

Chapter 30: Travel

Got my bag, I got my reservation,
Spent each dime I could afford.
Like a child in wild anticipation,
I long to hear that “All aboard!”

Bud Green, “Sentimental Journey” (1944)

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

Francis Bacon, “Of Travel,” in *Apothegms* (1624)

When a traveller returneth home, let him not leave the countries
where he hath travelled altogether behind him.

Ibid.

Travel, instead of broadening the mind, often merely lengthens the conversation.

Elizabeth Drew

I have done a lot of traveling over the years, and my travels have taught me a lot and gone a long way to making me who I turned out to be. So I thought it would be good to include a chapter on travel – where I’ve gone, what I got from it, and something about how I do it. The pictures in this chapter, as in most of the others, are not mine, but have been taken from the Internet.

When I first started this chapter, I arranged it by area. There were nine areas to be covered: the United States, Europe, Canada, the Caribbean, North Africa, Israel, India, Latin America and East Asia. But I soon found that including even the highlights of most of my journeys produced a chapter approaching a third the length of the entire rest of the book. It distorted the structure of the memoir, and while the individual accounts had some value, for my intended audience of future social historians anyway, taken as a whole they were indigestible and lacked narrative coherence. Most people, even in the distant future, will not be interested in hearing where I went and what I saw in trip after trip.

So I changed my approach. Now I have limited this chapter to an overview of my travel experiences and what they have meant to me in aggregate, with sections on how I travel, the County Project, and other topics capable of being treated with reasonable concision in more or less the same style as the rest of the book. While I still use the area arrangement to detail some individual trips, usually the earliest which introduced me to a part of the

world, the travel chronicle I attempted at first has been shifted to a Supplement. Even with that restructuring, this is still the longest chapter in the book.

Even the Supplement is not a catalogue of everywhere I've ever been or even every trip I've ever taken, although it will include a series of lists. For example I go to New York for a visit every year, stay with my brother Christopher in his apartment, see friends, go to museums and theatres, and enjoy strolling the streets of my youth. I don't see much of a benefit even for a future social historian in going through all these trips one after another. But the Supplement (augmented by the notebooks, see Chapter 28) will have most of what it seems worthwhile to record about my individual travels.

What remains of this chapter does go into a few especially important trips with some particularity, especially those before I began the notebooks in 1983. But it restores the basically thematic approach of the rest of the memoir. Document 30-1 lists the countries I have visited.

A. Early travels in America

You could say I was born on a trip. As described in Chapter 1, although my parents lived in New York City I was born in Delaware because my father was in the army and my mother was following him from post to post – first to Rhode Island, then New Jersey, then Delaware, then North Carolina. So my first road trip in 1944-45 was from Delaware to North Carolina, and my second was from North Carolina back to New York after he was shipped overseas. I'm sure we did not fly home, not in 1945, plus we had to get the pre-war LaSalle automobile back to New York. For more on these early trips see Chapter 1.



As a child I did not travel much in the United States. I remember a trip to Atlantic City, a resort on the New Jersey shore, where I saw Mr. Peanut on the boardwalk (left) and was amazed by a special tap in the bathtub for salt water. This was before gambling transformed Atlantic City. I was taken to Philadelphia to see the Liberty Bell (right) and Independence Hall. I went once as a child to Boston with my grandmother for a little tourism and to visit relatives in suburban Newton Center, and later our family went to Cape Cod for summers. I had been to Connecticut a few times. I went to Washington DC once or twice, too, and later went there on



my high school senior trip, and I made another trip to suburban Washington as described in Chapter 8. But until the summer of 1962, when I was almost 18, I had never left the Northeast Corridor, except for living in North Carolina in my infancy, a trip to Deerfield,

Vermont with my parents (which I have been told about but do not actually remember), and summers on Cape Cod.



In 1962 I was allowed to go by train from New York to Chicago, change trains for San Francisco, fly from San Francisco to Seattle, and come back by train from Seattle to Boston.

The nominal occasion was the Seattle World's Fair, which was interesting to me then in itself although I would probably not find it interesting today.

But the main event was the journey. I had never traveled anywhere on my own before. The trip to California took three days and nights, not counting a few



days' stopover in Chicago. I had a compartment to myself – a small private room where the seat folded down to make a bed and something else folded up to reveal a toilet – very ingenious. A Pullman porter looked out for me and I ate in the dining car.¹ There was an observation car at the end of the train – so luxurious. It was the Twentieth Century Limited as far as Chicago, and then some other famous train. Simon Arnstein, a friend of Christopher's, was on the train also, with his mother Daphne, so I had someone to talk to from time to time.



I was astounded at how big the country was. Perhaps you can imagine what Wyoming looked like to someone who had never been west of Washington DC. And Wyoming came after Nebraska, which came after Iowa, and then after



¹ The picture, *Boy in Dining Car* (1947) is by Norman Rockwell (1894-1978).

that there was Utah and Nevada. I would see a mountain and we would race along for an hour or so at 60+ miles an hour and there the mountain would still be. It was like nothing I had ever experienced before. I have been back and forth across America on the ground many times since, and it still amazes me.

I got off the train in Chicago and stayed there for a few days, living in a hotel and seeing the sights. For someone as closely supervised as I had been, doing this by myself was very exhilarating. Seeing the sights meant of course more than the Tribune Tower and the Art Museum. I saw those too, but more exciting by far were the downtown burlesque houses. In 1962 there was still burlesque in the old sense, threadbare but still hanging on – old-fashioned strippers (pasties and G-strings were the limit) alternating with baggy-pants comics, and people going up and down the aisle selling muddily risqué (but not



obscene) photographs. I was fascinated, especially of course by the strippers. I spent quite a lot of time exploring the old downtown of Chicago, and afterwards became a fan of the now almost forgotten Chicago writer Nelson Algren (1909-1981).



When I got to San Francisco I only spent an afternoon there, not enough to get any sense of the place where I would eventually settle – all I had time to do was attend a kind of Hyde

Park public speaking event in Union Square. Then I flew (again for the first time alone) to Seattle. I saw the sights, including the Space Needle (left) and the famous Monorail (now hardly used at all anymore), but as with Chicago the sights I most remember involved breasts. There was an exhibit where women were allowed (as at the Windmill Theatre in London, but behind glass) to pose nude as long as they didn't move. I stared so hard I didn't move much either. I also saw Sally Rand (1904-1979) do her famous fan dance (right), in which you could not really see any forbidden parts of her body. Sally Rand was 58 years old at the time, and she was fabulous. The Seattle World's Fair, called Century 21, was also the first place I saw a touch-tone telephone.

I went out to California from Chicago on the Union Pacific's central route, and came home by the Northern Pacific's northern route through Idaho, Montana, North Dakota and Minnesota to Chicago, and then on to Boston where I took the ferry to Provincetown to rejoin my family in Cape Cod. It was a great experience. I won't say it *gave* me a taste for western travel, as I had a taste for it anyway. But it gave me a start on a new understanding of my country.

I took a few more trips out of the Northeast Corridor after that first trip west, but before I got a driver's license and a car in 1970. Of these the most important were trips to Northern Mississippi in 1966 to participate in the James Meredith march (see Chapter 12.A); to McPherson, Kansas in 1967 to teach at a draft counseling seminar at McPherson College (see Chapter 12.B); and to Berkeley, California over Christmas 1969, to visit my college classmate Peter Miller and see what California was like (see Chapter 16). I liked it so much I got a car and drove out there the next summer.

In the spring of 1970, as described in Chapter 14, I bought a small Austin America car (English despite the name), learned to drive it (sort of), and took it to Berkeley.² This was my first independent road trip, a very different experience from traveling by train. You could take a car down back roads; you



could stop it wherever you wanted; you could have lunch at little caf  s in tiny crossroads towns. Since then I have traveled at least many hundreds of thousands of miles by car all over the United States; many of those little towns, and larger ones too, are mere shells now, and most of the caf  s have long since closed.

But then, as now, it was always a thrill to be on the ground in such places as West Virginia and Tennessee and New Mexico and Montana. I had studied the map of the United States since childhood (see Chapter 5), and had romantic images of all these places. The reality was even more romantic. In the south there *really were* tobacco sheds with tin roofs advertising Red Man chewing tobacco. There *really were* Indians in the west. The Great Plains really were great; the Rocky Mountains really were rocky.³

Part of the amazement was that *people lived* in these plains or mountains or on the shores of the bayous or wherever. Look around you – wheat! You're in Kansas! This thrill has never abated for me, although every part of America (except Alaska) has become much more familiar to me now, and the country has coarsened and become more homogenized and suburban, with strip malls and chain stores instead of the old main streets. Perhaps

² The attachment on the roof (in the picture) is a bike rack, which I didn't have on my car. But I did mount a searchlight there.

³ I later learned that the Grand Canyon really was grand. I have not yet been to the Great Dismal Swamp in North Carolina, but on the basis of these past experiences I'm guessing it's both great and dismal.

this is just the nostalgia of the old – things are not the way they used to be. Maybe Starbucks *really is* better than Mom's Crossroads Café – I wouldn't know.

So as mentioned, during summer vacation 1970 I went out to California by car. I took a southern route, heading down the spectacularly beautiful Blue Ridge Parkway, into Alabama, and then west across Mississippi to Dumas (pronounced *dumb-ass*), Arkansas, where my car broke down. As it was an English car I couldn't get it fixed locally and it had to be trucked to Monroe, Louisiana, where I hung around for ten days waiting for a part to swim over from England. It was agonizing for someone on his first road trip, who had almost no money. When I was on the road again I continued through Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona, and then up the California central Valley to Berkeley.

That summer I went from San Francisco overland to Boulder, Colorado, to attend the convention of the very left-wing National Lawyers' Guild. We went out by bus but came back in someone's car. Boulder is very dramatically set at the edge of the plains, flat on one side but backed up against the hugeness of the mountains. Albert Bierstadt would have loved the place.⁴

When the summer was over I drove back to Philadelphia for my third year of law school. This time I took a central route, a lot of it on Interstate 80 as far as western Pennsylvania. I think I did this because I had someone with me to share the driving part of the way across, someone I didn't know who had a deadline. I didn't mind, as I had never traveled I-80 before.

The car was still a novelty for me and I used to enjoy driving for its own sake – going sometimes 100 miles on the Pennsylvania Turnpike in the middle of the night, flying on speed of course (see Chapter 17.D), and then making an illegal U-turn through a gap in the median reserved for police cars and coming out near where I had come in, paying only one exit's toll. I took road trips whenever I could that year, including one memorable one with Joel Solkoff from New York to Cape Porpoise, Maine. The trip was undertaken on a sudden whim and the purpose was just to get to Maine (I had not yet been to all the states). The car broke down in New Hampshire on the way back, and I had to stay with it until it got fixed. A car breakdown was a big deal in those days, when I didn't have any money. Even now it would be a headache; then it was a sundae of anxiety.

I took some other trips around the eastern states, just to travel, and one down south to cross the Florida state line (the same impulse as with Maine). A lot of this trip was

⁴ Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902) was a German-trained American painter who specialized in vast, dramatically lighted paintings of the American west, especially mountain scenes. His work, still exciting and rewarding, gave a lot of Americans a sense of the west.

through West Virginia and Kentucky coal country. I made it to Yulee, Florida, and then turned around and drove back to Philadelphia along the coast. Every place I went was entirely new to me. Finally, after I graduated from law school in May 1971, I drove back out to California, this time to stay. Joel Solkoff drove with me, through Illinois (speeding ticket), South Dakota (tornado), Wyoming (daredevil driving on soupy mud roads in the outback) and Nevada (legal whorehouse).

B. The County Project

By the time I got to California in 1971, I had been across the country five times – the train trip in 1962, the car trip in 1970, and the one-way trip after graduation. I had not yet been to all the states – I think my count was 44 at that time – but I was closing in fast. So I decided to begin on the counties, of which there were more than 3100 (counting the independent cities of Virginia, and the boroughs of Alaska). I bought a county outline map of the United States, and thus began the second stage of my American travels.

