Spent most of the evening packing my vase.

Sunday 12th September

Went with Satchmo to another antique shop but not so nice as some of the others. I think we must have scoured most of the shops in Peking; if one is there long enough there are plenty of things to be had as bargains. After lunch, having vacated my room, I walked to Coal Hill park and up to the temple at the top; being Sunday, it was crowded with children. Returned to view more of Satchmo's buy; a gorgeous rug, and pair of paintings on glass, the latter quite horrible but probably worth a great deal, rather Rousseau/ late Victorian style.

We had supper and met an Italian who is living here for 6 months. He had a wonderful collection of furniture and some fine pictures.

Set off with three-quarters of an hour to spare to the station; it needs this time to collect a porter and catch the train. I had wanted to go hard class and indeed this is what it is, rather like a German Youth Hostel except more crowded; open compartments, nearly all men but fairly friendly. No one of course speaks English, except a policeman who wanted to see my travel permit. Squashed in as best I could; this is really the way to travel to view people in the closest possible surroundings, though not the most comfortable. Glad I brought a lilo! Provided with pillow, flannelette sheet and blanket but no mattress. Six to each compartment, no room for luggage. The wireless blares out continuously and there is no knob for adjustment, the result is terrible so tonight I must sleep with cotton wool in my ears. Each departure from a station is accompanied by music and a high-pitched female voice telling I know not what.

Monday 13th September

The early morning is worst; it starts about 5.30 and is accompanied by loud shouts from the restaurant car attendants selling breakfast tickets, obviously it's better to get to sleep earlier. Thank goodness they have a good supply of fans, the weather is becoming hotter and more humid. The land is the same up to Sian; paddy fields, maize, men in coolie hats putting carts, oxen pulling ploughs, I haven't seen one tractor yet but they would probably get bogged down in the mud. Crossed the Hang Ho river, about 2-3 miles of mud banks with the river running muddy between.

Sian. The ancient Chinese capital but from the railway, it looks much like any other town; stone houses with thatched roofs predominate or mud houses, the former reminiscent of

Devon if one's imagination is stretched far enough. My companions are friendly but distant, refusing offers of sweets and so on with a definite "no." They are fascinated with the lilo and by the Nestle's milk I squeeze from a tube. It's impossible to change so I just sleep in my jeans. After Sian the country becomes more hilly with flat paddy fields giving way to terraced ones. It's incredible how every inch of useable land is converted into paddy field, haven't discovered how they get the water up, though.

Have had three meals, toast for breakfast, a good ham omelette for lunch, sweet and sour pork for dinner. They must think I'm starving because they pile on the rice and bread, 5 pieces of toast at breakfast! Food quite cheap (i.e. 5 pieces of toast, omelette, cup of soup, rice, bread, and large bottle of beer 3/-) I usually wait until the train is in a station before going 4 coaches up to eat, but they always seem to lock it up, must be people trying to get in unnoticed. It's nice to be able to leave one's luggage unattended. One thing about the restaurant, they manage to dig up an English menu which they brought on my sleeping berth, very thoughtful except I'm not feeling up to the enormous portions they keep giving me. Imagine British Railways being able to produce a menu in Chinese, quite a thought, especially as less English people travel here than Chinese in England. I think I'm the only foreigner on the entire train, not that it's a worrying thought, anywhere else it might be. The train seems to go quite slowly, slower than the Trans Siberian, and stops more often, at least the hours seem to slip away. I feel horribly dirty but then so is everyone else, you just seem to hate yourself after a while.

Tuesday 14th September

The country is definitely changing; far more mountains, less easy to cultivate but still they are making full use of every scrap of land. Had a better night since I plugged my ears with cotton wool, helped to keep out some of the early morning chorus. It is the volume, not the noise that is at fault. Some of the lighter music adds colour to the scene outside. The air seems cooler today, it must be the altitude. The houses are most attractive with low flowing roofs, decorated in Chinese tradition. They tie stacks of rice stalks or hay in nets to these so as to keep them dry, unlike Persia where they put them on the roof. The train followed the winding course of the river, very green, which occasionally rushed over rapids but was often no more than a sluggish stream. Little boats with long oars or rudders at each end made their way up and down, carrying or floating timber. Little timbered houses clung to the steep sides of the gorge, in winter the water must tear down these hillsides and the river swell to three times its normal size.

