

Sept. 25, '72 -- Start of the trip diary. In a way, it's as if jets had never been invented. People talk about our trip and intended length of stay rather as if we were making the journey our grandparents did -- very long and very far. Surprising to me, since I'd thought I was one of the few untraveled, people aren't blasé about a trip of this sort.

Today, Monday, what we hope will be the last ticket hassle was resolved. Pan Am refused to give us Seattle-Lisbon tickets for the same rate as Seattle-London, after suggesting to Carol on the phone that this is what we should do. Some catch about total mileage figure. Anyway, after Wardair deal fell through because they no longer sell one-way tickets, we're more secure to be flying regular commercial. Stunning, tho, to have to lay out the entire \$1400 for tickets in one vast chunk.

We've just passed through the week in which it seemed easier and saner merely to stay home. The tough rental problem -- had only 3 people who looked at the house in nearly 3 weeks of efforts -- solved itself neatly when Isabel Thompson's son spotted our ad in p-I. That lifted one load, and plunking down the determination to go by Pan-Am instead of charter eased another.

Feelings about going: some apprehension about the costs of living there, and curiosity about how our stay will trend.

Ocean Grove, Oct. 5 --Going to airport Tues. morn and even flying to Denver and on to Newark, still no real feeling of going to England. Instead, the feeling simply was that some vague misfortune would happen if we didn't go through all the steps of the ritual -- packing, renting, traveling, etc.

On Mon., we bought \$1000 in traveler's checks at our bank, a transaction which tied up a teller for 15 or 20 minutes and badly disjointed the business flow of the little branch bank. That afternoon I went back to leave power of atty cards I'd forgotten earlier, and the same teller looked up, startled. When I got to the front of the line, she confessed she'd been wildly wondering what she had done wrong on the traveler's checks.

Flight to Denver slanted across the Cascades, Columbia R., Snake River, vast wrinkled ranges of Wyoming. Layer of smog over Denver. In fact, flight across entire country showed hazy air, worsening as we approached East Coast.

Record ease in getting out of Newark airport. Baggage came promptly, and Frank had parking place near front door.

Trip to Phila. yesterday to see Roger & Marge Dean. Extent of slums astonished us, plus decrepitude of much of city. Roger says 4 of his students have been murdered; Temple is in heart of ferocious slum.

Living in air-conditioned house and traveling in air-conditioned car bothers both of us. We try get out for walks a couple of time a day, for fresh air.

Oct. 7 -- Leave for London tomorrow night. Tomorrow morn will be time for packing again.

Weather has been wild here today. Hard rain all night, and great gusts of wind today -- and 93% humidity.

Yesterday I sent out book queries, an assembly line job of sorting sample material and getting it into envelopes. Total of 18 queries.

We called Betty Thomas last night, and she said she liked our book -- or at least was so relieved that she didn't hate it that it seems as if she likes it.

Went for walk this morning, to buy papers and mail package for Frank. Stopped for cup of tea, and encountered a surly waitress. What the hell is it with the East Coast? Yesterday I had my teeth cleaned by Doc Vetrano in Asbury, and his receptionist coldly ignored my "good morning." Vetrano, though, was a kick. Round close cropped head on round body, first thing he did was take off arm rest on right side of dentist's chair, explaining "I'm too fat to reach all the way across this wide chair."

Also visited Tom Jobson at the Press yesterday morning; he is plumper and has longer hair each time we see him. In the afternoon, we all went to Eelmans'. To my regret, Carol got stuck with the women while I shot pool with Frank and Harry.

P.S. On Betty Thomas. She told us how surprised she was to see her name in Ackmts. Carol remarks that several people have told us this, but they all seem to have read Ackmts first in anticipation.

72 Oakley St, Oct. 9 --

A jammed day of toting, walking, and skewed body time. Vagrant impressions, from last night until now --

...Copter ride from Newark to JFK a bit unsettling; noise and vibration, plus the oddity of a craft which lifts off back end first. 20 minute ride to JFK. NY was fairly clear. Impressions of much water, great bridges, tremendous high rise complexes ...JFK is like a rude foreign country. The TWA terminal where NY Airways copter landed was quiet, but shuttle bus outside was packed, with classic bus driver. Ground his way through gears, growled at passengers, grumbled out the stops. The Eastern-Allegheny terminal became "Eastuhnalluhgheny" Next, waitress in PanAm bar was slow and sullen. Pan Am terminal generally tacky. ...Set out to call Grandma, and everything possible got bollixed. Briefly: cashier at standup food counter refused to change dollar for me, told me to go upstairs to branch bank. Teller unhappily gave me 4 quarters. Dialed Grandma's number, no answer. Decided to have drink, try later. When I did, the operator couldn't hear my coins clink in, I tried again twice. Then operator couldn't get my connection thru to WSS. Finally got thru, still no answer. Began my alternate plan of calling Alma; had the wrong number in address book. Began to call Wally, had the same number for him. Called information, got both numbers, finally called Alma collect. Most everyone else on plane by now, Carol waiting patiently. When I did get through, G'ma was at Alma's for supper, all was well.

Oct. 9, cont.-- ...Pan Am flight was pleasant, tho hard to sleep. I finally went to back section of plane, found 4 middle seats empty and laid down. Oddly, stewardesses put on lights and fed us cont'l breakfast nearly 2 hours before we landed. ...Remarkable sky coloring as we neared England; blanket of cloud below, and high horizon of dark clouds ahead, but in between ~~an~~ a vivid orange glow as if horizon were on fire. And as we came down through clouds, began to see orangish street lamps below.

...Carol found Sunday London Times in JFK boarding area, and as we read it on the plane the U.S. began to feel farther away. Also, a woman from India sat across aisle from us, crosslegged on seat as she ate.

...Heathrow arrival smooth, tho clerk who examined our passports pondered and wrote a long time before granting us 9 months stay. Passed thru customs without search.

...Hour's ride on bus from Heathrow to Pan Am terminal at Victoria Station. Along the highway with its river of traffic, saw a man walking a huge shepherd dog on about a 30 foot leash. Traffic disconcerting, with the left hand driving and tiny cars everywhere.

...Easy cab ride to Miss Smythe's. We have room 7, on 3d floor. It's nicely painted -- light blue with white trim -- and clean, but also high-ceilinged and huggermugger.

Furnished in early mod\$ley. Twin beds, swaybacked to the center like hammocks. Dawned on me it's like going back to Latham House. This, and stark john and bath -- in separate rooms -- one landing down, plus street noise sent us into some shock,

Oct. 9, Cont. -- despite our efforts to be ready for different style of life. Naps and walking around helped; Carol said the room looked better every time we came back to it.

...Met Miss Smythe on our ~~ix~~ 1st trip out, and she was precisely as expected: short, plump, gray-haired.

...Walked couple of hours, including to Sloane Gardens to check on apts recommended to travel agent. Nothing available, but were directed across st. Manageress showed us apt for 36L a week, not much more than one dowdy room with afterthought kitchen. Shaken, we went to Universal Aunts, Ltd., which Carol read about in Nat. Geo piece. In office jampacked with 3 desks, Miss Maude gave us addresses of 2 places. Before dinner, walked to the one at Egerton Crescent Home of the Hans Polaks, radically different from stereotype we had in mind. Apt. is basement of row house on crescent block which is nat'l monument, Polak is with N. Am. Rockwell. Very upper class people, who invited us for drink after showing us apt. Had ginger wine, chatted; are to call them tomorrow evening with decision.

General day's impressions: London is dirtier and dingier than expected, tho Chelsea took on sparkle tonight when crowds thinned and st lights went on. I'm muddling the currency problem, how to light gas heater, how to order bitter in manageable portion at lunch. Carol admits to being ready to get back on plane and go home this morning; we're both brighter tonight, gaining from each other's areas of competence. It's starting to be fun -- which isn't bad after 1 day.

Oct. 10 --After day of trying to house hunt, we've decided to take the Palak's apt. on Egerton Crescent. Will see Mrs. P. at 10 in the morn. The other prospect we intended to see this morn, a place filled with antiques, turned out to be for a year's lease. Universal Aunts had nothing more to offer, and a call I made to another firm produced only a dismal-sounding 2 rooms in Bayswater.

Busy day; much walking after breakfast arrived at 8:30. Went to Universal Aunts, then to British Tourist office on St. James's St. Next up to Ireland House on New Bond St. where Bank of Ireland was supposed to be, but had moved 18 months ago. Walking back to Picadilly, increasing rain; downpour by time we got to bus stop shelter. Folding umbrella from Nelsons and Rec Eqpt rainwear getting good use. After figuring out bus route, got off at Cheyne Walk for lunch at King's Head and Eight Bells. Veal, Ham and egg pie came with immense variety of salad stacked around edge. Went back tonight, to upstairs restaurant; excellent trout.

Carol took long nap when we got back from lunch, I took shorter one and read papers. Tried periodically to call Wintersgill and Mrs. Polak. Finally learned from Guardian office Don is on vacation until Sunday.

...One added problem in getting acclimated is that most of the help we encounter -- au pair girls, bus conductors, waiters -- are themselves foreigners, unsure of English.

...Blocks of brick and stone houses send traffic noise racketing up all night long; took us both long to go to sleep last night.

Oct. 10 cont.

...As I stepped out of house this morn, well-dressed blind man on side street across way was trying to tap his way to crossing. A car screeched into a parking space on the other side of the street from him, a middle-aged businessman smoking a pipe leaped out, ran across and shepherded the blind man. Then drove off again in his commute.

...We encountered Irish con man as we came out of a London Tourist bureau this morn; his racket unclear, but probably phony railway passes.

...Language: post office slots marked "London" and "All Other Places". At Heathrow, exit marked Way Out, and instead of Yield sign, Give Way.