With the aid of a road atlas I mapped out in different colors the counties of the route I had just taken, and the routes I had taken the previous summer, and the routes of the excursions I had taken since getting my car. An atlas with railroads on it revealed the route for the 1962 train trip. Except for that, I had not traveled much in the United States before getting the car, so it was a relatively easy matter to reconstruct the probable routes of all my earlier journeys, beginning with the wartime trips from Delaware to North Carolina and back to New York. I assumed that for these trips my parents would have taken the main road, which was not necessarily still the main road in 1971. I figured it out, aiding the clarity of the outline map by using gray for all trips which added only one county – thus Staten Island (Richmond County, New York) did not need a different color from Manhattan (New York County). In this way I filled in most (but not all) of the Northeast Corridor. I had no written records, but I did remember most of the trips, and however many trips I made from New York to Boston (for example), I probably did not leave either the main road or the main railroad. There may have been some slight errors in this retrospective mapping, but I did the best I could and decided to accept the map I created as a baseline for the fanciful project of going eventually to every county in the United States. As I write this in July 2010, I am at 2103 counties, 2/3 of the total and still counting. I have completely finished 25 states so far. State totals for the County Project (an excerpt from an Excel spreadsheet) and two maps appear at Document 30-2; the original maps, an accompanying spreadsheet arraying the data in different ways, and a notebook and atlas for checking off the counties one by one, will go up to Yale as supplements.



This project has changed very significantly the pattern of my travels in the United States. For one thing, I now take road trips, usually about 10 days long, which have no other formal purpose except to pick up more counties. Although I do some tourism along the way, I lay out the trip for counties first and then see what sights are nearby. Sometimes the goal is to finish a state by completing all the remaining counties; in recent years, as the map has filled up, the goal has often been more visual – to fill in white space, connect previously completed areas, or add a vertical element to a horizontal pattern (a lot of my travel in the central part of the country has been in east-west swaths).

I do one or two of these trips a year now – in 2006 I finished Maine and Idaho. In 2007 I visited Chicago for the first time in many years (no breasts this time), and used it as a base for adding several dozen new counties in Iowa and some more in Illinois and Wisconsin, and filling in a substantial area lying between ones covered in two earlier east-west trips. Often when I go somewhere for other reasons I still try to add a few counties – for example in August 2007 I went on a short trip to the medal collectors' convention in Houston and spent part of two days driving along the Texas Gulf Coast to see Galveston and add a few more counties. If the convention had been held in Denver or Las Vegas, where there are no unvisited counties anywhere close, I might not have gone at all.



I decided to cut back on this kind of county-based traveling when I retired in 2008, but then eased back into it. I finished West Virginia that year, with a lot of Appalachia included, and the next year finished Wisconsin, also reaching some isolated pockets of Minnesota and Michigan I had missed on earlier trips. I finished Virginia (including its independent cities) in 2010. Although there are a lot of places I haven't been yet, except for Alaska there are no areas of the country left where I haven't traveled. If I haven't been to a certain county, I have probably been to a similar one not far away.

I don't usually travel in a straight line on these trips anymore. The trip west in 1971 left a trail one county wide on the map – we just drove straight down the main highway through the southernmost tier of Minnesota counties. Now I make it a point to drive more or less along the county line itself, often on gravel roads, alternating back and forth so as to pick up the counties on both sides, and my path becomes two or three counties wide. Adding the irrational element of county lines to my itinerary means that I don't travel a direct route from city to city, but go by back roads, sometimes special Forest Service or Indian Reservation roads, sometimes unmarked and unpaved, sometimes just mountain paths or access lanes between cornfields, in order to maximize the number of

counties I touch. This has brought me through a much wider cross-section of America, and allowed me to see it much more intimately, than most motorists are able to do. And since the objective is to get *new* counties, on road trips I don't ordinarily go where I have already been, which widens my experience.

I usually plot my route very carefully on a free Automobile Association touring map, on which I have outlined all the reasonably possible new counties in blue and laid out a preliminary path in yellow highlighter. Then I go over this route with DeLorme state topographical atlases, and if I have one (as I do for many states) also with an even more detailed and specialized atlas made of or based on the maps used by state highway engineers. These allow me to see many small roads not on larger scale maps.

- Sometimes, where it was uncertain even on these maps whether an apparent shortcut was passable, or whether the road crossed a county line or not, I used to use a DeLorme CD⁵ which had just about every street and dead-end road in the country to 12 levels of magnification. If the route was tricky and there was a chance I might miss a crucial line, I printed out pages from the CD and made a special-purpose looseleaf atlas for the trip.

That CD is obsolete now, because it no longer works on my updated computer. But now I use Google Earth instead. This is actually better for the purpose, as Google resources combine satellite views, ground-level photographs, road maps, and terrain maps with boundary overlay, to an amazing degree of detail. I'm sure in 2319 there will still be some version of this resource available to everyone.

After I lay out the route, I study it over and over, finding short cuts and ways to add additional counties with a little extra mileage, until I have it more or less memorized. I also build in tourism, working into every day's journey at least one museum or historic house or state capitol or scenic wonder or weird attraction. Finding and selecting these also takes some research – the DeLorme atlases, the Automobile Association regional guidebooks, and Internet resources help me choose what I want to see.

- Apart from Google Earth, which is not portable for me as I don't carry a laptop computer with me on these trips, the atlases based on the highway engineer maps are the best resource where available, better even than topographic maps for my purpose. They show very reliably, for example, how the road is surfaced – five miles on a blacktop road is very different from five miles on a gravel or dirt road. They also give names for every road where names exist (which permits navigation

⁵ Compact disk.

by road sign), and exact distances between exact landmarks, and minute roadside features like structures and power lines, and coordinates for exact location.

One time in Nebraska I drifted off an unpaved road in a rainstorm and got stuck in a mudbank. I contacted 911 on my cell phone, but where was I exactly? I was able to tell the sheriff where I was down to a few yards by using the coordinates on the state engineer's county map – my maps were better than the sheriff's. These maps are published for some states by specialized publishers, and for some states I have ordered them from state transportation departments; for other states there are special commercially published county atlases intended for hunters and fishermen. Most eastern and far western states don't have these available in any form, but midwestern states do. There's nothing comparable.

I have set some rules for the County Project. The main one is what I call the *coroner's rule* to determine whether I have been in a county or not: if I were to drop dead, which county's coroner would have to do the autopsy? Thus going one foot across the line is good enough – one time I added two counties by driving in a circle around a parking lot which county lines happened to trisect. It's nice to have some time in a county, or visit a town, or have lunch there or see the courthouse or something, but it is not necessary – all that is *necessary* is to be within its boundaries on the ground. Flying over or boating through does not count, although (inconsistently) going through on a train does count.

A few years ago I joined an organization called the Extra Miler Club – see www.extramilerclub.org – devoted to just this pursuit. About 30 members have already finished the project.⁶ I accept their rulings on most things – for example, is Kalawao (the former leper colony on Molokai Island, Hawaii) a county or not? The state statutes differ, but EMC counts it, so I count it too.⁷ However, they also have a rule that if a county splits and forms a new county, you have to go back to the new county if you had not yet been in *that part* of the old county. This happens every so often. I don't follow that rule – I follow the *indelible ink rule*. If I color in a county, all the territory I colored in stays colored and doesn't suddenly become white again because a state legislature changes the line. *Uti possidetis ita possideatis*, as the Roman lawyers used to say, meaning *that which you possess you shall continue to possess*.

⁶ It is kind of startling to see the picture gallery of completers – they are almost all paunchy baldish gray-bearded white men in their 60s. It's hard for me to imagine how I fit in with such a group. In 2010 I went to the annual meeting in Arlington, Texas, racked up 12 new counties in Texas and one in nearby Oklahoma, and helped cheer a new completer across the line into his final county.

⁷ An EMC member at the 2010 convention clarified this for me: Kalawao is a county until the last resident leper dies, and then it becomes part of Maui County. The youngest leper is younger than I am.

- EMC has declared that it is all right to count the unincorporated areas of Alaska as one unorganized borough, rather than requiring members to touch down in every census tract. Although Alaska has just incorporated two more boroughs (they don't have actual counties at all up there), that still reduces the jurisdictions in Alaska from 27 to 18, a substantial change in a state with hardly any roads. The new total to aim for is 3127.

Almost all of my American travel, except for trips within California or to eastern cities, is now influenced by the County Project. Either a trip is planned just for county collecting, or as noted if it is for some other purpose I try to build a little county-gathering in. In 2006 my brother Adam asked me if I wanted to join him on a trip to New Mexico to gather stories for the Voice of America. Well, I had been to every county in New Mexico already – would Wyoming, Idaho or West Virginia do as well? We ended up going to Idaho, and I was able to finish the state. Even the routes are now planned with future trips in mind – I no longer leave isolated counties as gaps I will have to go back for, and plan my routes to lie next to routes already taken, so as to broaden the completed area systematically and fill in all the gaps.

C. Later travels in America

The first major trip I took after starting the County Project was in 1972, from San Francisco to Seattle and back. The object (apart from counties and itchy feet) was shunpiking – to see if I could get all the way to Seattle on back roads without taking the main road anywhere. I almost did – there were a few miles near Grants Pass, Oregon, where the Interstate, built over the previous roads, was the only road there was. But for most of the trip I was able to stick to the former Highway 99, superseded several times over and almost invisible unless you knew where to look. But I knew where to look – old faded street signs, painted sometimes on curbs, which said 99, or sometimes Main Street or Hicksville road if Hicksville was the next town. I did not yet have DeLorme atlases, or CDs, or highway engineer maps – I was still working just from AAA touring maps. But I knew I was looking for the oldest road, the road that connected towns and villages before the freeway was built. Often I asked directions and was told to get on the freeway – young people seemed to think that was the only way to get to the next town. But if I could find an old person, he would know how it used to be done.



Taking the route closest to the river or the railroad was another way to keep to the oldest road. One time I remember being on a rutted, ruined road, and seeing a newer but still old road, and the so-called U.S. highway (actually a state highway) that had replaced it, and the Interstate that had replaced that, and the railroad, and the river, all at once. For a consumer of historical maps, this was quite a thrill. I came to think of the Interstate as a river, a natural barrier that could only be crossed by a bridge or a tunnel. Now I have a fair-sized collection of road atlases, not only state topographic and engineer atlases but national road atlases from different periods, going back to the 1920s. These let me determine which is the oldest road if I am in doubt.

There is usually no one on a road replaced by a newer, faster road parallel to it, so you can often drive almost as fast as on the new road if you want to (sometimes they are retained as frontage roads, or remain as residential streets or farm access roads for the houses built there before the old road was supplanted). Usually I don't drive fast, though, because disused roads are neglected and so the paving is bumpy, and there can be serious potholes, and also traveling fast you miss the faded evocative details which are the only reason for being on such a road in the first place. It is a kind of time travel – stay as close as you can to 1940, or 1920, or occasionally much earlier. Try not to see anything added after that date. When the freeway went through it killed off the roadside businesses on the old road – driving along, you can see their faded husks. In a letter about this trip I wrote:

Three roads crossing a river. Two of them were the two directions of the Interstate, and they just went over the river without noticing it. Right alongside was an old two-lane road, choppy in places, crossing the river through an old steel bridge, dated 1926. I was slightly stoned on marijuana, but it didn't take much for me to maintain the illusion of a time-warp. My car in 1935, everyone else in 1972. When I passed an old 1949 pickup truck the rush was incredible. Just me and the railroad tracks; occasionally a faded RR crossing sign announcing a town no longer there. It was an incredible experience – I beat the Interstate. I had overcome the world. It can be done, You can go home again.⁸

I continued:

When I stopped for the night I always stopped at the old commercial hotels, seedy and run down, where I would have stayed in 1935 had I been going to Seattle selling Fuller brushes.⁹ And some of them were remarkably cheap and remarkably good – a nice room in a nice hotel which has seen better days, enormous wood-and-glass front desk, huge old-fashioned bathtubs with no shower, \$3.56 a night.

⁸ The year he died, the Montana artist Charles M. Russell (1874-1926) wrote: "Like most men my age [he was 52] my heart lives back on trails that have been plowed under."

⁹ Future researchers: these were famously sold door-to-door in the old days.

This is of course no longer possible today as it was in 1972, as the old hotels are gone, boarded up, and most of the towns are boarded up too. Shunpiking always brings you through the center of town, nowadays itself usually a faded husk, almost every storefront either shuttered or occupied by a junk shop or other marginal enterprise (video rental, thrift store, nail salon). The junk shops (usually quaintly named “antique” shops) contain what the people who moved away no longer wanted to bother with, or what the people who died still had at the end. The larger the town, the more elaborate the main street, but the rot is often just as deep. Often the only life is now at the strip mall by the interchange, and that is a robotic sort of life. It is very distressing, but there’s nothing to be done – it is the Kali Yuga.

Here’s an extract from an e-mail about this dated 1999.