To my surprise the others in the compartment informed me that we would be in Canton at 6, I thought we had another night on the train. It must take 42 hours from Peking to Canton, very pleasant surprise as I was beginning to feel in need of a good night's rest. Met by funny little interpreter who spoke bad English but who was quite helpful. We drove to the hotel, which has 11 floors. I'm on the 10th and command a wonderful view of the river, with a mass of shipping constantly on the move. Did not feel inclined to go out again so just fell into bed.

Wednesday 15th September

The sound of a blaring wireless does not seem to have left with the train; there is a building site under my window which has a persistent blare, not only music but also repeated talk. Set out to find antique shops but find Canton is much hotter and my energies are flagging.

Found an excellent wall painting but it had had some bad treatment, undecided whether to buy or not. Had to come back for a rest after lunch and fell asleep, it seems that this atmosphere makes one feel this way. Wandered along the harbor and took a 'hard' rickshaw back to an antique shop but it isn't so nice as the other one. Looked at some more wall paintings (scrolls) but have fallen for the other one, although it is 30 yuan (30/-). There don't seem to be many English people or foreigners here and the Cantonese themselves are different from the Pekinese. The litter bins are fascinating, made of porcelain and most attractive in green, blue and white. The town is not well laid out as is Peking, i.e. the streets not so modern or straight, but probably more of the old town remains. The place does not seem so advanced as Peking but difficult to say how, just a feeling I have. The river is fascinating, especially the sampans with their families, each one self-supporting with a chicken or two on board.

Thursday 16th September

Took a rickshaw to get a customs stamp for my visa, then another to the antique shop where I acquired a little vase with a Mongolian horseman. Decided to buy the scroll after all, it will have to be restored in Hong Kong. Another thing noted in streets apart from a shop selling some wicked looking snakes, was the persistent scrubbing of the curbside and washing of the roads, although the small streets were far more filthy. Caught a bus to the Park built as a memorial to the Martyrs of the Canton uprising. The bus had no indicator so the conductor held a red flag out from the appropriate side instead. Park very new and full of children building bridges, watering flower beds and planting trees. Watched a practice ceremony for October 1st, all the kids from Grade 5 upwards beating drums and listening to speeches, they had probably walked about 2 miles to get there. Returned and met Greek and English sailors, each wanting to get home quickly and both having difficulty doing this. We went to one of the large amusement parks, very reminiscent of Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen, where acrobats, films and cultural aspects of Chinese life were shown. Fine display of stuffed and live fish and a good dose of communism. The park is covered with thousands of Chinese lanterns which look very much in keeping with the scene. Had a party back at the hotel.

Friday 17th September

Left Canton early at 7 am. The train was surrounded by groups of students all waving banners and coloured papers; this was apparently to send off an African delegation from Ghana, who were occupying a coach on the train. Our carriage was half Japanese, half English, consisting of two Queen's messengers with piles of bags, the polyethylene groups of engineers, and Brian the sailor. It took about 3 hours to reach the border and about an hour to go through. Formalities were comparatively few and customs negligible. I had a woman customs officer who was charming and apart from just opening my case, she let me through. No trouble with the films at all. We had to walk about 100 yards over the bridge to the Hong Kong side, no formalities except passport and vaccination certificate. It is 32 miles from the border to Kowloon. Utter confusion at the station so polyethylene group invited me to the International Hotel where we had a gorgeous lunch and then they drove me to the YMCA where I have found a room. Spent the rest of the day getting acclimatized to traffic, neon lights, and endless shops. Bought a silk dressing gown for about two pounds.

Saturday 18th September

Spent the morning shopping and managed to acquire a terylene suit which will tide me over; very pleasant English-run shop, about the only one to be found that sells things ready-made. Tried also to get my scroll restored but decided to wait until Sacha arrived. Took afternoon exercise in indoor pool here, the only place to keep cool in this sultry heat. Walked around the town, which is a feat in itself and returned to supper and a film set in Australia.