...As we walked past Buck. Palace on way to St. James's St., dozen horse guards came riding past in exact middle of street, traffic rocketing past them on both sides. Their black horses unflinching.

Oct. 12, The Mariners Hotel, Lyme Regis --

Drove here from car rental firm on Kensington High St. in London--a monumental trek for our 1st day in a British car.

To catch up from yesterday: I woken up early yesterday, sleeping pattern still skewed by the time lag. Left the house about 5:45, walked across Albert Bridge to Battersea Park and then back across Chelsea Bridge. Dredge working on Thames, its clam bucket dripping little silver waterfalls in the reflected light from the street lamps. At Chelsea Bridge, several trucks and a few cars were pulled to side, lights still on; drivers were gathered at tiny tea stand at end of bridge.

Oct. 12, cont.

Just after I passed the barracks of 1st Bat. Coldstream Guards, reveille sounded, 6:30 am. At the Royal Hospital, a few pensioners in their uniforms were coming home with their morning papers; perhaps it's true old people wake early. Along King's Road, early commuters were reading papers, in lighted doorways or wherever they could find a glimmer of light.

After breakfast, Carol and I set off on an enormous day's work. We arranged to rent the Egerton Crescent flat, registered with the police as aliens, put money in Bank of Ireland, arranged for today's car -- all at cost of much walking and bus riding. Some highlights:

...Miss Maude of Universal Aunts Ltd., the rental agency, was puzzled by our Seattle address of 15004; "how can there be so many house ^{on our street} numbers?" London addresses seldom run into 3 digits, let alone 5.

...Man at car rental firm advised us to take Austin 1100 over the minicar; said the little one "is a bit of a buzzbox" in so much hilly driving.

...As we waited at bus stop to go to play at Picadilly, man pulling flower wagon came down King's Road in the middle of commuter traffic. Apparently nothing illegal, and cars simply narrowed into one lane and pulled around him.

Saw Butley at the Criterion Theatre on Picadilly, after getting thoroughly lost for the first time when we tried to find The Red Lion pub, on Duke of York St. at St. James's Sq. When we finally found pub, it was superb -- intricate mirrors, good

cider, good sandwiches. The play was a tour de force for Alec McCowan in title role. Criterion Theatre itself is worth the price of admission, an ancient underground theatre of pale velvet and musty atmosphere. Touches of class, such as ashtrays over urinals.

This morning we took leave of Miss Smythe, paying her 16 pounds for our 3 days. She told Carol she lived there even during WWII, sleeping in the basement during the bombing. Picking up our rented car, miraculously navigated out of London. The left hand floor shift, right hand turn signal, and sundry rules of road kept us both tense, but we negotiated the 140 miles to Lyme Regis okay. Countryside is exquisite, with surprising straight lines of green -- the hedgerows and trees marking field boundaries thru centuries. Passed thatched roofs; like Englishmen with bowlers and umbrellas, they do indeed exist. Popping over one long hill, we looked ahead and saw Stonehenge like a scale model on the ridge below. Carol's grandmother walked past there on her way to school each day.

Pulled into Lyme Regis tired and edgy; the Kerrbrooke, recommended by Frommer guide, is closed for season. Instead we're in the Mariners, which is spectacular. £3.15 for room, breakfast and dinner, and countless classy details about the place. As we ate, for instance, someone turned down our bed and put our pajamas out neatly. There's modern plumbing and delicious food -- which I told Carol is her concept of heaven.

The town looks splendid, too -- winds down a long road to the shore. Tomorrow we plan to write letters and explore. Carillon has been playing intricately every half hr.-- Carol is near ecstasy with the place.

Oct. 13 -- The day of the French Lt's Woman's path. We walked to Ware Cliffs, where Charles met Sarah Woodruff in the novel. (See letter to Millers) To the east we could see the cliffs of the shore, which change to salmon color when the sun hits them. First part of the walk overlooks the Cobb, where the Woman stood looking out to ~~xxx~~ the Channel, towards France. Along the path we saw fungus shaped like tea pots. At Pinhay Bay, we scrambled down cliff, and walked the beach the mile or so back to Lyme. Beach has small rocks like Henry Moore sculptures, which make a hard sound almost like ceramic when you drop them. Also, ledges of rocks come up out of the water like piers, as neatly formed as if laid by human hand. Large seashell fossils called ammonites, some a couple of feet in diameter, common in the big rocks on the beach.

We used local guidebook -- Lyme Regis Walks and Picnic Spots, by John Hobson, borrowed from Mr. Lambert of The mariners hotel. Provided feverish description of what we thought a mild path: "...only the most agile ought to attempt it. There is every hazard and deterrent imaginable in the middle section....Like Bunyan's Pilgrims progress beyond the Ordeal by Thorn to the Test of Agility, where recent slips have presented you with ten-feet drops..."

Oct. 14, Bovey House, Branscombe -- Big, drafty and cold. This manor house is built of large stone blocks, like so many dwellings in this area. Gorgeous countryside, with ancient villages spilling down hills to the Channel. Carol and I walked the mile or so to Beer before dinner, along a flinty path with hedgerows immense on both sides. Saw pheasants on the way.

Before leaving Lyme, went through the museum there, and saw where Fowles must have gotten the descriptive material for his novel. Also walked the Cobb, which is about 200 yards long, and about 20 feet high, built of tremendous stone blocks. The top pitches down toward the sea, making it odd to walk on.

The drive from Lyme was adventurous, because the roads are narrow and steep. Carol met an oncoming car, and had to squeeze the ~~xxx~~ Austin tight against a hedgerow to get past.

We both regretted leaving Lyme. At breakfast a Canadian at the next table advised his friends they should move on because there wasn't much to see around Lyme, and I nearly choked. I asked Mrs. Lambert of the Mariners Hotel whether people were curious about the town because of the novel. She said yes -- pause -- "Americans, at least."

Language: at the Lyme pub where we had lunch, barmaid was trying to find place for cut flowers; ruled out a place at the bar because the customers knock them over "when they get a bit funny".

Oct. 15, Dartmouth -- Lovely old town tiered up the hill from the Dart River. Ferry across river is small barge with a small tugboat fastened alongside. Large harbor here, with two small freighters swinging at anchor. After dinner, we watched the BBC's "The Onedin ~~Atter~~^U", filmed here; the 3-master used in the play is still at anchor in the harbor. This^u home of the British Annapolis, the Royal Naval College. As we ate tonight, 4 fresh-faced midshipman passed through.

This seems to be Sunday's town; many families, kids to grandfolks, here this afternoon. Everybody eating ice cream cones; the town must have to dab away the ice cream smears from spilled cones after every Sun. Also, church bells played long tonight, beginning about six p.m.

This morning, left Bovey House for the village of Branscombe. Parked at beach there and hiked the East Cliff; great outlks of red and white cliffs, and neatly patterned countryside. Clifftops are a high plateau, maybe a thousand feet or so above sea level, and farms spill down valleys between the plateau horizons. Reminds us of Wisconsin, but intensified -- neater, hillier.

Roads the past two days have been paths between hedgerows, an adventure to drive.

Like the smaller towns we've been in the past few days, Dartmouth is all stone and stucco. Constant surprise to me how many stores there in towns, because they're so closely packed compared to US downtowns.

This entire coast has~~ve~~ been gorgeous, but according to local papers, progress is eroding beauty here too -- motorways, new buildings for old; reads much like our own brand of rural neglect.

Oct. 17, Bath -- Spent last night in Dartmouth, at the Old Customs House. Great culture gap between us and landlady; the house and ~~xxx~~ our room were frigid, but I was told three times that there was "central heat" -- actually, big electric heaters which scarcely heated at all, and certainly not central heat in our terms.

Yesterday morn, we walked along a high road to St. Petrox Church and Dartmouth Castle, where the River Dart meets the Channel, and the French sailed in various times to burn the town. Stark feeling of the tolls of war. In St. Petrox, memorial tablets on the wall for 30 men dead in WWI, 23 in WWII, one in China 1949, another in Malaya in 1950, -- fearful losses for a town the size of Dartmouth. The castle gives off the feeling of how dank and uncomfortable life there must have been. Everything is rough stone and mustiness.

At 7 p.m., we presented ourselves at Britannia Royal Naval College to be shown around, special favor granted by officer of the day when I phoned him in the morn. Our guide was Midshipman R.G. Davidson, an apple-cheeked young gent whose parents live near Detroit. Naval College, which was earlier in a pair of ancient ships in the Dart, now is in beautifully proportioned building of red brick and white stone. Surprisingly low-keyed place, with beards and little overbearing regimen.

Drove this morning to Bath; stopped at pub on the way for lunch, and keeper asked, "where you from in the big country?"

Oct. 17 (cont) --Bath is city of light tan limestone. It's Georgian, which doesn't seem to be our style: we find it heavy and unproportioned. But city is interesting; went through Roman baths this afternoon, which are rich layers of history. Then walked thru the immense abbey, with its stained glass windows like vast kaleidoscope colors.

Bath's layout of streets is even more impossible than London's; we made two passes before finding our rooming house for tonight, and at that were lucky to get here so simply. We've promptly parked the car and walked.

Some food notes by now: the English, at least here in the West, eat enough cream and butter to thrombose anybody. Clotted cream has become our great favorite at afternoon tea. Also, the one ubiquitous item so far has been Kellogg's corn flakes, which we've been offered every breakfast since we landed at Heathrow.

Oct. 22 -- Sunday papers and walk thru Kensington Gardens. Surprised to find the Albert Memorial in the Gardens -- a grandiose menage of statues, pillars, byzantine arches, and heaven knows what all.