As you speak of vileness, there are two kinds. The malls and parking lots are one kind, but that doesn’t reach everywhere. The other kind is the devastation left when the parts the malls don’t reach are abandoned to the rats and wolves. Of course, the sadness of the loss of sweet old towns of the 20s that we like to see in our travels, and which hardly exist anymore, is to some extent the result of our imprinting. Codgers in 1899 also complained how things were not like they used to be, and the same in 1799. You can make a good case that a cracker-barrel country store really is better than Wal-Mart, but no one is listening. Either The People don’t agree with us, or they do but are still willing to sell their town for 3¢ off a roll of toilet paper. Either way our America is finished. Rather than get upset about it, I try to channel my feelings into a kind of autumnal escapism, studying old photographs, training my eye to exclude the modern, trying to pretend it’s 1911, before antibiotics and air conditioning and Internet. Or even 1811, if I’m in an environment which supports that fantasy, before anesthetics and typewriters. It’s no use. It is what it is.

While in California during the years 1971-73 I traveled often to Feather Falls in Butte County for LSD trips (see Chapter 17.F), to Lake County to visit my law school classmate Ron Green, and to Los Angeles for various reasons. I can still remember the “loneliest road in the world” (Nevada State Road 375), the isolated hamlet of Fry Canyon, Utah, where a young girl who could hardly wait to get out of there served me lunch, and the exhilarating alfalfa smell of summer-night Kansas.

- While I was in southern Kansas, President Nixon was scheduled to hold a press conference – he was under pressure for Watergate and a person never knew when he would fly apart. I didn’t want to miss it if he actually came unglued (which never happened, even on his last day, but in 1973 it seemed as if it could) so I raced down to Ponca City, Oklahoma and walked into a hotel asking to watch the presidential press conference. I looked like a stone hippie but I was asking to watch Richard Nixon, so they let me.

- In those years I always had dope with me, and was usually stoned on the road. I never had any problem either with my driving or with the law. On the 1973 trip (going back to New York for library school) I shunpiked through Kentucky. I remember finding a road which looked much as it must have looked in 1840 (except for the paved surface and the age of the trees which met over it). For whatever interest it may have, I attach at Document 30-3 the travelogue section of a letter I wrote then, describing this trip in detail.

I didn't use my car while I was in library school, and not much in Washington outside the city except for one trip through the beautiful Delmarva peninsula and Virginia tidewater country. In 1975 I drove to Los Angeles, with Adam and Victoria, on my way to Taiwan – just as my earlier cross-country trips had opened up the Midwest and the West for me, this trip opened up new parts of the South and the Southwest.

During my second stay in San Francisco, 1976-82, I hardly left California. I went to Los Angeles and Lake County, and Lake Tahoe where I had the use of a vacation house. I did take a county-gathering excursion to Death Valley and to Las Vegas. On a trip to Montréal and Ottawa in 1981, I rented a car and explored the beautiful St. Lawrence Valley, and some islands in the river, not only on the Canadian side but also in upstate New York and in northern Vermont.

I sometimes went to Tucson, Arizona, to visit my cousin Jack Marks. Once even sent me a first class ticket, the only time I have ever flown first class. Even before global warming Tucson was unbearably hot – I remember sitting in Jack's pool like a hippopotamus in a river, immersed up to my eyes, with a water-soaked cotton hat shielding my head. On one visit I borrowed his Cadillac to finish off the last counties in Arizona. When I got back to his house I told him I had now been in every county in Arizona. He topped me by replying that he had held court as a judge in every county in Arizona. I have still not held court as a judge in even one county in Arizona.



The trips which finished off the California counties were part of a strange enterprise. I walked into one of our office suites at Farella one day around 1978, while working as librarian, and one of the secretaries said, jokingly, "Here's David – he'll do it." I said "Sure I'll do it – what is it?" It developed that one of the senior partners wanted someone to go to every one of the 58 county courthouses in California, as well as to the federal courthouses in all four California federal judicial districts, and check the Register of Actions to see whether any actions had been filed against a certain person under any imaginable variation of his complicated surname. No one expected I would actually want to do this, but I did – it

was a way to get my way paid to every remaining county in the state, and make some money on the side. They were delighted to get me as they knew and trusted me, and I was a lawyer and could read court registers. Nowadays of course everything would be computerized, as some courthouses like Los Angeles already were even then (although instead of terminals the public used Acco-bound printouts, carbon copies printed on tractor paper with dot-matrix printers).¹⁰ But in most cases the registers were huge bound ledgers with entries in longhand. As I only worked three days a week (see Chapter 24.B), I managed to structure this project into four trips (a fifth trip, covering northern counties I had already been to, I farmed out to Ron Green). I ended up finishing up California, visiting remote counties such as Trinity and Modoc on the company tab. Shown above: the Mono County Courthouse in Bridgeport, California.

In 1982 I was contemplating quitting my librarian job and retiring to the family property in Cape Cod (see Chapter 25). I took a trip to Hawaii to spend a few days on Kauai seeing how I liked not working. Kauai (and Oahu) were not very interesting places – the tourism was kind of prefabricated. I remember being on a tourist boat on Kauai, listening to the slack-string guitars on tape and waiting to go under Wailua Falls, but there were two similar boats ahead of ours, with their own tapes playing, as we were all processed into the same experience.¹¹ I would not go back to Hawaii if I did not have three counties left in that state, although my Hindu teacher Michael Bowen loved living on the Big Island. Perhaps if I were not a tourist I might see Hawaii differently, but it is hard to imagine why I would be in Hawaii except as a tourist.

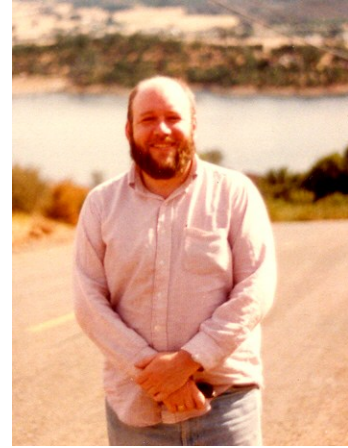
I decided to go ahead with my retirement plan, and in 1982 I drove cross-country again, taking a northern route from San Francisco to Cape Cod. In the Upper Peninsula of Michigan I left three remote counties untouched – I had to go back for them 27 years later. Today I would never leave such a gap on the map.

Once settled in Truro, with a (mostly) working car, lots of leisure, and a little money, I had the opportunity to travel some on the East Coast, which I missed as I had been away so long. Eastern trees! Fall foliage! I went often to Boston, New York, and Washington, took some other road trips in the beautiful states of the New England and mid-Atlantic and Appalachian regions, and spent every August with Les and Makiko Wisner in San Francisco. Below is a picture of me taken on a visit to Lake County, California in August 1983, aged 39.

¹⁰ Future historians: these are all so obsolete you don't even need to know about them. I want to leave *some* mystery.

¹¹ David Lodge describes the same thing happening in his comic novel *Paradise News* (1991), in part a satire on Hawaiian tourism.

By the end of 1984 my notebook system was well established (see Chapter 28). As a result I have detailed and precise records of all the road trips taken since then. Originally I had a long bulleted list inserted here, but I deleted it – there were around 40 bullets, *not counting* trips to New York, Washington, and other Northeast Corridor cities, or to Los Angeles and other often-visited California locations. Looking them over I see they included county-gathering trips all over the country, as well as some trips undertaken for other reasons. I visited 43 states (and the District of Columbia) in the period 2000-2008 alone. I have traveled cross-country several times during this period, and crossed several times into Canada. Details will be found in the lists in the Supplement.



What do I get out of all these trips? What is the point of going to every damn county in the United States? As I mentioned earlier, apart from the *mishegos*¹² element and the pleasure of collecting and of plotting routes on maps, I get to see a wide cross-section of the country. I know America a lot better than most Americans do, and I have seen a great many historic houses and lofty monuments and striking natural features and strange attractions. But even more, I love being on the road in America – living as I have mostly in the highly atypical cultural extremes of Manhattan and San Francisco, I think of these as *trips to America*. When I stop for lunch on the Main Street of a small courthouse town in a flyover state, someplace there is no reason to go unless you actually live in that county, it feels at once strange and completely familiar.¹³ I like both feelings – I think the best thing I have gained from all these American road trips is the fact that nowhere in America (in the Lower 48, anyway) feels *only* strange to me – every place also seems familiar.¹⁴

When I'm in a small town somewhere I usually know my way around now almost by smell. I know, for example, that in the midwest the railroad will run by the grain

¹² Yiddish for a (usually mildly) eccentric attitude or pursuit. The words *craziness* or *obsession*, sometimes used to translate this word, are too strong even though they point the right way. As Leo Rosten wrote in *The Joys of Yiddish* (1970), “Every man has his own *mishegos*.”

¹³ The term *flyover state* is a cultural marker at the time I am writing this. It means a state a person would never have any reason to go to, but would only fly over on the way from New York to California. Using this term without irony signifies a very specific combination of arrogance and ignorance.

¹⁴ *The Lower 48* is an Alaskan term, meaning the 48 contiguous states, excluding Alaska and Hawaii.

elevator, and the main street will usually run perpendicular (or sometimes parallel) to the railroad. I know before I get there what the square around a southern or western county courthouse will look like – now I can even predict the ruin of shuttered storefronts I will find there. I know the feel of a Pennsylvania coal town, and of a New England village, and of a crossroads town in North Dakota, and of a Gulf Coast beach town. I know how the street plan fades out into fields without ever having been there before, and can navigate my way back to the state highway even without a map. Not that I ever *am* without a map – if a town has a courthouse it usually has a motel, and if it has a motel you can usually pick up a map of the town at the front desk.

D. Europe

I have been to Europe (including Britain) 26 times now, and find it inexhaustible. Other places like India I find exotic and exhilarating in a special way, but Europe is different. Because my culture is at least half European, and a lot of the literature and art and history I have learned over the years traces back to Europe, being in Europe is like suddenly seeing the original after looking for a long time at a degraded copy. Also it is so old, and America is so new. We think 1701 (when Yale was founded) was quite a long time ago. In Europe this is not so. There is a clever saying that in America people think 100 years is a long time, and in Europe people think 100 miles is a long distance.



After all my experience of Europe it still thrills me to be almost anywhere there. The more history I learn, the more interesting Europe becomes. A lot of who I am comes from my familiarity with Europe and my experience there. I am speaking mostly of Western Europe – Eastern Europe is something else, because I haven't yet traveled there much. Also, the more time I spend in Europe, the better my ability becomes to manage in French, or Italian, or German.

My first trip to Europe was in the summer of 1952, at the age of not quite eight. Young as I was, I remember it vividly. My father had lived in England as a youth but he had not been back since. Although they did take a



vacation after my father returned from his overseas posting in the army, this was my parents' first extended trip since the war ended, and I think he wanted to show her the places that had been important to him. Christopher came too – he was 18 months old. To look after him they engaged a nurse in London named Mrs. Nash. To look after me they took along Gladys Martha Watt, known as Watts, my Aunt Louise's lady's maid (as she was called – the old-fashioned word *companion* would be better but now that has the connotation of *long-term sex partner*, which Watts almost certainly wasn't).

We flew on an old (then new) Pan American airliner – a propeller plane, of course.¹⁵ I think it was a Stratocruiser (above) – it had sleeping berths like the upper berths on a train, and I had one of those berths. We stopped first at Gander Airport in Newfoundland, which had recently rejoined Canada, so Canada became my first foreign country. We deplaned at Gander and my father and I went to the airport coffee shop (in those days Gander was a small and informal airport). I was about to start my ice cream, and he his coffee, when the loudspeaker summoned us back to the plane – hurricane coming! I was put to bed in the upper berth but I didn't sleep, and the hurricane came and knocked us around. It was very exciting. I remember my mother staggering around the cabin in the storm, ignoring the crew's demands that she sit down and put on her seat belt, and seeing the dawn from the porthole in that upper berth. We refueled again at Shannon in Ireland, and continued on to London.

In London we stayed at the Hotel Berkeley, in Mayfair (right).¹⁶ Wartime rationing was still on, for locals, but foreigners got extra rations. I remember Mrs. Nash pressing Christopher to eat plain butter from a spoon – butter was hard for her to get and she thought it must be good for children. Watts gave me her chocolate rations.



My favorite thing to do in London was to ride the Underground, so Watts would take me on it, and we went up and down the Piccadilly Line (our station was Green Park). I always stood in front and looked out the window into the tunnel. As related in Chapter 5, my great desire was to go the whole length of the Piccadilly Line, from Cockfosters to

¹⁵ Pan American, a pioneer American world airline, is now defunct.

¹⁶ I understand it has since moved to Knightsbridge, although I don't see how it is possible to move across town and still be the same hotel.

Uxbridge. I never got to Cockfosters, but Watts did take me to Uxbridge, where we got off and had tea.