Sunday 19th September

Took the ferry across the harbor and a bus to Repulse Bay. The bus was crowded with Chinese chattering like magpies; it swung up the twisting road, negotiating perilous hairpin at every bend. The scenery is magnificent, tree-covered slopes rising precipitously from the sea to the mountain tops. The buildings never seemed to end, fantastic skyscrapers built on tiny jutting precipices. Met an Australian couple who invited me to share their beach tent and never stopped talking. Had some nice fried duck for lunch, which one can buy at the beach. Came back to the YMCA where I met an extraordinary chap called Patrick Tyler who is over here trying to find a position as a barrister. I can't make out if he is just avoiding tax or whether he is escaping from something. He's fanatically right wing and does not have any tolerance for the other side, he seems very mixed up. However we had a lot in common as far as hunting etc; goes, he being of Irish extraction. Sacha rang up later, he seems to have visited other places, out of reach from ordinary tourists.

Monday 20th September

Sent a telegram off to Mr. Bower (Jersey bank manager) for more money, just a precaution anyway. Met Patrick and we went over to Repulse Bay again; it was probably a silly thing to do because I now have sunburn, in spite of being in the shade all day. The water is gorgeous, not as clear as Greece but very warm. This is definitely a holiday place but I'm not sure what it would be like for any length of time, one is so limited for space. During the evening we went to the Golden Gown for a Chinese meal, which although fairly expensive, about 1 pound /head, included a floor show and dancing. I really enjoyed it despite the cost.

Tuesday 21st September

Nothing really to report except I spent the day on my front with ointment on my back trying to get rid of the sunburn. Intended going on a water tour but missed the boat by minutes, so went up the Peak instead. This was an enthralling experience; the peak train is pulled up by steel wires, there are about 6 stations and as the train stops, you think it will roll down again. The conductor spends his life at an angle of 45 degrees. Patrick and I walked around the Peak which must be about 3 miles. The sun set over the distant mountains and the silhouette of an aircraft carrier (US) was visible in the bay. The lights of Hong Kong and Kowloon are well worth seeing, this is the highlight of a visit. The water is dead calm and all the ships big and small, lit up in the harbor, while the best of the skyscrapers look like Christmas lights. This harbor must be one of the most beautiful in the world.

Wednesday 22nd September

Took the vase and rugs to shipping agency, it is going to be quite costly, so decided to send my blue case after all. met American who carried all this stuff for me and was most envious, as most Americans are, of my Chinese travels, especially all the antiques. Met Sasha in the Mandarin and saw his Buddha and photos, he really has got a collection; marvelous ones of Inner Mongolia. He has shipped all his colour photos back to Italy. Back in Kowloon I bought a pair of pajamas and nightdress. Out for a Chinese meal with Patrick, not so costly as Golden Crown.

Thursday 23rd September

Took the blue suitcase over to Travel Advisors, had a barn with them about cost, since the suitcase itself must be packed in a wooden case. They relented and charged me about 7 pounds. Collected tickets from Jebson & Co, for the Alemannia; costs 40 pounds but it's nearly as far as from NY to London and it's 1st class. Met Sacha for lunch at the Mandarin and just late at 6m, Patrick and I tried once more to go out on the Round the Island Tour. Some other English people were there but the boat was hesitant about leaving because of lack of people; however we all complained to the manager and more people had gathered when the boat eventually sailed. Marvelous trip, rather rough at times ut the boat hugged the coast around Hong Kong and lights at all the little harbors were worth the entire trip. I think Hong Kong is really at its best after dark. Had another meal at the Mandarin.

Friday 24th September

Took photos all morning. Met an ASTA delegate at the Mandarin, typical American but friendly and full of all her travels in the South Pacific. Went swimming at Repulse Bay with Patrick until dark, the water is so warm and the sea shimmers, reflecting the lights of the skyscrapers around. We had dinner at the Imperial, good value for 6 dollars.

Saturday 25th September

Packed up during the morning and spent the day assembling for departure. Sacha turned up to see me off and Patrick came to the ship with me. From the outside the Alamennia looks rather unexciting, we came on board with nobody about; the interior passenger department is very nice, good modern design and comfortable. I learnt later that the ship is only two and a half months old and this is her maiden voyage. There seem to be half a dozen passengers, mostly Germans and two Americans. Average speed is 23 mph, but it can reach 27/28 mph; must be one of the fastest ships afloat. Only 17 days from Japan to Rotterdam. had a very good dinner, I can see that eating is the main pastime here.