To recap since last entry: returned to London from Bath on Oct. 18; next day, Carol did much phoning around about TV rentals, finally settled on one I spotted as I walked along Fulham. On Friday, a colored "engineer" -- Indian or Pak, perhaps -- installed the set, told us how well colored engineers did for their companies and how bad whites did. Unexpectedly, sun shined for 3 days, so we've walked a lot -- from Hyde Park to Parliament, windowshipping on King's Road, and yesterday to Kew Gardens.

Oct. 24, morning -- To the British Museum yesterday. Badly overshot it on the bus, all the way to St. Pancras Station. Walking back, we discovered the Museum is hedged in on 2 sides by row houses. Museum was colossal flow of people through immense rooms. King Tut exhibit is still on. As we came out, courtyard was filled with serpentine queues. Lines wound back and forth thru the yard, then up along the walls of the Museum -- maybe 5000 people, all patiently on line.

Miscellaney to catch up on:

...When we returned to London a week ago tomorrow, we set out to return car to Smith & Hunter on Kensington High St about 4:30. With Carol navigating perfectly, we made it to where we wanted to make a right turn across traffic -- and a bobby motioned us off. Had to keep going for miles, nervously watching gas guage settle onto empty amid the evening rush hour. Must have driven ten miles, nearly to beginning of m-4, before we could find an allowable right turn.

...Kew Gardens last Saturday: mix of grandeur and ~~sandy~~^{dowdy}. Huge park, with array of growth, but the queen's castle there looks like red brick school house. Kew seems typically English in its burgeoning and non-logical making do. For ex, amid the plant exhibits you suddenly come across a display case of Japanese lacquer ware, because some consul bought it for Kew a century or two ago. Best building there is the Orangery, high-ceilinged and without the heaviness of much Georgian.

Oct. 24 cont. -- After Kew, went on to Richmond, to see a suburb. Fairly grim, with identical rows of gloomy houses. Walked to Richmond Park for view west to the Thames, the view which supposedly caused William Byrd to name Richmond, Va., when he saw a reminiscent outlook there. Vancouver is buried at base of Richmond hill.

...On subway ride back, saw a gent in kilts and long socks, another of the endless line of stereotypes we encounter here.

...Started beard 5 or 6 days ago. As I shave my neck every day, I have to fight back the habit of lathering my face and running a razor down it. *Beard so far looks like ready version of Bogart's in African Qm.*

Afternoon: Went to Harrods dept store, not far from here on Brompton Rd. Covers entire block; with a great dome and imposing light-rusty stone, it looks more like museum than store. Incredible inside; it has a subscription library, a zoo, the largest display of furniture either of us has ever seen -- more remarkable than Nieman-Marcus.

After lunch, went to Brompton ~~human~~ public library. No red tape in getting borrowers' privileges; came back with three books each.

Did some shopping on way home, in typically English piecemeal style: cider and ale at one store, few groceries at another, then Carol went on to poultry store and bakery. She came back to report that the chicken she meant to buy was 90p. -- about \$2.35 -- and she got plaice instead. Late afternoon, we walked to Hyde Park and watched soccer games for a bit.

Weather surprisingly warm & pleasant; London still in drought which has lasted a couple of months by now.

Oct. 27, '72 -- On Wed. the 25th, we went to Picadilly and bought tickets for 4 plays. Had lunch at The Frigate, a pub outfitted like inside of ship. Then ~~xxx~~ walked to nearby National Portrait Gallery to see exhibition on 150th anniversary of the Sunday Times. Good show, with emphasis on historical context. One impression I took away was how dimwitted the royal line seems to have been. Bought a couple of posters at the Times exhibit to decorate our flat.

Yesterday, the 26th, was chore day. Carol did laundry early, we made beds, then walked to Waitrose's to grocery shop. Not a bad store, but it seems small and hard to navigate through, to our shopping habits. Took the back pack, and came home with it full, and two bags. You bag or box your own groceries here.

Late afternoon, caught bus to British Museum to try the King Tut exhibit. Line stretched somewhere out of sight around the block, so we gave up, will try on a Saturday night. Decided to walk home by way of Hyde Park, wandered through many back streets on our way. Both noticed, not for the first time, that Londoners aren't handsome people. Many have sallow city complexions, naturally enough, and don't look as healthy as Americans. But facial features aren't great, either. I think there is an English male face, which PM Heath typifies: long face, narrow head, longish nose. And London women are far from strikingly attractive.

Have spent the morning so far clipping papers and sorting. Light bulb in living room ceiling light blew out last night, and when I went to change it, discovered it's not

Oct. 27 cont. -- a screw socket like all the lamps, but a prongs-and-nipples contrivance. This flat is full of jurybuilt oddities. Yesterday the john refused to flush several times, until I tinkered with a couple of stray floats which apparently have been tossed in to help the big ball-float. At best, the john is a thunderous contraption, a great red-painted cast iron box ~~xxxxx~~ high on the wall which lets down a roar of water when you pull the chain.

Oct. 28 -- Yesterday noon brought our first bad experience of someone trying a tourist rook on us. Went for lunch to a pub called The Talbot, not far from Harrod's. Went in the grill bar, ordered potted shrimp on toast. Waiter told us no, that didn't count as a full meal. I said OK, we'll cancel that, and we ordered other dishes. Before long, potted shrimp arrived. Told the waiter we didn't want that and a meal; he pretended outrage and said we were confusing him. We paid for only our drinks, said we'd planned to eat regularly at the place but wouldn't after this and left. Went instead to the Norway Food Centre, had good sandwiches and excellent soup.

After lunch, went to the Victoria and Albert Museum to see Australian poster exhibit and exhibition on book binding. The prints were poor, with small sense of strong design and a surprisingly sterile abstract style. No vigor at all. The book exhibition was fine, full of incredible filigree and craftsmanship.

Last night, saw Private Lives, starring Maggie Smith and her husband Robert Stephens.

Oct. 28 cont. -- The play was acted with wonderful style, and Smith twice brought down the house with applause for bits of stage business. Perhaps some day we'll talk of having seen Smith and Stephens as people have talked of seeing Lunt and Fontane, or Sybil Thorndike and Lewis Casson.

This morning was bright and clear, so we walked Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, with Carol trying to get the Albert Memorial on film. Parks are under a blanket of leaves now.

Odd notes:

...Carol remarked that every time she sees one of the wives who live here at Egerton Crescent, she thinks of a meeting of the Vassar alum club.

...Since so many of England's buildings were built before indoor plumbing, we see pipes coming down outside walls wherever we look -- all the usual plumbing entrails on the outside. Some places make ~~ax~~ virtue of the afterthought by painting them a bright color for a design effect.

...Front page news in all papers last week was trial of Sir Gerald Nabarro, MP, on charge of driving wrong way around a roundabout. Outrageous and foppish as hell, he beat the rap by saying his former secretary was driving at the time.

...The mania for door locks here: our front door has 4 locks, the back one has 5. Kitchen windows are screwed shut, so that when I didn't get the broiler fully lit one morning and Carol smelt gas, all we could do was open the front door, at opposite end of the house.

Oct. 28 cont. --

...We see countless students on streets, seems like half the students in the world. Exhibition Rd., near us, has several royal colleges. Yet Britain is said to have only about 400,000 college and university students, not much more than the Big Ten.

... There was some controversy about Crown Matrimonial, play about Edward's abdication, when it opened, because it involves somebody still alive -- i.e., the Queen Mother, widow of King George. The ~~re~~ complaint is that someone in the royal family doesn't have a chance to answer back. Playwright points out that he sent his script to the royal family, inviting their comment. The retort to that on a TV debate was that of course not, the royal family can't comment on something of that sort.

Nov. 1 --

Catching up:

...Sunday, the 29th, we walked through Chelsea, past Sloane Square to Battersea Park and back across the ~~Albert~~ Bridge.

...Xmas shopping on Monday the 30th. Went to Selfridges on Oxford St. One benefit was that Oxford St. was so crammed it makes Brompton Rd. in our area look deserted. Discovered, in midst of our buying, that the store would charge about \$5 per item to mail them for us. As a result, we have the stuff -- place mats for Carol's parents, coasters for Jean -- here in the living room.

Selfridges is an immense old building, looking like a public building in D.C. with its columns.

Nov. 1 cont.

Tues the 31st went to Picadilly, to buy theatre tickets and see BBC anniversary exhibit at Burberry's dept store. Also went to the Design Centre, to see British wares; impressed again with wonderful plates and mugs.

Chore day today, laundry and groceries. Wrote letters this afternoon, and watched TV of Queen opening 50th anniversary exhibit at BBC Broadcasting House. Commentator said, as she walked between buildings separating parts of exhibit, it was "perhaps the first time in history a queen will walk across the pedestrian crossing to Broadcasting House."

Plays: saw Sleuth last night; remarkable plot line, impossible to guess ahead. Last Saturday saw Journey's End, with a brilliant set simulating a WWI bunker. Full of lines such as "You've been most awfully good about this whole thing", but still a fine play.

General: we see on display electric heaters with plastic "hearths" of glowing coals on top. They're remarkably ugly, but seem to be the standard modern heater as England moves from the gas room heater.

Terribly noisy Halloween party last night in torn-up house at our end of the Crescent. Hif-fi full blast, firecrackers, the works, all sometime in the middle of the night.

Nov. 6 -- Behind in the diary. To catch up:
Finished Xmas shopping last Thursday, the
2nd, and Carol mailed packages on Friday.
Friday night, saw Lloyd George Knew My
Father, comedy with Ralph Richardson. R. was
excellent, with fine timing. Cast showed
what could be done with lines which would
look fairly frail on paper. Play was at
Savoy, alongside Savoy hotel. At end, God
Save the Queen was played. Intermission, we
watched the comings and goings of limousines
at front door of the hotel. Apparently the
hotel itself has a fleet of chauffeured ^{wrong} ~~Rolls~~
black limos, which we guessed were Daimlers.
Watched as a tiny woman, youngish and very
richish, came out to her waiting limo.