I don't remember all that much about what I did in London – I don't think I did a lot of tourism in the adult sense (except for the Tower). But it was still a very broadening experience, and I was excited to be in a foreign country. The money especially fascinated me. The coins were different – Britain had a really beautiful and substantial-feeling coinage in 1952, coins like the half-crown (below left) which no longer exist. The copper pennies were as big as half-dollars. The bills were different too, and in different colors, and the £5 note (below right) didn't even look like a banknote, but more like an IOU. Most fascinating of all, it was not a decimal system – 12 pence made a shilling, and 20 shillings made a pound, and 21 shillings made a guinea, which there wasn't even a coin for, and there was half a crown (two shillings and sixpence, an eighth of a pound, written 2/6) but no crown (there *were* guineas and crowns, I later discovered, but not in active circulation), and there were sixpences and threepenny bits and ha'pence and hard-to-find farthings. I loved figuring out this system and amazing my father by doing the sums in my head.

George VI had died a few



months before we got to England, but no Elizabeth II coins had yet appeared, and coins of George V, Edward VII and even Queen Victoria were still circulating. Images of these superb coins can be seen at www.ukcoinpics.co.uk.

After about two or three weeks in London, we got on a propeller-driven BOAC plane¹⁷ and flew to Paris. As Christopher was still a baby we carried a special toilet seat for him, and I will never forget the sight of my father walking down the stairway from the plane with this toilet seat around his neck – a perfect image of parental sacrifice.

¹⁷ British Overseas Airways Corporation, also now defunct.

In Paris we stayed at the supremely elegant Hôtel de Crillon on the Place de la Concorde (right). I found the Métro just as interesting as the London Tube, and Watts and I spent a lot of time riding it. There was a Tom & Jerry cartoon festival on at the time, and I spent some time there too; also Martin & Lewis.¹⁸ The idea, I see now, was just to keep me occupied while my parents did tourism. I remember



many visits to the Gardens of the Tuileries, where I rolled a hoop – home movies of me doing this (now digitalized I hope) are lodged with the Phillips Family Papers. We all went to the Tour d'Argent restaurant one night for the famous pressed duck. But my memory of touristic things is very slight. We spent two or three weeks in Paris and flew home – going west there was no need to refuel in Shannon or Gander.

In 1959, I heard from my school friend David Gilpatric about a summer program he had been on called *Swiss Holiday*, run by the American School in Switzerland and based in Lugano. This interested me a lot, and I mentioned it to my parents, who inquired of David's parents, and that summer, when I was 14, I was sent on the trip.

We flew to Frankfurt and then Zurich, where a bus met us and drove us down to Lugano, in Ticino canton, the southernmost (and only Italian-speaking) canton of Switzerland.

The view of Switzerland and the Swiss Alps, even from the bus window, was quite amazing to me. I had never seen mountains before. In Lugano we stayed in the large villa which housed the American School – it was a boarding school during the school year. Our summer program alternated between home segments and travel segments. During the home



¹⁸ Tom and Jerry were a cartoon cat and mouse; Dean Martin (a singer) and Jerry Lewis (a clown) were a movie comedy team. Jerry Lewis still has a cult following in France.

segments we stayed in Lugano and were required to study one language out of a choice of three or four – I chose Italian, and while I didn't learn very much Italian I got in the door with it, and learned how to pronounce it and some vocabulary and what an Italian sentence was made of. The food was terrific (we had a Swiss chef who knew his stuff), and there was plenty of free time. The school was just outside the town center, and I used to wander down the hill and into the town (above) and sit at an open-air café with a beer (being able to order a beer at 14 was exciting in itself) and dig being in Europe.

There were five travel segments. For four of these we went off in a Volkswagen minibus with a couple of adult counselors and did tourism – the segments I went on were Switzerland, the French Riviera, Austria (including Venice) and Italy (as far as Rome). In the last segment, on the way home, by plane rather than bus, we stopped for three days each in Copenhagen, Paris and London. We also went at least once for an open-air dinner in Campione d'Italia, a town in an Italian enclave on Lake Ticino and technically in Italy.



After all these years I am no longer certain exactly what our route was for the first tour, in Switzerland. I remember only isolated shards of tourism from this tour – the mechanical clock in the town square of Bern, walking behind a waterfall on the Rhine, the astounding baroque church in Einsiedeln Abbey, the Jungfrau in the distance, lots of edelweiss and mountains and Swiss-looking wooden buildings. And then Montreux on Lake Geneva, where we visited the Castle of

Chillon (above), which Byron wrote a famous poem about that none of us had read – we saw the dungeons and the privy set above the lake.¹⁹ And Geneva City with its *jet d'eau*, and into France at Chamonix to see Mont Blanc, and then back home through the Valais. It was at this time that I started buying the best city map I could find of every city I went to – I still do that, and I still have the maps I bought on this trip over 55 years ago.

The second tour was to the south of France. I remember the Maison Carée in Nîmes (below right), and Grasse where the perfume is made, and the palace of the popes in Avignon, and *bouillabaisse* in Marseilles, and the grand *corniche* of Nice, and a quick visit to Monaco, and Genoa on the way back. We did some camping, which even then was not

¹⁹ The poem was “The Prisoner of Chillon” (1816), about the Swiss patriot François Bonivard (1496–1570), whose struggle to keep Geneva out of the hands of the Dukes of Savoy resulted in his confinement in the castle.

my favorite sport, and I learned the hard



way about squat toilets (left). It was kind of difficult for me on this trip because I was the youngest person in Swiss Holiday that summer, and some of the older ones were having sex, or at least enthusiastically making out, and no one seemed eager to make out with me, not that I would even have known how to ask. It was an exhilarating experience anyway.



The third tour was Northern Italy – Florence, Pisa (I still remember vividly the strange gravity effects in the leaning tower, hard to walk in one half and hard to restrain yourself from running in the other half). I remember eating a pizza in the great glassed-in arcade in Milan, and some basic tourism in Rome, and going to Vatican City – more *places* than actual *sights*. It was all rather processed tourism – we were closely supervised teenagers in the 1950s, touring in a bus – but everything I saw was new to me.

The fourth tour was Austria – Salzburg, and Innsbruck, and Vienna for a day, and the fabulous baroque monastery at Melk. We came back through Venice – I remember the canals, and the sewer smell of Burano. And then came the excursions to Copenhagen, Paris and London. I bought a lot of postcards as souvenirs, to remind myself where I had been – I still have some of those too. I don't remember much detail of any of these tours, but I was delighted at the time, and still remember my pleasure at being in Europe. I learned a lot even though I can't now identify with specificity just what it was. Swiss Holiday would have given me a taste for travel, except I already had one – I had one even before I had gone anywhere, from all the time I spent studying maps (see Chapter 5) and stamps (see Chapters 3B.7 and 29.A).

In 1963, aged 19, after I graduated from high school but before starting college, my parents allowed (and paid for) me to go to Europe by myself. I flew to Schiphol airport in the Netherlands and visited a number of Dutch and Belgian cities. I drank delicious *bessengenever* (a kind of berry-flavored red gin) in the bar of my small Haarlem hotel, and rented a bicycle for a long spin over absolutely flat country.

I remember Eindhoven because I left there in a helicopter for Brussels. I saw the medieval town halls in Ghent and Bruges, which really opened my eyes as by this time I knew a little about medieval Europe. I visited the Waterloo battlefield, and continued by train to Luxembourg and then on to Aachen in Germany. I recall the highlights of some of these stops, but few details of interior experience. This part of the trip lasted quite a while, but I have no journals or letters from that period, and my old passports have disappeared, so it will have to stay slightly jumbled. I can say, though, that I was

learning how to travel in Europe, and make my way from city to city and buy maps and see the sights.

I remember very distinctly, though, the train trip to Aachen. I had never been to Germany before, and had a rather dismissive attitude toward my mother's loathing of the place. It's all different now, I said – the war is over, we're in NATO together, and so on. A lot I knew about it! I got quite a shock when the train conductor came to take my ticket wearing a hat with a high peak and a long-winged stylized eagle almost exactly like the one used by the Nazis, except no swastika. It was very easy to see him as a Nazi functionary. I thought for a while about the sort of country that would use almost exactly the same kind of hats the Nazis used rather than change (as they easily could have) to a hat without those associations. The more I saw of Germany the more it freaked me out.



In Aachen I went to the Cathedral to see the throne of Charlemagne (left) and other Carolingian relics including the famous golden reliquary containing his skull (right). That was the main reason I went to Aachen in the first place. I continued on to Cologne, where I visited the famous cathedral and then suddenly had had enough of Germany and the crypto-Nazi uniforms and the people who with the squint of an eye I could see hunting down Jews, or as concentration camp guards, or as SS men or Gestapo. I decided I had to get out of Germany as fast as I could.



The next stop was supposed to have been Morocco. When planning the trip to Europe I pointed out to my parents that Spain was in Europe, and Morocco was just a ferry ride away from Spain, so could I go to Morocco too? Amazingly, they agreed. But having to get out of Germany in a hurry meant I had to change my plans and go through Spain. I got a flight to Madrid through Zurich, where I sent a postcard home (which I intended to be a little confusing as I had not been scheduled to go to Switzerland at all).

Madrid was a guilty pleasure because Franco was in power and good liberals were not supposed to go to Spain. But since I had to go through Spain to get to Morocco, I decided that if I spent all my time there in the Prado Museum that would make it half OK. So I did spend my time in the Prado, looking at Hieronymus Bosch's *Garden of*

Earthly Delights (below). I am kind of off Bosch now, but then I thought it was terrific stuff, and was especially delighted that the guard opened and closed the panels at my request. This world-famous artifact was opened or closed because of *me*! Wow!



I originally planned to get to Morocco through Gibraltar. But now I was in Spain, and there was no way into Gibraltar from Spain in those days, so the way to Tangier was by ferry from Algeciras. There were no flights to Algeciras, though, so I flew to Malaga and made my way somehow by bus to Algeciras. I am a little vague on just how this was done, but I do remember having to spend the night in a *Guardia Civil* sentry box – quite



uncomfortable. The important thing was that I was learning to travel, to arrange transport and get a hotel room in an unfamiliar language and cross borders, and learning how to improvise on the road. Whatever the practicalities, I made it to the ferry (called I think the *Virgen de África*) and sailed to Tangier.²⁰

Morocco was quite a surprise to me, as I had never been outside the

²⁰ Although Morocco is not Europe, it was part of the same trip so I mention it here rather than in section F below.

western umbrella before. The city maps showed crescents instead of crosses in the cemeteries! I think my hotel in Tangier was in the new city, but it was the old city (above) that interested me the most. I wandered around there and even saw Barbara Hutton being carried up a stepped street by a burly chauffeur.²¹ I was fascinated by the strangeness of the old city, which was nothing like Europe or anyplace I'd ever seen. I was in Morocco when President Kennedy's infant son Patrick died (August 9, 1963) – people kept consoling me as an American. I spoke French in Morocco when English wouldn't work – also a thrill.



I moved on to Casablanca – I remember the joy and ululation in the streets when the King's son (now King Mohammed VI) was born on August 21, 1963. I was in Casablanca during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, where Dr. King gave his famous speech (August 28). I read in the *Herald Tribune* that Americans supporting the march were asked to go to the nearest consulate to record their support. So I went by city bus

to the American consulate in Casablanca, in a sort of suburb, and tried to do this. The consular officials didn't know what I was talking about until I showed them the item in the *Herald Tribune* and insisted they report back to Washington that I supported the march. I'm sure that is now in my FBI file, even though the FBI now denies having a file on me at all.²²

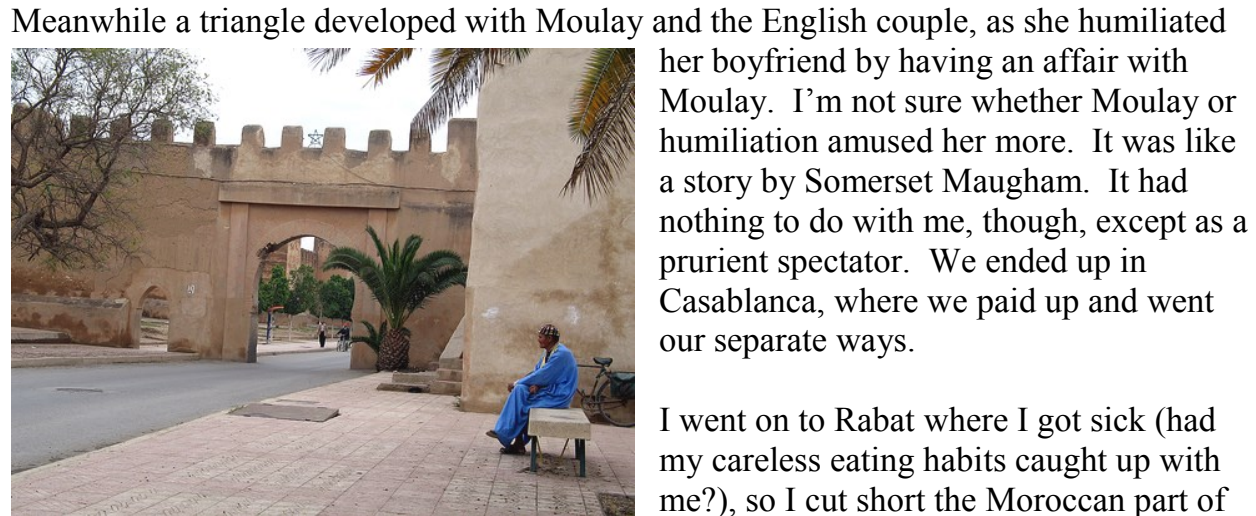
Then I moved on to Marrakech, which was even more fascinating than Casablanca. I remember the *souk* at the gate of the old city (above), and storytellers and performers there (right), and the Casbah. I ate delicious snails from a street vendor, using rusty safety pins he kept in a jar of polluted water on his cart – why I didn't die from this I'm not sure.