Sunday 26th September

Missed the wake up sound, which is a worse version of the chime bell that some people have on their front doors. The food is excellent and very plentiful, the trouble is one doesn't get enough exercise to wear it off. There are four other passengers; one Franciscan priest (German), returning from his first holiday in Germany for 4 years, he works in Kobe. Another German priest or higher, who spent 5 years after the War in a Russian POW camp near Moscow doing hard labour. One American, retired who is traveling with Miss ??? "just

good friends" ! The latter is delighted to see another female after 25 days in sole male company. Crew and officers also very pleasant.

Monday/ Tuesday 27th/ 28th September

Both days relaxing, sunny for the most part, interrupted only by meals and games of shuffleboard. The islands of Japan came into view later today, blue mountains in different shades rising in the distance, with small white fishing boats bobbing on a choppy sea. This ship is so stable, it seems to plough straight through the roughest waves. Some porpoise followed the ship for some time, gracefully leaping in and out the waves. We dropped anchor in Kobe after 6pm which means the customs cannot clear the ship until tomorrow.

Wednesday 29th September

Felt the ship starting to move at about 6 am. so got up but in fact we didn't dock until 9 am. The scene was fantastic, all the flags that the ship had were flying; hundreds of dockers in yellow helmets stood waiting to scramble aboard, while the tugs busily pressed against the weighted ship, easing her to the dockside. A group of newspaper reporters, cameramen and agents stood waiting, eventually the gangway was lowered and the frenzied mass rushed aboard. In no time a man with a bicycle loaded with wires and telephones had installed one aboard, secured with sticking plaster. Girls in kimonos tripped up the gangway and monopolized the saloon. We just kept out of everyone's way. I managed to get through to Dr.Irie's secretary , who said he was in Tokyo but promised to come and meet me at the ship. I had to wander ashore to change some money but was quickly back. Miss Hayashi arrived and was absolutely charming. I had to say a quick good-bye to everyone because there was a work's car waiting. Mr. Batansch was most reluctant at my departure. The dockers were having lunch out of square cans filled with rice and covered with a red mixture, which came out of a large red paint can.

Drove to the factory where there was a letter from Louise and a parcel of sweaters. Came through twisty lanes to the Irie house, tucked away in a lane impossible to turn a car in. Although she doesn't speak much English, I was greeted in true Japanese style; had to remove my shoes at the door and sit on cushion on a carpet; this becomes uncomfortable for foreigners after a while, especially when one is trying to eat and forget about the cramp in one's legs.

Sat for most of the afternoon before going off to Cisco's house with Dr.Irie's chauffeur, a buck-toothed cheery lad who seems to be part of the family. The car is a terrible Hillman-Minx in salmon pink in the true dolly-daughter brigade, really seems unlike the Irie's. Came back by train, very clean and quick. Dr. Irie had arrived back from Tokyo. Spent the evening eating raw fish and salad dipped in soya sauce and pepper, not so bad as I had thought and a large local steak.Had a fantastic Japanese -style bath, one first has to wash all over with soap then rinse off with bowls of water, then climb into a square wooden bath, very hot, which comes upto one's chin, although you can't lie down and stretch out, rather similar to a sauna bath except for the water. My bed was laid out on the floor in the lounge, very comfortable and warm, sort of sheet and eiderdown combination with a blanket.

Thursday 30th September

Had a lie in, then English-style breakfast ham and eggs. They are really trying to satisfy my appetite. Met Indian visitor from chemical factory in Bombay. Dr. Irie took us out for the day, over the mountains beyond Osaka. Stopped at Toshodaiji where there is a Buddhist temple, one of a group in the old city of Nara. The whole building is of wood with an attractive shape and setting. Sandlewood is burnt at the entrance. Drove to Nara for lunch; gorgeous grilled prawns, large as a piece of plaice. Went onto the park and temples of Nara, where roe deer roam in profusion; everyone feeds them so they are very tame as a result. Once a year they have a rodeo for de-horning which hundreds of people watch. There are numerous temples scattered throughout the park; the largest being Nara Daibutsu which contains a seated Buddha and which must be as large as the one in Peking (Llama temple), only that one is standing. All the temples are made of wood, some painted orange, others full of lanterns, metal and stone ones. Others have bells from which hang multi-coloured streamers, which one calls the god before praying. Back to sukiyaki (see recipe) which is very filling. As always I'm expected to eat everything, having acquired a reputation for a good appetite.