Saturday the 4th, walked to northern edge
of Hyde Park, looked around the hotel-crammed
neighborhood there. Found the only barber
shop I've seen anywhere. Then, got to the
British Museum about 5. Line to see King Tut
exhibit was out into the street, but not as
long as other times. We decided to give it a
try for 15 minutes or so, and after about 10
minutes the line moved all the way inside
the courtyard and against the Museum walls.
Within half hour after we arrived, we were
in the exhibit area. A tiny OAP woman and a
strapping woman who had lived in S. Africa the
past 15 years were in line behind us. OAP said
"Seattle. Is that really the name of a place?"
S. Af. mistook Carol, in short hair and
slacks, for a boy and asked if she was in
college. She also said, more aptly, that
we'd be dining out a lot on this exhibit.

Exhibit itself was gorgeous, with some
brilliant craftsmanship in the goldwork.
Sometimes hard to see in the crowd, but

Nov. 6 eentst. -- probably the English make the best possible crowd. Everyone polite and restrained; guards kept saying there was no need to Queue, we could move at random, but queueing there was. E Londoners truly do line up naturally. They stood in lines for this King Tut display as if it werex the second coming.

One irony: at exit of King Tut exhibit, Museum ~~xx~~ has a great Haida totem from B.C. in the stairwell, and people would stop and look at it as raptly as the Tut treasures inside.

*not quite
as good as
the Tut stuff*
The Tut artifacts apparently seemed almost miraculous to the English, who have their own great treasures of the past thousand years or so, but no native handiwork from the lineages before that, as in U.S. or Canada. Some of the Tut work, for instance, resembled American Southwest Indian craft. But as some Irishman said, in the early days of this island there were only a bunch of savages running around painted blue.

After Tut, ate at the Green Parrot a few blocks away from museum, our first real find of good cheap food. I had great spaghetti -- Carol said her ravioli was quite mild, #English ravioli", and I suppose mine was actually "English spaghetti" -- and left wishing the place was in our neighborhood.

Sunday, Polaks invited us for 4 o'clock tea. Spent hour and half upstairs, drinking their Indian tea and then 3 sherries; they are some hosts. Discovered his job is buying companies for N. Am. Rockwell as they expand their axle and transmission business to Europe; deals only in firms with min. of \$10m gross annual.

Nov. 6 cont. -- Also learned from Polaks that asking price on rowhouse next to this one is L37,000 for an 11-year lease, and that the obnoxious Halloween party a few nights ago was the biggest blowout in London, with Mick Jagger among the guests.

This morning, went to Menzies store on the Strand and bought a radio. Have been playing it most of the time since, and discovered some differences from U.S. On newscast, story about Egon Ronay travel book, which said courtesy and service are on decline. BBC man said to test it he'd approached a doorman and asked him about it; recorded results: "Piss off, ~~mx~~ mate, I don't have time to spend on likes of you." Apparently the unflinching use of "dirty" words which we've noted in papers extends to radio as well; already had heard it on TV.

Carol is food shopping with Mrs. Polak; I'm glad she'll have sometime with somebody besides me. We seem to do excellently about spending all the time together, but should try spend some with others as well, I suppose.

--The other morning at Albert Memorial, saw the first contingent off a couple of tour buses of Japanese: 9 persons, 8 cameras clicking.

--Measure of proportion: English don't use "billions", which pop up in our news all the time. Here the usage is a more measured "1200 millions", for instance.

--Beard has itched some the past week. Encouragement from Polaks: he says from experience that it all improves after 3 weeks or a month, and she says I'm beginning to look like Van Gogh.

Nov. 6 cont.

-- Also on Polaks: have meant to note that under stairs outside our door is the clock face from the Swiss Senate in Geneva. She bought it there at rummage sale, wants to have it made into coffee table; she says her husband hates it, because it's so damnably heavy and they're moving all the time.

--Sign on Shaeftesbury: Philadelphia Restaurant -- Traditional Greek Dishes."

-- Our kitchen light is fluorescent which makes 2 or 3 blinding flashes before it comes on steady. I go into kitchen, turn my back, close my eyes and flick on switch.

Carol is just back from shopping with Mrs. Polak, and reports that Mrs. P. idly commented on David Frost's engagement to Diahann Carroll! "That should titillate the Crescent." Carol said David Frost lives here? Yes, she said, down toward the middle of the Crescent.

She also learned that owners must have houses painted every 4 years, at cost of \$550. And, some rock musician also lives here, with a chauffeured Rolls.

Nov. 10 -- Yesterday's weird and scarifying accident: as we walked along Exhibition Rd. to catch bus at the Albert Hall, a pellet or wad flew out of passing traffic and hit me on the chin. Even though it didn't even break the skin or leave a bruise, the stunning sent me into a minor case of shock for the next half hour.

We were on our way to Natl Maritime Museum in Greenwich to look for ill'ns for OCEANS article on ship masts. Since the Print Room there was being torn up for renovation, I wanted to get there before pictures got inaccessible. So, we kept on to the bus stop after I was hit. Carol could see I was glazed and white, and asked if I wanted to go home instead. I thought the shock would wear off quickly; it didn't. When I finally was able to describe it to her and jot notes, I came up with this:

The shock was physical, but jarring enough that it made me light-headed. First effects were tightening of vocal cords, making it hard to talk through the clenching; at same time, I had spasms when I wanted to sob. A sensation, a kind of numbness, spread up the back of my neck and head -- I suppose it was the light-headed sensation. Once I climbed on the bus and sat down, those sensations eased, and I went on to some sweating on my feet and the backs of my hands. Some minor chills followed. By now, about half an hour had passed, and I was coming back to normal. Final symptom was hunger; we found an eating place at G'wich Park and I devoured a sandwich, sweet roll and 2 cups of coffee.

Nov. 10 cont. -- I suppose I had a minor taste of what it's like to be shot. All the physical upset happened in spite of mental efforts to shrug them off; I was helpless to pull out of it, especially after light-headedness set in and made my thinking woozy. The randomness and mystery of what happened make it a small terror -- a taste of some destruction falling on a person out of the blue.

When I was back to normal, we met Mrs. Tucker of the Museum's art dept. She had saved out for me any prints she had showing ship construction, and spread them on the floor of the office coffee room. No real luck, however, in finding the sort of ill'ns I want.

The day had turned chilly and blustery, so we didn't sightsee the G'wich Park area, which looks superb. We did see the Queen's House, now part of the Maritime Museum, which was designed by Inigo Jones and has a warm, human feeling despite its size.

To catch up on the last few days:

--Tues., Nov. 7, saw musical Canterbury Tales. Fairly good, but pit music overwhelmed several of the singers. It was our 1st really rainy day since 2nd day after we arrived. Had lunch at King's Head, which is quiet and becoming a favorite. After play, watched U.S. election results on TV for a little while, but time difference meant it was impossible to get meaningful results before 2 a.m. or so. BBC's Ludovic Kennedy was mc'ing group talk in NY -- J. Rubin, Gloria Steinem, J. St. John, Helen D. Bentley and no light came out of their mutual rancor. Robert Macneil reported results as they came into NBC.

Nov. 10 cont.

--Wed., Nov. 10, morning papers made it clear Nixon had a landslide. Neither of us surprised, though another term of Nixon distresses both of us. From here, U.S. looks like vast unfathomable amalgam; maybe it is. Day was bright and crisp, so we walked through Hyde Park to Notting Hill. In late afternoon, invited Mrs. Polak for ginger wine; her husband traveling as usual. She said they paid £31,000 for this house.

Today should be a chore day. Clippings are piling up. Went out for papers this morning, and got soaked. But as I was out, troop of mounted soldiers clattered through rain-slick streets; about dozen men, each riding black horse and leading one alongside. Probably from Coldstream Guards, heading for palace service.

Nov. 12 --

Yesterday went to Lord Mayor's Show Procession, a parade of guilds, military, and floats representing industries. Crowded; our first good viewing point near a street corner was wiped out when police let flood of people stand in cross street in front of us. Struggled to St. Paul's, and found places to stand on wall above a pool -- both standing uneasily because of 10-foot drop into water. Surprised when military went by to see casual pointing of weapons by soldiers; careless-looking handling such as we can't recall seeing in U.S. Temp chilled and chilled; told Carol I was surprised the Qn wasn't in the parading freezing her bum, but Carol pointed out it's the Lord Mayor's Day and butting in would be bad form. Mayor's

Nov. 12 cont. -- coach, which came with a blast of trumpets from men on horseback, was straight out of Cinderella, absolutely agleam with gilt and curlicue.

Crowds jammed subway and buses afterward, so we began walking west. I got the bright idea we should have lunch while crowds thinned, so we turned up side street. There we saw woman start to cross street, look back over her shoulder, and then step off into side of passing car. A great thump, and she was knocked face down. I hurried into nearby hairdressers to have them call police, but before it was done, ambulances had arrived.

Postscript: when we tried for lunch in the pub, it was so busy and service so glacial we gave up and came home.

Randoms to catch up on:

...ITV blurb for pre-election visit to Cheyenne advertised it as "typical Midwestern town."

...Harrods dept. store looks like what I always imagined the Vatican must be like.

...What we call the first floor is called ground floor here; our second floor is called the first floor, and so on.

...Similarly, rugby is similar to our game of football, so here soccer is called football.

...Graffiti seen: Arsenal are crappy. Gay is Angry.

...At Nat'l War Museum, saw Lord Raglan's telescope mounted on stock like small rifle; he'd lost an arm at Waterloo.