²¹ Barbara Hutton (1912-1979), the Woolworth heiress, was called the “Poor Little Rich Girl.” Her tragic life was dominated by a long series of unhappy marriages and affairs.

²² That must be a *really* special file if they deny even having it.

At my hotel in Marrakech I met an English couple, and we decided to join up and hire a car and driver to see some of the south. So we found Moulay, a well-connected guide, and we went in his car to Agadir (which had had some dramatic earthquake damage) and to a town I now think must have been Boumalne Dades (where we saw the famous blue people), and the walled city of Taroudant (below) where he knew the governor, in whose house we stayed.²³ There were camels, and meals in local houses, and we got a flavor of the place I could not have got on my own.



Meanwhile a triangle developed with Moulay and the English couple, as she humiliated her boyfriend by having an affair with Moulay. I'm not sure whether Moulay or humiliation amused her more. It was like a story by Somerset Maugham. It had nothing to do with me, though, except as a prurient spectator. We ended up in Casablanca, where we paid up and went our separate ways.

I went on to Rabat where I got sick (had my careless eating habits caught up with me?), so I cut short the Moroccan part of

the trip and flew to Paris. In Paris I stayed at the same hotel on the Boulevard St. Germain we had stayed on Swiss Holiday, and it felt very grown-up to me to go back there as an independent person. After some tourism in Paris, and some lonesome letters to my girlfriend back home, I flew back to the United States.

After that trip in 1963 I did not go back to Europe for another 16 years. College, law school, California, then library school, Taiwan, and other adventures, all described elsewhere in this memoir, occupied my attention instead, plus I didn't have any money. When I was working as a librarian in San Francisco in 1979, and had some money again as well as some leisure, I went back to England for the first time. Two years later I went to Israel, and the first spring after I moved to Truro, I went to Europe on an open ticket and stayed for almost four months. I went back many times after that, still go about once a year, and plan to keep doing it as long as my money and my health hold out.

In Europe and even elsewhere, if I can't manage in the local language (Hungarian, Turkish, Russian) I usually offer people languages to talk in by saying *English Français Deutsch*. I can do OK in French; I can manage in German, barely, if I have to. I could probably add *Italiano* to the list now, ahead of *Deutsch* – I have enough Italian to buy

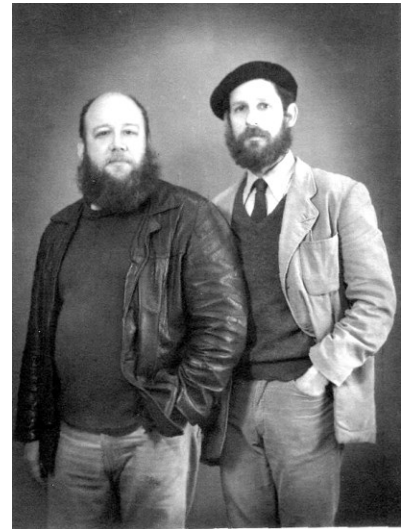
²³ The blue people were Tuareg. The blue comes from the indigo dye in their clothing.

books, instruct a taxi driver, get a hotel room, order dinner. I used to be afraid to speak French, fearful that I wouldn't get it right. I was even afraid to speak French with my French-Canadian girlfriend. Then one day in Paris I saw two Africans in full costume, jabbering away in what even I knew was awful French. But they didn't seem to care. So I thought: if they can do it, I can do it! And from that day forward I have been fearless in French and German and Italian and even Spanish, what the hell? If I get the ending wrong, then I do. I'm doing the best I can, and at least trying. If I sound like an American with imperfect French and a heavy accent, well guess what, that's what I am. *Laissez rouler! Toujours gai!* It has been very liberating, and now (for example in Hungary) I buy books speaking German if I have to, and so what if it's broken German (or French or Italian) – that's better than no German at all!

As with my travels in America, I have abandoned the plan of listing each later trip with a bullet point. Rather than detail all these trips here, I will do it in the Supplement. I have traveled in every country of Western Europe (except Norway and Iceland), and I have gone back to many of them more than once. England and France and Italy have meant the most to me. I love each of those countries with a special passion.

France is the most beautiful country in the world, green meadows, fields of brilliant yellow rapeseed, gentle hills and lofty bowers, clank of distant cowbells, rivers rushing under brown trees, lichen on stone walls, ancient buildings and fabulous food (especially the duck and the pastries), tricolor in front of the *Mairie*, *Vive la France!*

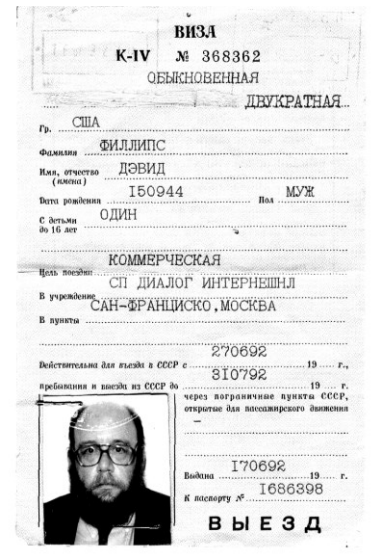
But of course Italy is also the most beautiful country in the world. I can find my way around in London and Paris and Venice more easily than Los Angeles.²⁴ But I have fond memories of Lisbon and Amsterdam and Vienna and Geneva and Rome and Florence and Edinburgh and Copenhagen and Istanbul and Valetta and Barcelona and Gibraltar and lots of other places. Here's a picture of Christopher and me, taken in a photographer's studio in Madrid in the spring of 1985. I was 40, he was 34.



²⁴

I dream of Venice. Here's a dream from 2004: I was once again riding the little streetcar which runs around the periphery of Venice. I saw again in intricate detail the fabulous sight of the churches of Giudecca against a gaudy sunset, glimpses of the Salute and other landmarks at the ends of streets as the car turned a corner, the familiar stop in the working-class northeast of the city where I had changed streetcars so many times before, the ride along the ridge by the edge of the seawall on the western side, and then the excitement as the streetcar dove underground and rode through the workers' canteen to the terminal, where rabbits played on the concrete floor. All very vivid, and only slightly muted in memory by the fact that there are no streetcars in Venice.

I have traveled less widely in Eastern Europe, so far anyway, but three weeks in Russia stand out (right: my Russian commercial visa), and Budapest, and Istanbul, and an epic journey from Istanbul to Munich on a Bulgarian train, sharing a compartment with five Cypriots who cooked stews over a sterno stove. The toilets did not work, and I was briefly detained by the Yugoslav border police for not having an entry visa (this was still Communist time). I still remember that there was nothing for hundreds of miles to show it was the 20th century but the train tracks and the electric wires, and blackberries grew wild along the tracks across most of Serbia.



E. India

After America and Europe, India the most important place in the world for me. Other places are interesting, and some (especially Israel) have special meaning. But Europe and India are limitless, and I miss them when I have been away from them even for a short time, and I plan to go back as many times as I possibly can.



I have been to India five times now, each time for more than a month. I can't stay away from the place, and always long to go back.²⁵ There is something irresistible about India, that speaks to me in a way nowhere else does. The sounds, the smells, the multiplicity of the place, a million things happening at once, the cow in the road. Anything can happen. There is an immediacy to India, a sense of the veil between

²⁵

At this writing in August 2010 I have another trip scheduled for February 2011.

you and reality being lifted, that is very much like LSD. Another thing about India is that you have to learn to do it in the Indian way, on Indian time – it's not going to change for you. This is a valuable lesson. Once in Kerala I saw an elephant take a crap in the street – that moment, like a sudden enlightenment, sums up India for me.

- The picture above is from the Internet. I chose it for the elephant, and then realized it was taken right in front of my hotel in Udaipur, Rajasthan, where I stayed in 2008. The archway with the orange sign is one of the entrances.

As with America and Europe, I will recount my first trip there in some detail, with extracts from my travel diary (which accounts for the telegraphic style). This was in 1987, while I was still living in Truro. On January 5 I flew to Delhi from Provincetown, via Boston, New York and London, a journey that seemed to last forever. I arrived at four in the morning and took a bus into town. A flock of three-wheelers (like those in the picture above) followed the bus, pleading for fares. I took one and got the driver to take me to a hotel – any hotel – near Connaught Circle, and slept. Brief forays into the city, then back to sleep – the first taste of India was very disorienting.

After a day of this I emerged, found a more congenial hotel (also on Connaught Circle, the hub of *New Delhi*) with a terrace overlooking the road. A fog, much denser than San Francisco's, obscured everything – the terrace looked out on a whiteness of nothing. Very scary to cross the road – I couldn't see traffic and it couldn't see me. I crossed waving a flashlight. If I had known the Kali mantra then, I would have used that too.

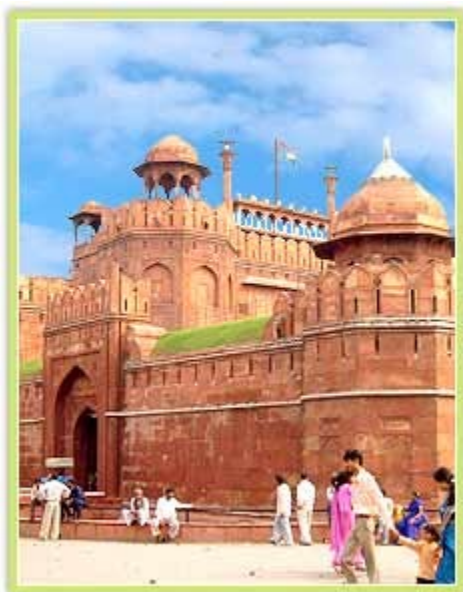
I tried to walk from the westernized sector around Connaught Circle into Old Delhi, through the market (*chowk*) to the Red Fort. I quote from Notebook 34:

It got stranger and STRANGER and S*T*R*A*N*G*E*R!!! I see why Christopher says he has never seen anything like it. An acid trip hardly does it justice as a metaphor. Goggle goggle goggle. Talk about life in the streets! Goats and rickshaws! Crowded, busy!! English not much use.

And later:

Took a pedicab home to Palace Heights Hotel – thank god for Connaught Place as an intermediary between India and me! Boyoboyoboy!!! The trip back was an amazing experience. Makes Old Jerusalem look like Scarsdale.²⁶

²⁶ A pedicab is a bicycle in front but a rickshaw in back. Scarsdale is a well-domesticated suburb of New York City.