Friday 1st October

Spent the morning listening to tapes belonging to Gen, Dr. Irie's son, a friend of his came over. Had lunch of packed rice with fish on top with ginger. Mrs Irie drove me to the YMCA in the hope of finding a job. I have to give a lecture on British agriculture next Friday. Possibility of finding a job is not so easy in one moment. Watched Japanese TV; there are 6 channels (2 commercial), you can watch anything from mathematics lesson, opera, or the Man from U.N.C.L.E

Saturday 2nd October

Went to Osaka with Gen, it is about 6 stops on the line by train. had an ice cream soda in a cafe full of Picasso sketches. Fantastic underground shops, very new and full of attractive things. met a friend of Gen's who came with us in search of a job at school but they want me for over 6 months. We went on to an American culture centre, no luck and then to this chap's ex -high school where they were having beginning of term celebrations; flower arranging, tea ceremony, painting, beat music and an English play. Met the producer but I explained to him that I couldn't hear much because of all the noise. It took us a long time to get home, especially in the rush hour. Osaka is the second largest city in Japan, so the concentration of people is correspondingly dense. Spent the evening teaching Men to waltz and twist.

Sunday 3rd October

Dr. Irie drew me a map of agriculture in the British Isles. A Mr. Morelli came to lunch to learn English. We and Gen went out towards Kyoto in the car and up into the mountains to Mount Ryoken where there is a Buddhist temple in operation. There are rooms on the way up where one can sit Japanese style and eat and drink. The air is filled with sandlewood as the believers walk around the temple a hundred times, not only old people, more often young. Fantastic lions and beasts at gateway, took several photos. Returned back down narrow mountain road, dusty and stoney, rather reminiscent of Persia. Dressed to go out to Dr. Hokki's house with Mr. Morelli, difficulty finding the place but wonderful reception;

sukiyaki bream for special occasion, octopus, crab, prawns and rice with beans, so much it was exhausting.

I have been offered a job with the company, ¥10,000 for 8 hours (2 hours per week) , at least a start ! On the way home the car developed a puncture and to crown it all . one of the bolts broke off, so the wheel could only be held on by three nuts. Mr.M didn't have very much idea about changing wheels; thank goodness English girls are practical. Returned to his home where I met a friend of his who had been to England recently, won some yachting race. Came home by taxi.

Monday 4th October

Spent most of the day at home trying to find agricultural statisticians. Attended a lecture of English conversation in the evening given by a Japanese man who had been in the States. Each student had to give a personal account of themselves, including me, very charming people. Came home by train by myself for the first time.

Tuesday 5th October

Drove to Osaka to meet Nita Jansen a Swedish teacher who has lived in Japan for 10 years and speaks excellent Japanese. She has offered to let me share her flat with her sister. I was introduced to the president of the English speaking school who has offered me work every Friday evening. Returned and cooked spaghetti bolognese for lunch and then toad-in-the-hole for supper.

difficult with minute oven and not enough heat.

Wednesday 6th October

Drove to Kyoto early along the motorway; the day started off by raining but later it was just misty. Passed several pottery shops which looked inviting and antiques. Got to the British Council building which was down a muddy lane, it is being replaced this year, thank goodness. Met Mr.Martin who was very charming and gave me a lot of useful tips, like the situation of visas and getting a job. He claims to have completely absorbed himself in Japanese life and only misses the pub and sausages.

Mrs Irie and Gen then took me to see the imperial Palace which is only open for 2 weeks a year. It was a pity that the weather was bad; flocks of people going around including a selection of foreigners. Returned via a later shop which is related in some way to the Irie's; fantastic stand and hanging lanterns. Mrs Irie bought a selection . Went over to Nita Jansen's place by train. They live 5 minutes from the station in a pleasant flat that will be my home from now on. Spent the evening listening to records and talking.