Nov. 12 cont. --

...One reason London is ~~is~~ memorable city is its architectural themes, down at human level (unlike NY skyline which has to ~~g~~ be -- can only be -- appreciated from afar). My favorite of these is the grill fences, hundreds of miles of iron cut into chest-high spears. Since ~~gxxx~~ these sentry fences are everywhere, they provide continuity of feeling; you know you're in London all the time, where parts of other cities are often interchangeable. Other themes: chimneys, ornate door knockers, park squares.

...Alistair Cooke's Letter from America; heard our 1st one last night. He recalled Richard Crossman's 1960 insight that JFK, after most intense and careful campaign ever, only managed to squeak into office; offers this as suggestion that swing of U.S. electorate began in 1960. I'd just told Carol about noticing some reporters -- Adam Raphael of The Guardian, I remember for sure -- describing McG's loss as "worst since Goldwater in '64." Which is nonsensical -- the worst defeat since the election before last! Cooke's point may be right; if Nixon-Wallace votes are totaled together for '68, these last 3 elections have run roughly 60-40 against loser.

...Book reviews here range from great to walk-throughs by big names. Hugh Cudlipp ambled through review of Wintour's press book in Times this week, and just noticed AJP Taylor's second lazy Sunday review in a row. This one was of biography of Reith of BBC, and gave little evidence of having read book. Most notable was Taylor's conclusion that BBC is not an important institution! (After all, it merely provides most of the news and entertainment for this country.)

Nov. 12 cont. -- More on book reviews:

Journalism here in London, at least among papers, is clubby. Only incisive review I've seen of Wintour's book is by non-editor, in today's Observer; reviews by Cudlipp of Mirror, Harold Evans of Sunday Times, and one in Wintour's own Evening Standard have been largely uncritical and polite almost to stupor.

Nov. 15: The last several days ...

Sunday afternoon, Nell and Jim Hardy from N.J. came by for a drink, then we went for lunch at Hotel Rembrandt. She's talky but fairly pleasant, he's very quiet and faded looking. They're on ~~a~~ a theatre tour run by Frommer, they said. They get 6 plays in their 2 weeks, but don't know until they get here which plays. They'd just been to Great Northern Welly Boot Show at Young Vic, a satirical revue which probably doesn't mean much to the average American suburbanite. Also, there is a total strip tease in it, which rather startled the Hardys. Big bonus for us from their visit: they're going to the north and can't use their tickets for I and Albert, so they mailed them to us.

...Monday the 13th, Carol worked to finish her election-watching report. I got out of her way in the afternoon by going to Br. Museum to look for ship mast ill'ns. Ran into the cumbersome reader's ticket system; librarian eventually let me look at catalog drawers, but I can't see any of the pictures until I get a ticket. Finding ill'ns for the masts article has become an unexpected headache, and I'm going to give up.

Nov. 15 cont.

...Tues the 14th: laundry and food shopping in morning, and in afternoon went to Eskimo art exhibit at Br. Museum's Dept. of Ethnography. Wonderful sculpture; bold and fluid lines. That night saw A Pagan Place at Royal Court. Some critics called it episodic, but there is a good story line. And no one gave author Edna O'Brien credit for the resilience of her characters; hit with whatever minor tragedies, they soon joke or visit or somehow simmer down the emotions -- as people do in life.

Got home in time to hear Tom Stoppard play on the radio.

...Wed. the 15th: we walked to King's Rd. to do some shopping. I bought slippers, gloves, pr of socks; Carol looked at coats. Polaks are leaving for wk in Morocco, so they invited us up for drink and talk about household details while they're gone. Hans arrived about 6 -- back from Paris, where he'd flown for lunch. Said he drives in Paris on the blind man principle: eyes straight ahead as if blinkered, because if you look around as if you're aware of the traffic around you, French drivers will try crazy things.

Nov. 20 -- Christmas cards are in mail as result of marathon writing over the weekend; now for the usual backtracking:

--Thurs. the 16th: went to U. of London for lunchtime ~~lecture~~ lecture on info science. Bought media books at Foyles on way home. That night, used our freebie tickets to I and Albert, a lavish production which we liked. Carol sat next to American man in the Hardy's theatre tour who kept exclaiming angrily "I can't understand what's going on!"

Nov. 20 cont.

-- Friday the 17th: Apartment had turned chill and drafty (snow out in West, where we were a month ago), so headed for Marks and Spencers on Oxford to buy long johns. Far cry from the long underwear we have on home; the women's Carol bought are sleeveless and end well above the knee. That night, went to Stoppard double bill at Shaw Theatre. Tried to eat at nearby Black Sheep, but place was jammed. Caught bus to The Green Parrot again. Plays were uproarious.

-- Saturday the 18th: walked through Hyde Park, worked on Christmas cards. Went food shopping in morning at Safeway on King's Rd. Jammed with people. Then a checkout boy hurled the groceries into g bags, an unheard of departure, and more harm than good the way he did it.

-- Yesterday, Sunday, I finished my share of cards and Carol did hers. We went out for short walk, and discovered entirely new area here in the neighborhood, including a mammoth housing complex and a big church.

Today, Carol is out coat shopping, I've just written Holdens. Had planned to go out about noon to try see some of Qn's silver wedding hoopla, but then remembered we must let Paloma in upstairs this afternoon.

...black conductor on bus, instead of saying "excuse me, please" when approaching for fares, says "thank you please."

...Coming home on bus the other afternoon, we came on traffic jam caused by 7 cabs making simultaneous U-turns from Harrod's front door.

Nov. 21 --Carol came back from the weekly debacle at neighborhood washeteria much aggravated. Most of dryers were out of order, and she had bundle of damp clothes. I took the mess to a laundromat near the news agent, and got it dry. That laundromat, though workable, is no bargain; elegant women stand around there on a floor which hasn't been swept since Magna Carta.

Sunny and warm this morning, so we headed for Primrose Hill and Regent's Park. From the top of Primrose, London is a hybrid skyline, the high-rises beginning to take over from steeples. It's a famous view -- nice, but small shakes by Seattle or SF terms.

Huge pigeons the size of grouse wandered the grass at Primrose. After walking length of park to Baker St., went to Raw Deal for vegetarian lunch. Great food. Next to us sat tiny rich-looking matron, in fur hat and coat and splendid ivory cameo on lapel. She's probably been devout vegeterian since 1890.

Carol began shopping for a warm climate jaunt yesterday, and from info got at Am Express, we both worked up enthusiasm for Kenya. Until she calculated a month there would cost at least \$2000. Air fare is high, and a tour seems the only way. We concluded it probably would be cheaper to go from Seattle some time with a Rec Eqpt. charter.

Puttied crack in the john wall yesterday, trying to keep rain from puddling on floor. We shall see.

Nov. 23 -- Yesterday I spent several hours figuring out what we want to manage to do during the rest of our stay here -- surprisingly hard work. Finally devised some lists.

We caught the train to Blackheath a little before 3, to go to dinner at Wintersgill's. Our first time on a genuine train in six years -- and it was the eve of the train drivers' strike.

Don met us at station, and we all agreed the past ten years hadn't changed us a bit -- him with long hair, me with beard, Carol with her hair short. When we got to the house, Don began pouring and scarcely stopped all night. About midnight, he drove us home, careering through the night in his tiny car as he drove with one hand and pointed out historic points with the other.

Don and Mary very funny in describing their stay in India last winter; Don explained the only way to savvy Indians is to realize that they're all potty. Said even the journalists' training institute he taught in, for some of the country's most sophisticated people, had to be rescheduled so it wouldn't end on the 13th. "Inauspicious," Indians say of anything so astrologically doomed.

Don also said The Guardian had inquired of its U.S. microfilming service why sales were so low. Turned out Harvard U. also microfilms the paper, and sells the films. When Guardian asked about this, Harvard sent back xerox of 1936 letter; they'd asked C.P. Scott if they could microfilm, and he said sure, go ahead for as long as you like!

We went to Picadilly this afternoon, to travel offices for Morocco, Greece, and Austria. Carol studied the lit this

Nov. 23 cont. -- afternoon and came up with possible trip to Switzerland and Austria. I spent a couple of hours weather stripping every suspicious crack of door and window -- used 5 20ft. rolls, with one in reserve. At least stopped the wind whistling in around front door. Doors and windows are fitted atrociously -- because buildings are so old and have settled?

Nov. 25 -- Flurry of chores the past few days. Yesterday morning we grocery shopped at Waitrose's -- another excursion into chaos; we've vowed to try early Tuesday morning or some other time when stores won't be jammed-- and took a taxi home with a 28 lb. bag of coal as well from a store across the street. Today Carol bought a winter coat and gloves; I put a screw in the wavering door latch for the living room door (some item springs a leak or falls out or otherwise gives up the ghost just about every day) and, as this page shows, bought a new typewriter ribbon. We're at about the six weeks point now; we've decided it takes about that long to get settled in.

Yesterday afternoon, went to Br. Museum to see film about King Tut excavation, then futilely shopped for ~~coat~~ coat for Carol on Oxford St. Last night, watched modern Oedipus on TV. Wonderful job; play was set in modern Middle East, with Hussein-like Oedipus. Portentous choruses or soliloquys which make such a play hard to take were made into anthems for the King's army; or broadcast over tinny p.a. system as govt propaganda; or done as voice-over interior monologue during convincing stage business. Great piece of theatrical imagination.

Nov. 25, cont. --

This afternoon, we strolled to Sloane Square and back. Damp and chilly day, with light fog this morning; felt like Chicago used to.

Carol picked up more travel info about Austria and Switzerland, and this afternoon planned what looks like a feasible winter trip.

Nov. 26 -- Lunch today with Bob and Carol Frey at Pizza Express on Fulham Road. Pleasant couple -- Bob quiet, Carol very offhand and helpful. Gave good suggestions on libraries, restaurants.