I settled into tourism, and visited the Red Fort, a fabulous Mughal monument (left) with quiet courtyards. Jingle of stone-workers' hammers. Elephants, horses, oxen in streets. Inlay factory using hand-operated bow drills. Hoopoes and little green parakeets. Wild rides through streets in rickshaws, pedicabs, 3-wheelers – no lights at night, smell of smoke. I learned to deal with hotel discomfort, cold, noise, the difficulty of finding safe food (I finally found a place where I ate roasted chicken and soda pop twice a day – see Document 30-4, my essay on how not to get sick in the Third World). One by one I solved the problems of water, towels, toilet paper, post office. “Small money” was very hard to come by in India – I finally got a pad of

two-rupee notes (16 cents each) from a bank, secured by a brass staple, which I used for tips in the hotel where I took breakfast in my room every morning. [This trip](#), I wrote,

[is certainly going to be an advanced lab course in yogidom. Be reassured by existence of ample time, sufficient money, cannabis and some sense. And so far, bowels still loyal. TAT TVAM ASI.](#)²⁷

My experience in the *chowk* led me to ask my hotel for an Anglophone student to translate for me – not a guide, just a translator. Asking rate: 100 rupees a day (\$8, a very liberal rate to which I agreed gladly). Through Sadanand I was able, for example, to buy raga records and negotiate the strange ritual of mailing them home (first buy linen in a dry goods store, then have a street tailor sew the records up in the linen and seal them with sealing wax, then apply glue to a customs form with index finger, then do the transaction with the post office clerk



²⁷

That Thou Art, the kernel-phrase of yogic wisdom. In those pre-terrorist days it was an easy matter to carry cannabis onto a plane, in a sealed container in your underwear. I stopped doing that after September 11, 2001. *Ample time* because I was traveling on an open ticket and had no set time I had to return.

in Hindi). Sadanand taught me about *pan*, the mixture of seeds and herbs Indians like to chew. When I saw elephants in the street, I asked him to find some for me and he brought me to their riverside lair (above; Sadanand is second from the left). He helped me find a Hindi alphabet book, and walked me through the ritual in a Sikh shrine.

Telegraphic entries from my travel diary continue. More tourism. Eighteenth-century Jantar Mantar “observatory” (below right), very weird, like a post-modern sculpture. Indian museums of very poor quality, but military bands with Indian soldiers march up the Rajpath, practicing for the Republic Day parade. Qutb Minar (left) as impressive as any Gothic cathedral, I wrote.²⁸ Famous iron pillar. Mughal monuments. Jami Masjid (main mosque). Cool marble mausoleums. Raj Ghat where Indian statesmen are cremated. Rural village on river island reached by bridge of wooden boats, babies picking up steaming water buffalo patties to dry for fuel on mud-hut walls all within sight of a multi-lane expressway. Every instant is a trip, I wrote, and peak experiences twice a day.



I exercised traveler’s ingenuity at my rather basic hotel, for example making a wastebasket out of a curtain, a plastic bag, and safety pins. Bath in a bucket is not at all unpleasant, I wrote, which is a good thing as there isn’t any other kind. Sounds of India – jingle of ankle bracelets on passing women, clink of tiny stone hammers, *bhajans* in



²⁸ It isn’t, really, except in aspiration, but it is still quite a sight.

temples²⁹ and *muezzins* from minarets, whirr of wings. Indian birds and trees and flowers. Monkeys in the temples.

More tourism. American Embassy by Edward Durrell Stone. Gardens by Lodi tombs where Galbraith used to walk. Birla Temple.



Humayan's Tomb. Gandhi dioramas; Nehru's house and Gandhi's *ashram* and death site. Trained monkeys amusing bystanders for coins. Indian Parliament. Pathetic library at Delhi University. Site of 1911 Coronation Durbar, now abandoned, grazed by cattle. Intense Delhi traffic and ghastly fumes (above). Tailor and shirtmaker. Good things in National Museum. Man with no feet rolling himself down the road. Carpet factory – proud owner boasts his low prices made possible by child labor! Amazing Victorian Secretariat Building, with little habitations sprouting everywhere inside. Vultures and dogs eating dead horse by roadside. Special tour of Lutyens' *Raj Bhavan* (now President's residence), durbar hall &c., with private gardens. Jain temple and bird hospital, place where after an offering they release caged birds as a *mitzvah* – but keep them caged until then!

Something wrong there. Indira Gandhi's villa – spot where she fell preserved under plexiglass.

Car and driver – visit to Sultanpur bird sanctuary. Flamingos; pelicans. Child labor brickyard – these are only “low class” children, it is explained to me, so they don't need to go to school. More Delhi tourism. Mahatma Gandhi's false teeth; bullet that killed him displayed on pedestal made of inverted jelly glass. Match at the polo club – Army Service Corps vs. 61st Cavalry – commentary in beautiful English. Generals in topees – very *pukka* but now all Indian.³⁰ Spectacular Republic Day parade (above) January 26 – I was in the best grandstand seats. Great parade with camels and so on, flyover with tricolor chaff, President with bodyguard, Rajiv and Sonia Gandhi.³¹

²⁹ *Bhajans* are Hindu sacred songs.

³⁰ *Pukka*, a Hindi word much used by the British in their day, means both *first-class* and *genuine* or *authentic*.

³¹ Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi (1944-1991) was the son of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi (1917-1984) and grandson of India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964). Like his mother, he was assassinated while in office. Sonia Gandhi, his Italian-born wife,

(footnote continues →)

Then to Agra by train on January 27, 1st class on the Jhelum Express. Lots of brown Indian countryside – mud, sparse trees, trim green fields, dusty waste, thatch huts. In Agra I stayed at the colorful Shah Jehan Hotel in Taj Ganj, the true old neighborhood of Agra behind the Taj. Roof garden omelettes with view of Taj; Anglophone staff; \$2.80 a night. Cows and camels in



the streets, no auto traffic to speak of. Taj Mahal amazingly beautiful – stands up 100% to the hype (detail of inlaid marble ornamentation at left). Pearly misty sunset in countryside out back behind the Taj (right) – wood smoke, birdsong. Pigs fighting in gutter over a human turd. Amplified *muezzin*, all-night *bhajans*.

Agra Fort magnificent – see three views below. Romantic spot where near-blind Shah Jehan, prisoner of his son Aurangzeb, could see the Taj in a mirror. Cigarette lighter reflected in small-cut mirrors covering walls and ceiling of small chamber, view over Yamuna River, enormous beehives under balconies. Rode around Agra by rickshaw and horse-drawn *tanga*. Ordered more copies of my safari shirt – they are made for me almost instantly. Iron age scene in Agra – animals, basic materials, roadside wheelwrights and goldsmiths, like something from the ancient world. Sikander's tomb – okapi and courtly monkeys on grounds. More Mughal monuments, river sunsets. Found bird book and began keeping track of birds: pied mynah, red-ringed parakeet, dusky cragmarten, black-winged stilt.



(footnote continues ...)

later became and still (2010) remains the President of the Indian National Congress Party; she has repeatedly refused the party's request that she become Prime Minister.

Excursion by car and driver to Fatehpur Sikri, Akbar's abandoned 16th century capital (right). Detours off the main road on the way home – India totally different off the main road. Tall stately sarus cranes in fields (left);



egrets and kingfishers.

Excursion to Bharatpur bird sanctuary with special guide who really knew his stuff. Flying herons; cormorants

catching fish; pythons in the trees (!). Palace of Dig (Maharaja of Bharatpur) – very interesting and evocative with western-style

rooms and cool marble screens and *punkhas* in darbar hall and a very active Hanuman temple.³²



Left for Jaipur by “luxury” bus on February 6. Rajasthan pale green and brown, fields of mustard alternating with desert, lots of camels, dusty villages and dry stream beds and towers of buffalo dung, wild peacocks like huge pigeons. At Christopher's suggestion I stayed at Khetrie House, a former minor princely city palace. My room not in the main palace but in an area of separate bungalows in an overgrown garden, with peacocks – very restful. Took a day off, stoned in garden with the peacocks. At night monkeys and jungle ululations. Jaipur tourism, palaces, temples, temple music. My driver and acting Garuda gets me into secret gardens in non-tourist hours.³³ Mughal monuments; side trip to Ajmer, where I ride up to monuments in elephant cart. Great rooms, great effect by firelight.

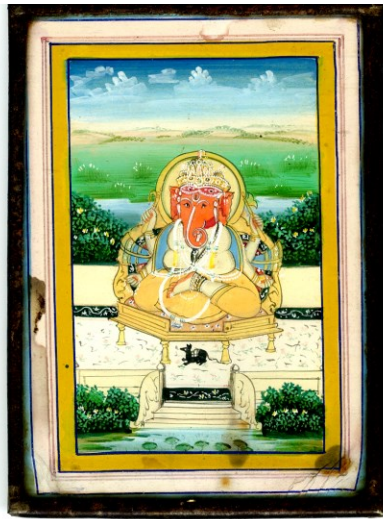
Back in Jaipur. Visits to palaces, including some modern ones; manage some time alone in a wicker armchair. Pigs and dogs fighting for offal in the road. More temples and palaces and a glimpse of the reigning maharajah at polo grounds, beautifully dressed in blazer and ascot.. Bought a small Ganesh icon (below, half size) – my first one. It is a bit stained now by moisture that has seeped through the metal frame, but it is still (2010) my traveling icon. *JAI GANIPATI!*³⁴

³² A *punkha* is a flat ceiling fan pulled back and forth on a cord by a *punkha-wallah*. Lord Hanuman is the monkey god of India and one of the stars of the *Ramayana*.

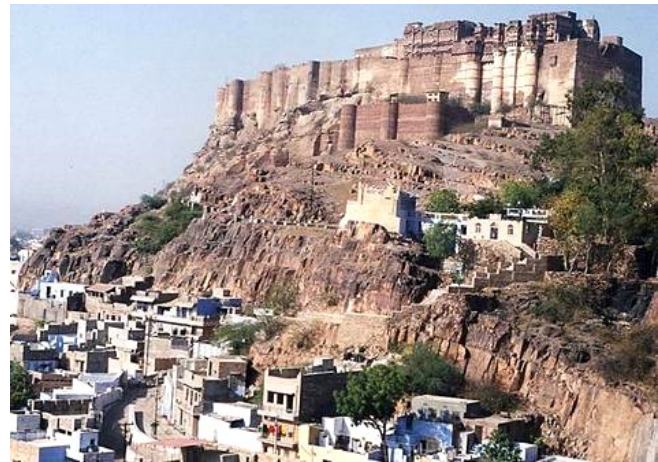
³³ Garuda was the eagle-like being who carried the Hindu gods.

³⁴ An invocation of Lord Ganesha.

Journey by jam-packed bus to Sariska tiger reserve – people holding babies out the windows to defecate. Left off all alone on road – got a lift to the lodge. Modest jungle idyll – heard tiger but saw none. But saw white monkeys, and bush pigs fighting jackals for carrion, and glorious harvest moon.



February 14, by train to Jodhpur. Stayed with Rajput colonel's family; trees full of screaming crows. They scared crows away with firecrackers.³⁵ Jodhpur Fort Palace (below) fascinating, up a high butte like Orvieto. Much grandeur in palace at the top. Throne room. View over blue plaster city. Vulture's nest. Color on the walls showed me how these palaces looked before everything faded.



I left Rajasthan early – some alarming physical symptoms impelled me to skip Udaipur, cut the trip short (it was still almost three months) and fly back to Delhi and on to London. I planned to come back to see Udaipur some day (which I actually did 21 years later). A relative of the colonel's read peoples' fortunes by the grooves in their upper lips. Mine (straight and of middle depth) says: you will not be a millionaire, but will always have enough, a smooth life all the way through.³⁶ Flew back to Delhi January 18, and London as planned January 20. [Here ends reworking of diary entries.]

My first trip to India was hugely successful, an overwhelming experience, unlike anything I'd ever seen before or even imagined. It gave me a taste, indeed a passion and longing, for India which I still have, although I did not go back for 10 years. Accounts of my other trips will be given in the Supplement.

³⁵ The colonel's son shot a kingfisher for the fun of it. When I protested he said he was a Rajput, meaning shedding blood was no problem for his tribe. When I left he gave me a letter to a girl friend, asking me to post it secretly for him in London.

³⁶ Good! So it has been, more or less, in the 23 years since that prophecy, and so may it continue!

- In 1997 I fulfilled a vow (see Chapter 18.F) and went to the Kali Temple in Calcutta. On this trip I spent some time in Calcutta, one of the most astounding places in the world, jagged irregular skyline, no window directly below another, trees growing from upper stories of buildings, buildings partly in ruins but intensely occupied, decay and complexity like the paintings of Ivan Albright. I also went to Bodh Gaya in Bihar (scene of the Buddha's enlightenment), to Puri in Orissa (a hugely congenial part of India) and Konark (for the famous sun temple) and even spent a day and a night in Jessore in Bangladesh.
- In 2000 I went to Trivandrum in Kerala, and spent a while in South India (including Cochin and Erkulunum, and Kanyakumari at the southernmost tip of India), as well as visiting Sri Lanka and the Maldiv Islands.
- In 2002 I returned to Delhi, and then journeyed by car to Agra, Gwalior, Orchha, Rewa and other princely capitals, and Allahabad, to Varanasi. After a psychedelic stay in Varanasi my driver returned and drove me back to Delhi via lowland Nepal.
- In the winter of 2007-2008 I went to Bombay, then toured the princely capitals of Kathiawar in Gujarat. With the help of Dr. Hansdev Patel's *Palaces and Royal Families of Gujarat* (1998), I was welcomed by six royal families, shown around their palaces and given tea. A great experience – an account of this royal adventure is given Document 30-6. I finished up in Udaipur in Rajasthan.