Thursday 7th October

Spent the morning writing up my lecture. Went to the Sumitomo works a bit late. Class consisted of 5 members with Dr. Hoki; all older men, nuclear chemist, polyethylene-chemists etc: Driven home by Mr.Tsuji, bought record en route. He has invited

me out on Saturday.

Friday 8th October

Moved to Nita's flat during the morning. Spent the rest of the day preparing the lecture. met an American woman, Mrs Takauchi who never stopped talking and continuously said "well, is that so ?". It was her class that attended the lecture. This went off OK and an agricultural research worker here invited me to visit the local centre.

Nita told me some of the facts about the underworld in Japan; apparently gangsters are quite common. One is married to an American girl. They frequent certain areas and clubs; when one enters a club or train and abuses anyone, no one will say anything so they have a sort of power over people, they intimidate them. They mainly go around in groups, doing small things like stealing or beating up people who have wronged them and so on. Leaving the gangster group requires that the little finger be amputated which is to ensure that an ex-member can be recognized. also in the underworld are Ivy League types who wear the equivalent clothing to our Mods. The girls dress in long skirts and have beatnik hair-styles.

Saturday 9th October

Went to market after late lie-in. Then to the YMCA teachers meeting; hilarious Canadian couple, Mr & Mrs Geddes, on honeymoon and working as well. Met Mr. Tsuji at the Osaka Grand Hotel, then onto a cub where I met the English-speaking group ; they meet once a month and talk English for the entire evening . They come from many walks of life, mainly industry and the girls are TV announcers. Moved back to Grand Hotel for drinks. The went to see Osaka Castle in the moonlight; it was bombed in WW2 and rebuilt afterwards in the same form.

Sunday 10th October

Gen and Dr. Irie came over and picked us up. Went through Sakai to the yachting marina. Set out in the "Shanondori", passed a fishing boat flying multi-colored flags and banners because it carried an exceptional catch. The weather remained calm and sunny, not very conducive to sailing but we were able to swim, much to the horror of others on the boat, although Gen also came in. It was warmer than it ever is in GB , bit more and further out but nothing much. Returned to yacht marina where they thought we were all foreigners and conducted us to new moorings. Had a drink and sherbet in town at a plush place, especially as we were all in jeans, people couldn't stop staring but apparently it's OK if you've been participating i physical exercise !

Monday 11th October

Met Mr. Kusano and a public relations man from Sumitomo who have asked me to give an oral exam to members of Sumitomo in November. They were very friendly and I was shown the way to the YMCA where I conducted about half an hour of reading French with 2 girls there. This was not very successful because of the terrible noise going on in the next room.

Tuesday 12th October

Spent the day going round Osaka Agricultural Research Centre; pigs, poultry and cattle (Holstein) . i was only opened 3 years ago so everything is rather undeveloped. It combines with an AI centre, around 14 bulls. Tremendous amount of manual labour involved. Returned to evening of reading. Yoshi called.

Wednesday 13th October

Met Mr. Niboe (?) and attended class (Mr.Nagai) who is going to Bangkok so must learn English quickly. Rather slow process but remunerative. met the reporter who took me to the Morinaga Dairy, miles to walk. It was an odd set-up; they didn't know the amount of milk that went through each day and I wasn't allowed to view the pasteurizer at close quarters until after a lot of argument they gave me permission. I think they thought I was an ice-cream spy ! Met Nita with a Cuban officer from ship and another Japanese friend. We had coffee at a low dive and came home to a whiskey evening.

Thursday 14th October

Took Mr. Nagai to see the Churchill exhibition in a large store. Had a frustrating afternoon trying to reach Sumitomo in the rain, it really bucketed down. Spent a fortune on a taxi , so was a bit angry to put it mildly. Compensated by a hilarious class and then taken out by Yoshi for a meal, drink and dance. I felt very badly dressed but it didn't seem to matter. The hostesses with miles of tulle and net gave me rather stoney looks, especially as they all danced very sedately, we have quite an audience by the end of the evening.