Rest of day spent clipping newspapers and reading Sunday papers. Warm weather, feels like spring. ITV's Weekend World had 1½ hr on British journalism, and there's heavy schedule of shows we want to see tonight.

Nov. 28 --Yesterday, made our 2d trip to Nat'l Army Museum, looked at sections of paintings and uniforms. Amount of warfare the British were involved in is incredible. On way home, went by the Royal Court Theatre and bought tickets to two plays.

Both read last night; I finished book on The Guardian.

Chores today, starting with another laundry disaster. In contrast with last week, when Carol came home with wet laundry because she couldn't find workable drier, today I was beset by washer that wouldn't quit. With the help of woman who's regular customer, got door open during a spin cycle and took out the clothes. Laundromats so far are our worst aggravation. Next, grocery shopping at Safeway on King's Road, uncrowded and sane for a change. Walked to Hyde Park late this

Nov. 28 cont. -- afternoon, discovering route behind the Oratory. Off to the Kings Head in Islington tonight, for play there.

Random: on radio the other day, listeners wrote in about best ways to break up dog fights. My favorite suggestions: carry a pepper mill to use on the combatants; twist collar to choke dog; don't use stick because sticks break too easily.

...Lovely mild weather, virtually no rain there past week.

Nov. 29 -- Last night went to King's Head in Islington, to see Let's Murder Vivaldi. Very well done, with striking girl named Diane Mercer as one of leads. King's Head turned out to be pub-supper club theatre. Place was jammed when they squeezed in chairs for us, and countless people came after us.

This afternoon went to Parliament. Learning it would take standing in line most of afternoon to get into Commons for thalidomide debate, went across st. to Westminster Abbey to kill time until queueing for House of Lords. When we got back, took about 45 minutes to get into Strangers Gallery. Listened to about an hour of debate on Lord Longford's pornography investigation. The place was amazing -- many ancients dozing away on red leather benches, or holding phone-like hearing aids to one ear. Truly a creaky place. Carol said the place is full of dodderers, makes the Senate look good. House itself quite a scene -- dark wood paneling, then high tan stone walls going up to very high ceiling. Statues of warriors spotted around walls at height of Strangers Gallery. Very like a museum.

Dec. 1 -- Yesterday morn I clipped newspapers; imposing piles of clips reposing on daybed now. Morning continued warm and sunny, so we went to Scotch House, where Carol unsuccessfully looked for slacks. Had coffee and roll at Escalade for lunch. Afternoon, walked to Brompton Public Library to return books there, then on to Kensington and Chelsea main library, just off Kensington High St. Looks like the kind of library we've been searching for -- resources similar to Seattle Public, perhaps. Learned how to use British Humanities Index. Excellent research area in library. Open stacks are something else; good variety of books, but only a few small window seats to sit on.

After library (which turned out not to have any johns, but gives you directions to nearest public facilities) we went to Pewter Center. Carol loved the stuff there, and we bought gifts for Rodens and Millers, and a pendant for Carol.

Randoms:

...Carol notes the ornate courtesy of the House of Lords, apparently much different than rough and tumble of Commons. In the porn debate we heard, Lord Shackleton kept calling the Bishop of Leicester "the Right Reverend Prelate" (occasionally scrambling it to "light Relevant Prelate") and other lords as "my noble earl".

...Saw Kirk Douglas on late night film buffs' show, a very engaging session. He told of time he picked up hitchhiking sailor in Calif.; when sailor got in car, he gaped at Douglas and cried "Hey, do you know who you are?!?"

Dec. 1 cont.

...Also saw Sidney Nolan's Australian art on couple of weekend TV shows. Great stuff, vivid and telling stories in the strong flat animation of early cave paintings.

...Museums here are manned by ancient guards -- wardens, I guess. At Nat. Army Museum, there are a couple in each room, usually dozing in a chair. British Museum has some marvelously desiccated specimens

...The British motto should be "mind the step." Many public places and even many sidewalks have jogs between levels, so effective they almost might have been designed for tripping. After our first few weeks here of stumbling around town, we hooted when Qn. Eliz. hosted W. German Pres. Heinemann at Windsor Castle; as they stepped out to review panoply of troops, you plainly could see the Qn. telling him "mind the step."

...BBC reads listeners' letters, which are even richer than Times letters to editor. After discussion show on organ transplants, listeners wrote in to urge that people get tattooed on their bodies their permission for their organs to be used for transplants.

...Phone system very nonplussing to newcomer: the growling signal to put coin in always drowns out response of person you're calling, so you never know who you're talking to.

...Keep trying to define ~~the~~ British look; here in London, see many people with pinched look across eyes. Also long faces and long noses, with Heath sort of the ultimate Londoner.

Dec. 1 cont.

... We see many bikes here, including some ridden by distinguished ladies, but no ten-speeds.

Dec. 4 -- Rains came today. Went to the Marlborough Fine Arts Gallery after lunch to see Sydney Nolan exhibition, and wind constantly threatened to blow umbrella inside out. Weather was even worse when we came back.

Nolan exhibit had some striking stuff; we both liked two small impressionistic pictures of Outback plants. About a fifth of Snake -- 30 feet or so -- was on display, and it is amazing work; looked better on TV, though, in its full length. Also some paintings of miners, with figures shading into landscape colors more than his Ned Kelly or Cooper's Creek paintings do. I still prefer those, probably because of the legends which go with them.

Yesterday, Sunday, strolled Hyde Park and stopped at Speakers' Corner. Three soapboxer going, the most interesting an Indian or Pak on top of two white plastic milk cases, with briefcase leaned between his shins. Wore a dirty and patched pinkish leather coat and fur hat. Talked socialist theory, poohpooing British communists as Her Majesty's Communist Party. A competing speaker was a hefty derelict whom we couldn't decipher; whenever he felt the urge to talk again, he drew people away from other speakers by throwing back his head and roaring: "aaawwwghgh". Carol said he's a great illustration of the drawing power of noise.

Dec. 4 -- cont.

Saturday, the 2d, I felt slightly under the weather. But what felt like incipient cold hasn't developed. In evening, we saw John Osborne's A Sense of Detachment, a rambling and self-conscious play which made a few older people walk out because of endless recital of blue movie plot lines.

Dec. 8 -- Art auction at Christies. Will write that entry tomorrow, when I'm more energetic. First, to catch up:

Tues. the 5th, chore day. Carol did laundry, we food shopped at Safeway. More rain.

Wed., went to U. of London library in afternoon (still more rain). Library is cumbersome: check all cases on ground floor, ride surly elevator to 4th floor, where library is divided into several rooms, hardly any of them named according to use. Exception is Periodicals Room, customary is Middlesex North Library, which turns out to be ordinary library room where bibliographies are kept. Periodicals shelved according to subject; countless obscurantist language quarterlies, virtually no current affairs. Catalog system is some system like Library of Congress gone mad; each subject is listed in a volume atop catalog cabinet, given some alphabetical combination such as YXVC -- which you then look up in catalog. US Library turned out to be elderly grab-bag, mostly history and poli sci, catalogued both by Dewey and Lib Cong systems.

Carol found virtually no useful journalism material; Br. Museum Newspaper Library seems her best bet.

Dec. 8 cont.

Thurs., the 7th, weather turned nice again. We made another grocery trip, this time to Waitrose; Carol defrosted fridge early in week, and so stores were low. Afternoon, I did chores around town: previewed pictures at Christies, tried unsuccessfully to buy ballet tickets at Covent Garden (sold out almost forever), bought ~~pair~~ pair of socks at Picadilly, walked across Waterloo Bridge to buy tickets for The Front Page at Old Vic. River more interesting down there; large boats moored along banks, barges on way. One of the boats was the Old Caledonian of Glasgow with bulges amidships -- sides and deck bulging out about where sidewheels would be.

Wed. night, we saw Behind the Fridge, with Peter Cook and Dudley Moore. Funny 2-man review; excellent spoof of French cafe crooner by Cook, singing about English endearment he'd been hearing everywhere -- "Piss off!" And beautifully done macabre bit about taxi driver and a Lord fearful he's going to kill him out of resentment. And, inevitably, much drag-and-homo skitting.

Dec. 11 -- Ann McC. arrived yesterday morn, and I spent this morning showing her to various places she needed to get to -- Amcn Express, British Rail, etc. Good weather. Near Covent Garden, we passed a bulldog patiently barking -- about one bark each 30 seconds -- at a black streetsweeper. When we came back ten minutes later, both were still there.

Saturday the 9th, saw Owners at Theatre Upstairs. Nicely crafted play, infinitely better than Osborne's playing downstairs at

Dec. 11 -- the same time. Fine performance by Stephanie Bidmead

Random notes on Christie's auction on the 8th:

2 big crystal chandeliers overhead in auction room -- and also mod banks of spotlights, which signal an important work by flashing on for the photogs.

3 TV crews on hand, half dozen photogs standing on platform near us.

Man near us bid 8000, unsuccessfully, on #20. Later, man in front of Carol bid in 8-11,000 range on picture which sold for over 25,000; as he dropped out amid the escalating bids, he said "It's on its way."

Surprise pic was #60, going for 190,000; lights did not come on; as bids mounted, TV cameramen looked more and more desperate, finally shot without.

Countless pinstripe suits in room. Auctioneer had beautifully modulated voice, with hint of coax occasionally; Don said his hobby is fast cars, and his body is mass of scars. Don also pointed out a jolly old porter who occasionally would do errands for bidders; on big auction days, his tips are enough that he goes out for lunch, spending 20 guineas or so and comes back biotto.

For Beggars' Brawl, bidding began at 50,000, went up by 5s and then by 10,000s, until rep of Getty Museum got it for 380,000

Dec. 14 -- Another very warm day; we walked to Kensington Gardens, and winter coat was too heavy by the time I got home.