Here's an e-mail I sent after the Gujarat trip.

It is strange to think I have been back for almost 3 weeks, and also strange to think I have been back for only 3 weeks. At first it felt strange to be back at all – I was still waking and sleeping on Indian time, the streets seemed so empty and quiet – and now it begins to feel as if I never left, as if that whole month in India was just a dream. Was I really at the top of that mountain in Udaipur, looking down on the lakes and fields below? Did I really drink tea with the Maharajah of Wadhwan from his china tea-service with the royal arms on it? Did I really drive that one-lane road through the thornbushes in the Rajasthan outback? Was that really me at the port at Porbandar on the blue Arabian Sea, checking out the Hanuman flags on the fishing boats? I guess it must have been – who else? Now that I am back I feel like someone who has awakened from a really deep dream – you are awake in your house as before, but there's a tingly part that is not quite awake, a seed of the dream still working inside. Is this making sense?

I can't wait to go back again. It isn't just that it's *different*, although its difference is intriguing and instructive. Rio de Janeiro and Jerusalem and Johor Bahru are all different

from where I normally am – but I don't long to be there as the hart panteth after the water brooks.³⁷ But just thinking about the colors and the smells and the small weirdnesses and the 1940s British-style equipment and the tinkle of brass hammers and the look in people's eyes – just remembering India is enough to give me the vapors. I remember standing among the camels on the road in India, while they were taking their break, and then feeling them whoosh past me when break was over. Likewise elephants in Sri Lanka, going back across the road after a bath in the river. It is moments like these that make India (and traveling in general) worth the expense and inconvenience. It's so hard to describe, but everyone who has been there knows at once what I mean.

F. Other places

I have been to a lot of places when you add them all up – 61 countries so far, not counting airports, and 67 if you do count them. See Document 30-1. I hope I'm not done yet, even though I have retired – I have less money now, but more free time. I'm trying to keep my total country count higher than my age.

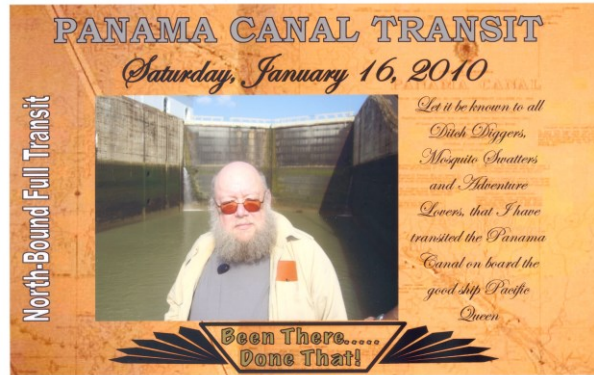
Canada. I have been to Canada seven times now, including six provinces (Alberta, British Columbia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Ontario, Québec), and I enjoy it hugely every time. There is something very refreshing and wholesome about Canada, a country trying so hard and so successfully to be a *good* country and treat everyone with respect. Coming from our own dark confused country, trying it seems to do everything wrong from health care to immigration to economics and social stratification to the environment and of course our disastrous foreign policy, being in Canada allows me to forget briefly how badly America has lost its way, and see what it could be like if we were more grown up and civilized.³⁸

Victoria, BC, [I wrote in an e-mail] is like a combination of California and Scotland. The people speak with a very distinctive Scottish accent, but without the burr, if that is possible. Everything squeaky clean and so polite – I saw a pedestrian approaching the crosswalk and was preparing to drive through first and then thought, no, I'm in Canada, have to yield, and so I did. When on foot I wait at the curb for the lights to change. I never drop anything on the ground, and cleaned out the back of my rental car before returning it. Canada is great!

³⁷ Psalm 42:1.

³⁸ As I write these lines in March 2009, President Obama (it feels so good to write that) has just begun the overwhelming task of fixing the mess. It may be more than even he can accomplish.

The Caribbean. I have been to the Caribbean five times, not counting Florida or the American Gulf Coast – the U.S. Virgin Islands when I was about 14, a recent day in the Bahamas, and three places on the shores of mainland Central America (Belize, and Bluefields in Nicaragua where the people are black and speak English, and Colón in Panama). I liked what I saw, but didn't see enough. I have never yet explored any of the Caribbean islands except St. Thomas, V.I., although I would like to do so one day, especially Trinidad or Dominica. I'd like to see Haiti, too, if it were safe to go there, which it probably won't be anytime soon.



North Africa. I have been to North Africa five times, although never very far from the coast. The first time was the trip to Morocco in 1963, discussed above.

I also spent a day in Sinai as part of a trip to Israel in 1981, a day in Ceuta with Christopher in 1985, a few days in Tunis in 1988 as an excursion from

Italy, and ten days in Egypt (mostly Cairo) in 2006.³⁹ I found Cairo to be one of the most unpleasant places I have ever been, with its relentless traffic, visibly oppressive Islam, pervasive filth, and third-rate attractions. I'm glad to have seen the Pyramids, and a few nice old Ottoman-era palaces, and some Art Deco buildings, but generally I found Cairo (and Alexandria) to have all the discomforts of India with none of the charm. I think it is because they are ruled by an uncongenial god, while India is not.

I have never been to any other part of Africa. In theory I'd like to explore the rest of it, but due to the danger in the cities, the heat and disease, and the lack of the kind of attractions I'm interested in, I doubt I am ever going to get to most of it. I have a trip to Ethiopia scheduled for the fall of 2010, though – we'll see if that happens.

³⁹ Ceuta, an enclave on the northern coast of Morocco, is Spain even though it is in Africa.

Israel. I have been to Israel three times, and each time was very different from the others. The first time was as a secular western tourist in 1981 – I covered the country stem to stern observing the antiquities and the *souks* without any emotional attachment to the place. The second time was when my brothers were in their yeshivas in 1984 – I discuss this trip and its surprising effect on me in some detail in Chapter 18.D. The third trip was in 2006, with Lee Oestreicher, after the Second Lebanon War – this was a special tour of military and security sites sponsored by Shurat ha-Din. We went to some remarkable places – inside an electronic observation post, onto a drone base, to a Gaza crossing point. I hope to go back again and spend more time in Tel Aviv.

Israel is very important to me now, which it wasn't before; as with many other secular American Jews Israel takes the place of the Jewish religion as a focus for my identity as a Jew. I often wear a lapel pin with crossed American and Israeli flags, and donate in a modest way to Israeli charities. I identify with Israel, love being there, and think of it in the first person – *we, us, ours*. When the Arabs lob rockets into Sderot, I take it personally.



Latin America. I have been to Latin America eight times, but four of those times were just quick trips across the Mexican border. I have taken one longer trip to Mexico, to Puerto Vallarta and Yelapa with Peter Stander, including an excursion by jeep into Nayarit. I have visited Central America three times (Nicaragua in 1985, during the war, with a lefty travel group, and later Belize and Guatemala with Adam, and Panama in January 2010) and South America once (Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay). It was interesting, but not so very interesting that I feel a need to go back anytime soon, although I might someday take a quick visit to Mexico City, where I have never been, and Chile interests me enough perhaps to visit one day. I find the language difficult, and the culture doesn't really speak to me. Or maybe it speaks to me, but in Spanish, so I don't understand it. Here I am at Lake Petén-Itzá in Guatemala in 1993 (picture by Adam).

East Asia. Except for my brief expatriate escapade in 1975-76 (see Chapter 22), I have not traveled much in East Asia. I don't have a lot of interest in China (although I'd like to see the Great Wall and the Forbidden City), or in Japan or Korea. Maybe my unhappy time in Taiwan burned East Asia out of me. I know China is the coming thing, but I would rather go back to Europe for the 27th time, or India for the sixth time, or Israel for the fourth time, than go to China even once. I know everyone who goes there says wow,

and I *should* want to go there, but I really don't. And why should a person go to the considerable trouble and expense of a trip to China unless he really wants to see the place? The same with Japan – my college classmate Peter Miller, who lives there and makes prints of wonderful scenes in the rural outback, keeps telling me its not all Ginza, and he makes it sound like *The Wind in the Willows* out there on moon viewing night with the peony blossoms when the rice buds are ripening. But Japan is another place I *should* want to explore, but don't. As long as there's America, and Europe, and India, all inexhaustible, why go anyplace I don't care if I ever see?

I have been to Hong Kong twice, and on my trip to Calcutta in 1997 stopped first in Singapore, and later in Malaysia (with a day trip to Indonesia). I spent a few very interesting days in Bangkok in December 2007, and I liked the Buddhist flavor of the place. If I go anywhere in East Asia now, it would probably be to Vientiane in Laos, which I hear still has a sleepy French colonial flavor, or to the Philippines, or maybe to a less urban part of Thailand than downtown Bangkok.

G. Cities

I am a city boy. I like traveling through the countryside, try to build a countryside module into almost every trip, and recognize that you don't really know any place just from the city. I love being in the outback in America (meaning the villages and back roads, not hiking in the wilderness), and especially in Europe (if I have a car). The countryside of France is the most beautiful in the world, with England and Scotland and Italy not far behind. But I have to admit that I like having the car with me, so after soaking up the scenery for a while, by the side of that mountain lake, I can get back on the road.

I am no outdoorsman. I am in poor shape physically now, but even when I was a boy I was not into country pursuits – the hike, the bike, the woodsy ramble, the ski slope, the fishing hole. Maybe growing up in the middle of Manhattan had something to do with it, but not everything. I loathed summer camps. In the country, except for swimming, my favorite occupation was the same as it was in the city – reading a book. Even now, on a car trip, when I come to that sylvan glen I stop to enjoy it. But then I look around for a picnic table (or take my folding chair from the trunk), sit down, and pull out a book. And try to stay out of the sun. And try to avoid mosquitoes. And move on pretty soon.

I get bored with scenery pretty quickly. It's not that I don't *appreciate* the scenery – I do. But it is kind of static. I can look at it for a while and be really moved. But then I have looked at it. Before too long I want to get back to my book, where something is happening. I know something is happening under that leaf, or in that bush, if I were only to get down on my hands and knees and look with a naturalist's eye. But I can't keep that

up for very long now, as I used to do on LSD. I don't have the knees for it any more, for one thing.

It was like that in Cape Cod, too. The sunset over the Bay was stunningly beautiful. But after five or six times I had really seen it. Cities are not like that – there is so much going on, and it is of such complexity, and changes so much from street to street and day to day, that it never grows tiresome. And in San Francisco especially, the natural beauty of the site never palls.

Of course, it depends on the city. A small town grows tiresome just as the countryside does. And some cities are just boring. But foreign towns still have their foreignness to interest me, for as long as I'm likely to remain there, anyway, plus often much of historic or architectural interest. A village in India has more for me to look at than a village in South Dakota, because of its strangeness. But the city is where the theatres are, and the museums, and the cafés where I can sit and watch the passing scene and – yes – read my book.

When I spend time in the country – visiting a rural friend in upstate California, or staying at a farmhouse in France, I love it. I love the novelty and the quiet and the peaceful lowing of the cattle. After a day or so I really begin to relax and change my rhythm. I begin to think I should do it more often, and for longer. But somehow I don't.

A few of the great cities of the world I know well enough now that when I go there I don't plan tourism, or not much – I just enjoy being there. I can wander the streets and ride the buses and pretty much know where I am. I know where there is a little park suitable for an afternoon idyll, and where the bookstores are that I especially like, and the neighborhoods I enjoy spending time in. These include:

- San Francisco (of course).
- New York, my home town, by which I mean Manhattan Island (the other boroughs count as exploration). Manhattan is one of the wonders of the world, not only for the museums and skyscrapers and Art Deco buildings and Park Avenue vistas but for its raw brute energy as the center of the world. It also brings back to me all the scenes of my childhood and college days. Walking to 86th Street feels a lot like it did in 1951 – the narrow storefronts and the brownstone houses and the details of street life are surprisingly



unchanged. Document 30-5 reprints two e-mails I sent from New York in 2008 and 2009, relating some of my feelings about this.⁴⁰

- Washington, one of the world's most beautiful cities, with its leafy avenues and noble mansions and terrific free museums. The smell of Capitol Hill on a steamy summer night after a refreshing rainstorm is one of the most satisfying smells in the world to me.
- Los Angeles. Not all that good for walking, but there is a wonderful sexy energy there, and so *many* different neighborhoods, and a feeling that there is room for everyone, and that I could always find a little bungalow apartment somewhere and settle right in.