Friday 15th October

Met Nita at Umeda and we went window shopping in Namba; bumped into another couple of Cubans and had a pizza at the piccolo. Took English class at English school , rather an ideal as there were about 30 -35 people. I prefer smaller numbers. Met Nita again afterwards with the president of the YMCA. We caught the train to her parent's home in Sakai, it was wonderful to be in a European-style home again. Had message from the Iries that Peter Bartoch had arrived on the Alemmenia about two days too early.

Saturday 16th October

Came back to Nishinomiya by a roundabout way. Met peter at the station so we went to Osaka and the Piccolo for drinks etc:

Sunday 17th October

Went to the Alemmania for lunch. Drove up Mt.Rokko and walked rather half-heartedly around. The cable car ride up was rather like the Peak in Hong Kong. Returned to Kobe where we went back to the ship. Came home as dawn was breaking after a party on board.

Monday 18th October

Spent the morning in bed feeling the worse for my late night. Went to Osaka ES for evening class but arrived very late as I got muddled about the direction. Found that "the Cat" was my pupil, surprise, surprise ! Rushed to Kobe afterwards where I had a meal with Peter on the ship. Said our farewells, the ship sails tomorrow.

Tuesday 19th October

Class with Mr. Nagai. Was very aware of Japanese smells today, especially on an early morning train; rice in tea breath, hair oil, tempura cooking. Met Yoshi at the Grand Hotel, full of loud Americans who had swapped wives for the evening, the place was littered with hundreds of their suitcases. We went to the Green + Blood Centre where I have been offered a job on Thursday evenings. We went on to a chrysanthemum show near Nara, fantastic blooms, Japan's national flower. Drove to Kobe where we had a delicious sukiyaki meal; meat and fish, while seated on the floor. Went to gangster bar up in an attic and then to a hostess club where girls always had to accompany couples but not many couples, mainly aged businessmen. The girls ranged from obvious tarts to widows who needed extra cash. Several young boys dancing together.

Saturday 1st January 1966

Flags of the rising sun of Japan decor each flagpole and leaves with a mandarin orange and lightning-shaped paper form a garland on each doorway. The whole of Japan is in festive mood and bells from Buddhist temples solemnly toll to welcome in the New Year. In railway stations clusters of people in their best costumes wait for trains; the women in gorgeous kimonos, pastel shades with enormous flowers, birds and plant patterns over them, with guided obis shaped like butterflies wings on folded squares, each one costing over 10 pounds, laden with gold thread and rich medieval patterns. It would look incongruous on a western woman. Each one had an array of flowers and jewellery in her hair, glistening with silver pendants, their feet pressed white, with colorful getas. The children also dressed up with butterfly obis with guided birds and flowers pinned to them, the colors are brighter and contrast sharply with their dark mushroom haircuts and gold threaded decorations. The men dressed in sombre kimonos and wooden geta, forming a perfect backdrop to their women and children.

We went to Dr. Irie's where a vast selection of sushi greeted us, in porcelain sushi boxes and lacquer trays. Our chopsticks were made of specially rounded willow wood for the occasion. The food ranged from prawns, crayfish, raw sole, seaweed-wrapped rice rolls, slivers of ginger, whole sparrows charcoaled and dehydrated, miscellaneous fish eggs, tongues from unknown animal, lotus roots, radishes, bean curd squares, slices of pickled fish, braised chicken, sweet black beans, sweet potatoes, chestnuts, innumerable vegetables and fruit, washed down with sweet sake, served from an orange lacquer teapot into disc-shaped cups and warm sake from conical-shaped flasks.

The alcove in the living room was decorated with a scroll depicting a red rising sun over the sea and the raised dais had a wooden lantern decorated with a new year wreath.

Bloated, we left there and called in on the Sato to be bombarded with further food and

drink including glutinous rice cake, either cooked and eaten rolled in seaweed with soya sauce or caster sugar. We couldn't leave until about 1 am after hearing about the 30,000 odd abortions Dr.Sato has performed over the years at ¥4000 a time. It must be a paying business and quiet within the law. Needless to say something food wise disagreed with me and I spent the rest of the night being sick.