Stopped at Albert Hall on our way, to buy tickets to Amsterdam Concergebouw concert and a Christmas carol sing. From the park, I walked on to Bayswater to get a haircut -- and couldn't find the barbershop Carol and I had spotted there.

In middle of the night, phone rang, jarring me awake -- wrong number.

Ann McC. returned from Salisbury, Stonehenge and Bath this evening.

Yesterday, Carol and I went to the V & A to see exhibit of Louis Wain's paintings of cats. Remarkable excursion into mental disturbance, as Wain's work shows trend from rather humorous humanistic cats to abstract psychedelic cats with madly flaring eyes.

Scenes from today: Londoner running for bus in front of V & A, knees pumping absurdly high like Peter O'Toole in Mr. Chips. Finally drew abreast of driver and waved him down with furled umbrella.

In park, woman with fur coat, her two white scotties trundling across the grass in front of her.

Tuesday the 12th, we went with Ann to Tower of London. More on that tomorrow. That night, we went to The Philanthropist, which features a fine performance by George Cole as the infuriatingly pleasant lexicologist.

Dec. 16 -- Gray day; rained last night, after remarkable spell of warm dry weather. Some smog began over south bank yesterday. Guardian office party tonight.

Last night 3 of us saw Suddenly At Home, murder thriller with nicely intricate plot. Acting not as good as usual.

Yesterday morn, we went separate ways -- Carol to Brompton library for Oxford trip material, Ann to changing of guard, and I set out to walk Battersea west of Albert Bridge. Took detail photos on way to Thames -- plaque on Carlyle's house, Michelin tiles, wall decorations. Crossed Albert Bridge, which is a delight with traffic barred. Next walked west to Battersea Bridge Road. On Battersea High St, saw pub named The Woodman -- and a few doors further, 2d pub called The Original Woodman. Near Somerset Estates, high rise public housing, graffitti said Lenin Lives. St market near York Road. Walked on to St. John's Hill area of Battersea; saw a specialty baby carriage shop there, with countless different carriage in window.

On way back, near the ^hTames on Vicarage Crescent I glanced across st and saw blue plaque on house saying: Edward Adrian Wilson Antarctic explorer and naturalist. We'd been listening to BBC 4's Story Time version of The Worst Journey in the World, based on book by Apsley Cherry-Gerard and read by Geoffrey Bemis, following the exploits of Wilson and others on Scott's fatal expedition of 1912. (Radio version was ten parts, ~~xxxx~~ that is 2 weeks of Mon-Fri readings.)

Walked nearly 3 hours on this jaunt; met Carol and Ann at King's Head and Eight Bells for lunch.

Dec. 16 -- Notes from Tower of London on Dec. 12: Black and gray stone of towers complex. Some towers with cross shaped windows. White Tower impressive centerpiece, former royal palace. Nearby is Traitors' Gate, where prisoners were brought in by barge from the Thames, through walkway under Bloody Tower to confinement. Tower Bridge looms great beyond the walls.

Warders as guides wear big black hats, widening at top like Mad Hatter's; red bulls-eye decoration on front of hat; dark blue cape with scarlet lining, piping, and collar, red stripe down pants leg.

Dramatic procession from tower to tower, starting with Bloody Tower (?). Warder, big, red faced with mustache, had earnest learned speil, master storyteller with no hint of mechanical recitation. Sounded as if he absolutely relished his job. Told of Sir Thomas More, "that man for all seasons," and John Fisher, pointing out tower "where they lingered for 13 months." Also, "It would be quite wrong to move away from here without mentioning James the Duke of Monmouth", who suffered "the bloodiest execution in our history" -- six blows of the ax, Monmouth apparant&y still conscious until 3d one. Also told of murder of the two little princes in 1483, and of Raleigh's imprisonment in Bloody Tower; and of a prisoner who obstinately lived through systematic poisoning. It took 24 doses, including "hemlock, arsenic, powdered diamonds, and ground spiders", to do him in.

As warder led our agog group up hill near White Tower, a raven posed dramatically on nearby rock. Warder told us legend of

Dec. 16 cont. -- ravens, said the resident birds with clipped wings have names and regimental numbers, and there's a 30 p weekly allotment per bird for raven upkeep. White Tower built by William the Conqueror 900 yrs ago.

At execution site nearby, warder went into careful explanation so we wouldn't confuse public execution site and private execution site. From the Tower green site, Tower Bridge looms, with foreground of stone walls, towers, and a timbered Tudor section of the Tower complex. Warder held black gloves carefully folded in his hands: "I won't enumerate those events," he says of the bloody doings where he stands, then enumerated most of them. Describing the axman "with a black mask," he passed hand over face Marceau like; hand to throat as he described beheading block; "down came the ax," with karate chop of hand. His fact by fact recital of bloodiness was like dramatic newsreel; Carol said it was the history of the Tower as told by The Sun.

In chapel with cloak off, warder's uniform showed great scarlet crown design on chest of Beefeater uniform, with E II R centered in design. He described how the chapel became the repository for "their bleeding remains from the scaffold sites ... their emaciated bodies from the dungeons." Explaining his theory about christening fount found in nearby Chomondley (?) tomb, he dramatically strode length of aisle ~~passed~~^{passed} all of us, silently put hand on font, silently strode back to front of chapel.

-- See White Tower for armor collection; splendid array, including Henry VIII's suits which show him expanding to eventual 23 stones

Dec. 16 cont. -- See Beauchamp Tower for inscriptions carved by prisoners. Rudolf Hess was held there in 1941. Bloody Tower has rooms where prisoners were murdered, small sample of torture gadgets. Waterloo Block has crown jewels, including diamond as big as hen's egg. My pick of it all: Chapel of St. John in White Tower, with small exquisite stained glass like ancient photos; must be etched work.

Honor guard -- the Gurkhas, tiny men in Khaki and broad hats like Aussies, with curved knives in scabbards at back of their belts; fearful precision as they went thru ceremony.

Dec. 17 -- Quiet day of reading Sunday papers; Carol and Ann about to leave for carol service.

Guardian Christmas party last night. Took subway to ~~Temple~~ Temple stop, walked along Embankment to Essex St, then jogged west just before the Strand to Little Essex St. Party was in basement of pub called the Cheshire Cheese. Great party, everyone remarkably friendly. Met various Scots who are Don's fellow sub-editors, plus chief sub-editor, Colin Henderson, who invited us to the office to look around. Others included an ^{Englishman} ~~Indian~~, an Australian, and an American. Party got louder and louder as the pints of stout and bitter vanished, but behavior was good. The ^{Englishman} ~~Indian~~ told us a long story about the time he interviewed Adlai Stevenson; a subeditor named Maurice told us story of a colleague who wrote scholarly history of left wing dissent in Britain, was called in by interested publisher to ask what degrees he would want on title page after his name; he said NATSOPA -- the British journalism union-- which ended the publisher's interest.

Dec. 17 cont. -- Met one sub-editor who had been to Seattle via Calgary on a Guardian 4-week sabbatical, said he had been up in "that Space Needle thing." Another heard me say something and cried "You aren't one of ours, are you?" I told him no, I'm an Australian, apparently convincing him. Closing time was 11, everyone bought big round at 5 till and lingered on finishing the last drink.

Dec. 24 -- Boy of 3 or 4 just came to door. I opened it and said hello; he said hello and started to come in, then stopped as look passed over his face like Marceau's hand coming down over Pip's face. "Ah've cum to the wrong door," he said, and left.

Didn't take typewriter on Cotswolds trip, so there's much to catch up on. First, the last few days:

Nonplussed yesterday by letter from Smithsonian sending back article I believed was an assignment. Will write to Ann for previous correspondence and try get some fee, but it's bad news. Dealing with magazine editors gets more and more onerous; I'd better do what I can to concentrate on writing books. I hope I'm over compulsion to earn immediate money sufficiently that I can invest time in projects when we go home;

Christmas shopped Friday afternoon; Carol and I have bought each other one small gift, will do other buying for ourselves later. I bought poinsettia at Harrod's for £1.50 -- lovely red, with five blossoms. As I was buying, man about 5 feet tall was nearby buying a potted 7 foot tree; clerk was endlessly wrapping paper around a tall thin bush.

Dec. 24 cont. -- While I was out on Friday, near Scotch House I saw two traffic wardens trying to help a man in turban and great white beard -- and Aladdin-style slippers, with toes curving back. He seemed to have address on slip of paper, and wardens set off, one on each side, leading him. Later saw them reassuringly putting him in police car, apparently unable to find where he was going.

Few days ago, a mouse popped into room, after off-and-on scrabblings in walls for some time. Came down from molding near living room window, and made clumsy circuit of room. Last night when we came home from carol sing at Albert Hall, Carol found him on the table, so now a sinister all-metal trap awaits under the window.

Carol sing was fine; best was extraordinary singing of Welsh carols by harpist Ossian Ellis, really lovely work. Albert Hall tiers up from main floor like fight arena to three floors of boxes like opera, to balcony where we were, topped by romanesque arches all around top. Domed ceiling goes up far beyond even the arches; round acoustical forms hang down like upside down toadstools. At one end gigantic organ pipes loom, with arches beyond mysteriously lit with red, like Nero's burning of Rome.

Wintersgills have invited us for drinks the morning of Boxing Day; Polaks invited us for New Year's Eve; letter came out of blue from friends of Susan Brown, inviting us to Surrey; as Carol said, we seem to be doing more here than we would at home. Both content with quiet Christmas, though. ~~Grandma's~~ Phone call to Grandma scheduled for 4 this afternoon.

Dec. 24 cont. -- Except for TV and milkman, the country nearly shuts down for 4-day holiday. No papers on Christmas or Boxing Day, transport schedules are cut. We went to Harrod's yesterday morning early to buy gift for Owen W'gill and some last-minute food; food hall had queues of expensive-looking people. In afternoon, we walked to Thames for exercise, discovered apothecary's botanical garden on Embankment, stopped at King's Head for half of bitter; place was fairly full, much good cheer.

Except for shower one night, no rain ~~in~~ for past week. We noticed smoggy air as soon as train from Oxford brought us inside the city.

Christmas cards have come at pretty good rate; Leonie Polak, who must know 4 times as many people as we do, is impressed with the amount of mail we've been getting. Hans stopped by yesterday noon just before they left for Dorset, said interest rate has gone up another point to 11%; his mortgage is on sliding scale, and so has gone up more than half since he took it last Feb. at 7%.

Speaking of cards, got our annual mimeo from Dr. Carlson and Kate, with annual scrawl on end saying they'llk have to retire to Seattle rest home in a few years. Dr. C. is now past 80, and we've been getting that same final message for years.

Dec. 27 -- After 4-day holiday, Saturday thru yesterday's Boxing Day, much of city still isn't back to work; couldn't find place to buy lightbulb for hall, and Carol found the Albert Hall boxoffice closed. Have lost track of how many lightbulbs have blown since we've been here.

Good weather again today; still no rain. The 4 days of Christmas -- or however many it's been; I've lost track -- were very mild.

Boxing Day at Wintersgill's yesterday: met Bill and Sybill Rankin; Bill writes leaders and reportage for News of the World. If NOW's claim of 16 million readership is near accurate, his words reach about one of three persons in this country. Tall disheveled fellow, thick Glaswegian burr. Invited us to lunch some time. Also there, Don's mother, and hospital administrator Paul Cooper. Both Bill and Paul have been to US, as had many of Guardian staff we've met.

Christmas Eve and ~~xy~~ Day, we spent quietly here; thank god we're happy and content to be with each other. Laid in huge supply of Sunday papers and magazines, and TV was great; saw A Day Out, brilliant play about men's bike club in 1911; Olivier's Henry V; documentary about snow geese with incredible photography. Carol roasted Scotch beef, which was a great meal. Call to Grandma went thru fine on Christmas Eve, tho attempt by Carol's folks to get thru to us next day didn't work.

Last night, after Don's heavy hand with Boxing Day booze, we sat thru ballet of Cinderella parching ferociously. Both had ice water and milk when we got home. Ballet was fine, impressive staging and very comic dancing in roles of step-sisters.

Dec. 27 -- Carol's folks sound like they will come in spring; edgy letter from Frank this morning saying they don't want to have to spend \$100 a day, as Carol warned them they might. She wrote reassuringly this afternoon.

Upset at the Smithsonian letter is fading; will write a protest and try get some \$\$.

Since I was saying as long ago as last summer I hope to steer away from magazines, this simply should reinforce intention. I'd feel better if I had a book contract looming, but I know in clearer moments that making a career of writing isn't ~~tx~~ that tidy -- and that however dismayed I sometimes get, I'm doing fairly well. Have done something like 100 articles and the book in past 3 years; have the feeling my writing may deepen and improve now, and hope I'm right.

To backtrack to Cotswolds trip: 3 of us took train to Oxford monday morn, Dec. 18. Heavy fog on way, but cleared at Oxford so we had bright view of spires from cupola of the Sheldonian Theatre. No papers that day because of protest strike, so subway riders on our trip to Paddington were reading books. One distinguished gent had his umbrella hooked over back of his neck as he sat readg.

Fog during train trip gave countryside subtle shadings; there is an English light. Frequently met trains whizzing from other direction, or even passing us, with some buffeting. Compartment for 8 persons, with mesh luggage racks overhead. Silent man in heavy tweed suit sat in comptmt with us, reading and occasionally twiddling slide rule

Bodleian Library with impressive courtyd in front. Looked at exhibit of first folios and editions, and rare letters. Liked these two:

Dec. 27, Cotswolds cont. -- Egyptian boy's letter to father, 2d or 3d century, in Greek on papyrus~~m~~, reads in part -- "It was a fine thing of you not to take me with you to ~~xxxx~~ Alexandria. I won't write you a letter or ~~x~~ speak to you or greet you... Mother said to Archelaus 'He upsets me. Take him away.'... So send for me, I implore you. If you don't, I won't eat, I won't drink; so there!"

Page of notes between Charles II and Clarendon at Privy Council; Charles inquires when he can spare time to visit his sister, Clarendon tells him. Chas: "I intend to take nothing but my night bag." Clarendon: "God, you will not go without 40 or 50 horses!" Charles: "I consider that part of my night bag."

Inside Sheldonian, pulpits over each door, with lion's heads with what seems a fasces pike coming out of mouth.

From Oxford, went to Minster Lovell in Opel Kadett rented from Budget. Good car, with more power than Austin 1100 we ~~w~~ented before. Still foggy, and village was shrouded as we drove up to Old Swan Hotel. Stone bldg from 13th to 15th century; Ann's room very striking with high dark beamed ceiling. Rooms very hot, surprise of surprises. Vast dinner, with endless good service. Had to borrow jacket and tie from management, done with fair grace on either side, I hope. Good place to go back to.

Before dinner, we walked to ruins of Minster Lovell Hall; horizon brightened at dusk, and ruins huge in the ~~g~~ fog. I went back to take pics next morn.

Dec. 27, Cotswolds cont. -- When I went upstairs to our room for something, Great Dane stretched in front of our door. Growled a bit, until I sweet-talked him into retreating down the back stairs.

Next morn drove thru even thicker fog to Burford. Shopped at ~~Six~~ Celtic Craft Shop there, and bought local pamphlet showing a six-mile walk. A good hike, where we saw huge swans on Windrush River. Males are gorgeous, in their small black masks above white bulk. Came on pair of swans as we crossed fence on stile; male was drowsy, and we watched as his head and neck sank lower, and finally curved flat onto his back in an oxbow squiggle. Female quietly watched, apparently the lookout. As we walked on, another swan was coming upstream, veering a bit sideways each stroke. *(wading)*

St. Oswalds Church, up on hill from Windrush, was ancient church with pale murals from 14th century, and chancel floor shows remnants of Roman villa which stood there before church. Church dates from Saxon times. Pews chest high, like big boxes. Murals were wine colored figures gesturing on beige background.

Thruout hike, fog tinted countryside, with leaveless trees looming dramatically; stone walls and stone houses, narrow roads. Black faced sheep in a field path went thru. On road, met a woman walking a bouncy little dog, which she said was a Jack Russell; she was nonplussed when Ann said he was cute, apparently taking "cute" to mean over-clever.

Stayed night at Old Farmhouse Hotel in Lower Swell, mile down hill from Stow on the Wold. Had the top floor rooms, roof pitching to A-frame. Again, good food and service.

Dec. 27, Cotswolds cont. -- Elderly Englishman who founded a travel guide is permanent resident of hotel; large mustache, punctilious manners, read with magnifying glass. Astronauts arrived back from moon, and some of hotel staff watched TV while we ignored it.

Spent some of Wed. Morning in Stow, about 45 minutes at least talking with town radical in gift shop. Very reluctant to let us go, avoiding taking our money as he talked of one world. Went on to Chipping Campden, very impressive old town, before driving back to Oxford. Caught train to London about 4:30.

Jan 1. -- Polaks' party last night. Besides Hans, Leonie, Lynn, and us, there were Fernando (Chilean) and wife Ria (Dutch), Ria's father, John Chadwick (English, from Devon) and wife Pat (American, from Berkeley) Hans served bol, Dutch wine punch with fruit in, like a reserved version of glögg, and Leonie cooked splendid dinner. Midnight toasts, and kisses and hugs all around. Carol looked great in long black skirt and white blouse; I had on new tweed jacket and thought I'd sweat to death before dinner was over. Hans somehow had the house warmed than ever before.

I talked with Ria's father, 76, wife died 3 weeks ago; spent more than 30 years in Indonesia, on Java, as technician setting up tea factories. Interned by Japanese, spent 3½ years on Burma road. Poignant little man, going into old age now as widower, stranger in his own homeland, and 2 of 3 daughters living in London and San Diego. What a lot he's been through, in decades in Java and also work in Indochina and Uganda.

Jan. 1 cont. -- Ann left for home yesterday at 12:30, still saddled with cold she caught in Scotland. Her nerves and wishes for quick intimacy with those she meets are at odds with our temperaments, but her stay with us went amiably enough. Carol did mutter the other night, as Ann again set the water pipes shrieking, how many weeks does it take to learn how to turn a faucet on right? On her side, Ann must have found my phlegmatic reading of newspapers and quiet pretty dull.

The three of us went to The Mousetrap on Friday night -- a good thriller, still playing to packed house in its 21st year. Next night, we met Ann at Simpson's after she went to early show of Behind the Fridge. All the waiters looked like David Low cartoons of Ernest Bevin -- short stout men, their features all bold strokes. Meat is carved at cart beside table; my roast beef and cabbage was good, but not as good as at Old Swan in Minster Lovell. Simpson's has comfortable feel; it's run by the Savoy.

Friday I went to Kensington library, to return books and get some new ones. Was infuriated to discover there aren't any elevators; an elderly woman was painfully making her way up stairs. Since there aren't any toilets in the building, or any place to put ~~many~~ coats, or to sit except in window seats on main floor, the library is a crime against old people.

On way home from library, Man got on bus carrying a tool satchel and a TV antenna.

Before Ann left yesterday, the three of us walked to ~~Hyde~~ Speakers' Corner. Heavy frost silvered the grass of Hyde Park, riders went past in dark outline against the fog. Much heckling of speakers...reminded me uncomfortably of bear-baiting.