- London. I have loved London since 1952. I have been there 15 times, feel really at home there, and know my way around from my personal ground zero in Russell Square. It is a sort of second home town of the imagination for me because of all the books set there I have read over the decades, and because my

father lived there in the 1930s. Of course I am a foreigner in London – when I'm in England I hear my Rs becoming harder and my accent growing more pronounced – but in a way I don't feel like one.⁴¹

- Paris. I have gone there also often enough to know my way, and to have seen the sights, and now can just be there and not really be a tourist. Paris is magnificent, not only in its vistas and rooflines and noble architecture, but in the storefronts and little squares, and the small details of bas-reliefs and



⁴⁰ The picture is on the preceding page is *Broad Street Canyon* (1904), by Colin Campbell Cooper (1856-1937).

⁴¹ The picture is *Piccadilly*, by Wayne Roberts.

the gold leaf on the columns in the Place de la Concorde. Ground zero for me there is the Sorbonne – I like to stay in that neighborhood, where I have cafés I like and know the bus routes.⁴²

- Venice. Here too I have seen the sights and know the *vaporetto* routes and can just enjoy being on the streets and canals without doing tourism. It is a magical place even with the *alt'acqua* and the throngs of tourists, which you can get beyond quickly enough if you know where to go.⁴³ There is something about the crumbling *palazzi* and the pale colors and the quiet back canals and the fact that nothing has changed since 1750 that really speaks to me. Also the entire lack of cars sets Venice apart from almost every other city on earth – no traffic! no traffic noise! no bright streetlamps! no smog! no herding of people onto sidewalks! Laughter is the loudest sound on a street. I really miss Venice when I have not been there for a while.⁴⁴



In addition to the four great American cities just mentioned, there are a few more which I feel have something special about them, more than just regional centers. These include Boston, Philadelphia, Miami, New Orleans, Chicago, Santa Fe, Las Vegas, Seattle and Honolulu. I don't necessarily love them, but they all have something extra. Atlanta and St. Louis and Minneapolis and Cincinnati and Denver, on the other hand, are just provincial cities – they all have art museums, but lack that special flavor. These are not firm categories – why include Santa Fe and not Memphis?

Many of the fabulously beautiful and interesting cities of Europe I don't know well enough (yet) to feel at home in them as I do in London and Paris and Venice. But I'm

⁴² I found the charming painting of Paris on the Internet, on a website which does not credit the artist.

⁴³ *Alt'acqua* [high water] is what the Venetians call it when the water rises in the lagoon and sloshes over into the *piazze*. They put duckboards down in front of the cathedral, and life goes on.

⁴⁴ The painting is *Venice*, by Karla Bogard.

not done exploring any of them. I could feel that way about Varanasi, too, if I went back and got to know it better. And maybe Tel Aviv and St. Petersburg.

H. How I travel

I have developed a routine for planning a trip, and managing the trip once I get there, which it might be useful to record as a point of social history.

The basic rule for travel, especially for people who have jobs and obligations, is to decide early and lay it out on the calendar. Then the dates get set and you and other people can work around the dates, and appointments accrete for before and after the time set aside for the trip but not during it, so when the dates arrive you have nothing left to do but go to the airport. The magic formula is: *Treat it as real and it will become real.*

Every year I go to New York, and that trip usually takes the same form. I stay with Christopher on East 74th Street. I fill up my calendar with visits to friends and relatives and going to theatres and museums chosen from the current issue of *Time Out* magazine (successor to the *Cue* magazine of my youth). I don't usually do any tourism in the ordinary sense, although I will sometimes do a touristy thing like going to Ellis Island, and try to make at least one trip to the outer boroughs. These days, having no job to get back to, I sometimes also visit Washington and Boston when I'm back east.

Trips to Los Angeles are similar – I fly to Burbank, rent a car, stay with Jim Ito and his husband Nick Coman in Hollywood, and roam around a bit. I do a little tourism in LA – maybe a museum or a historic house, and check some favorite bookshops (among the few that are left).

I always have a dozen or so domestic and foreign trips on the shelf in various states of planning. Domestic trips are usually structured to advance the County Project, discussed in section B above. I enjoy planning them out. For example, I promised to drive Joel Solkoff from Pennsylvania to Oregon if he decides to move there – there are three routes we could take, depending on choices he would make, and I have a route for each choice which would maximize counties (in absolute numbers and in terms of blank spaces to be filled in on the map) without needless detours. In addition I have a Wyoming trip planned, a North Carolina trip, a mid-Mississippi trip based in Memphis, a deep Dixie trip, another running between Omaha and Chicago, and a series of Alaska trips lined up and ready to finalize if the occasion arises. I had the trip with Joel scheduled for 2007, and when it was cancelled I took an Illinois/Iowa/Wisconsin trip off the shelf and plugged it into the time already carved out.

Likewise I have a number of European trips ready to go, and three more to India, one to Australia, and one to Chile. Ethiopia is set for October 2010; trips to Uganda and Iran

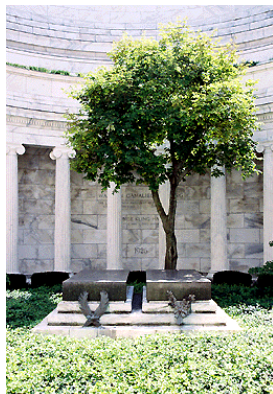
are forming in my brain. I may not be able to take all these trips, so it's a good thing I do so much traveling while I san.

When I plan a County Project trip, as noted the first stage is always the county map, to see what area seems like a good one to try to fill in. Then I figure out an exact itinerary as described in section B above. I like to work in at least one sight a day, and maybe more. Specialized museums and historic houses are favorites – for example, on a county trip in northern New England I visited the house and studio of Augustus St. Gaudens in Cornish NH. I used to stop at county historical society museums – old artifacts, a reconstructed drug store from 1890, that sort of thing – but after having seen dozens of them I don't bother with them anymore.

Anything connected with a historical figure I have some interest in is worth visiting – Hemingway's boyhood home, for example, or Stephen Douglas' tomb, or Bryan's house in Lincoln, Nebraska, or the house in what is now suburban St. Louis that Grant lived in as a young officer, or James Thurber's house in Columbus, Ohio (dog sculpture from there pictured below left). Presidential sites (pictured below left center: Harding's tomb), or even Vice-Presidential sites like the Dawes house in Evanston, Illinois, are almost always worth seeing. Sometimes I visit historic houses even if I don't know the person, if they are of a style or period that interests me – high Victorian, for example, or Art Deco, or Arts and Crafts.



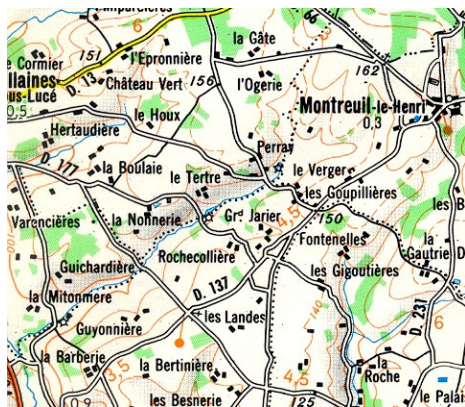
Sites of architectural or artistic importance are good candidates for a visit; so are monuments like the St. Louis Gateway Arch or the Watts Towers. I never miss a state capitol (see Nebraska State Capitol door, pictured below right center). Natural features like Arches National Monument in Utah (left), or the Petrified Forest in Arizona, or Niagara Falls, or the Everglades, or the Mountains of the Moon in Idaho, are worth driving well out of the way for. I also like to visit industrial sites like factories – anything I have never seen before is worth a try.



I like roadside attractions of a tacky variety, like taxidermy museums or the place in St. Augustine, Florida, that exhibits Jayne Mansfield's death car.⁴⁵ Sure, it's a lowlife attraction, but would you rather have seen it or not? I like cable cars and funicular railways (example from Dubuque, Iowa above right) and ski lifts (out of the season – it feels like flying), and always try to make time for an excursion boat on a river or lake. And along the way, time for sycamores meeting over quiet streets, haystacks dotting the rolling hills by the river, a Victorian or Art Deco county courthouse, red and black sunsets behind lonesome farmhouses, stately mansions, smell of alfalfa and cicada thrum through yellow moonlight, lightning below black clouds.

When I have identified all the sites along my route, I see the ones I can manage to see, if they are open when I'm passing by. If it is the centerpiece of the day's travel, like a Presidential library, I'll plan things so as to be there during opening hours, but otherwise if it's closed, it's closed. On each trip I keep a record of peak experiences – something seen along the way, whether an attraction or a monument or a natural feature or just an episode like trying a local delicacy or making it through on a seemingly impassible washed-out road. And I record what I did in a travel diary in my notebook.

I may reserve a motel in advance when I'm arriving at the airport late in the day, or am going to be staying for a while in a real city. I'm partial to Motel 6 (great value and reliable standards). But on the road I usually just find something by the roadside or in a county seat – almost every county seat, however decayed, has a motel for people who have to come to the courthouse. They are usually very cheap and adequate for my needs. The day of the great roadside diners is fading, but the motel will usually know a place for dinner.



Overseas travel is similar, although I use different resources. For a foreign city I'm unfamiliar with I buy a guidebook. The old Michelins were terrific, but the new ones are dumbed down and not nearly as good – now I use Baedeker or Insight or Bradt a combination. I go through it page by page highlighting sights that interest me. Then I work out on a calendar how long it will take me to see what I want to see, in a leisurely way, with excursions out of town or a countryside segment, and a day off every week. One favorite way

⁴⁵ The Museum of Tragedy in American History, it was called. Jayne Mansfield (1933-1967) was a blonde bombshell famous for her breasts, which sometimes spilled out of her dresses. She was the first mainstream star to appear nude in the movies (*Promises! Promises!* in 1963). She died in an automobile accident.

to structure a trip is to build it in three segments: a city at both ends and a car trip between them. I plan the car trip much the same way I plan road trips in America – one main sight a day, and back roads between. Touring maps of scale 1:100,000 (like the French example above), or 200,000 at the most (as in Italy), allow back road meanders without getting lost. Some of my happiest days on the road have been in the sheep-meadows of England and the stone villages of France and Italy. Staying in farmhouse bed-and-breakfast places is the best way to do it in Europe.

I do tourism in a foreign city in a very methodical way. By the time I get there I have a list of things to see, I am familiar enough with a good city map to know where things are, and I have chosen a hotel in the *centro storico* [historic center]. The first stop is usually the tourist office to get up-to-date opening times for everything, so I don't waste time going to places when they are closed or *in restauro* [closed for repairs]. Opening hours for foreign museums can be very eccentric. I also check to see if there's any interesting sight I may have missed during planning – usually I find a few. Then I lay out a plan on the calendar according to opening times and neighborhoods so as to make the best use of my time. I generally try to go first to the thing I most want to see, and second to my second choice, etc., so if plans change I will at least have seen my top choices. Two things a day in a city is the best pace – more only if some things go unexpectedly quickly, or are close together.

I take as long as I like with any sight, linger in the garden if I feel like it, go through the palace twice if I want to – why rush? If I am enjoying a place I have come halfway across the world to see, then I am using my time to the best advantage. I see tourists rushing through – they cannot be having as rich an experience of the place as they could if they slowed down. Usually an hour or two in a museum is the limit of what the eyes can absorb, and the feet too – best to stop then, have lunch, go do something else for a while or read a John O'Hara story in the garden, and then come back. Plowing on relentlessly through every room is not the way to see a museum. I choose what I want to see from the floor plan and go there directly. If my eye is drawn to something really beautiful along the way, that's fine too. But to start at Room 1 and continue through to Room 115 is not a good strategy. I know going in that I won't see everything there.

I usually travel alone and keep to myself. Meeting people and sharing bread with them and talking with Grandpa is just what I *don't* do when traveling, in the United States or anywhere else. I decline conversation, and read my book at night. My brother Adam is just the other way – he heads right for a café and talks to the locals. He asks me: how can I travel to a foreign country and not talk to the people? But I am much more interested in the palace and the military museum, and make a point of avoiding small talk with the locals. Small talk bores me as much in a foreign country as anywhere else, and it's harder with a language barrier. I know I'm missing a lot, but then Adam is missing a lot by staying in the café and not touring the palace.

I never use a camera. Susan Sontag pointed out (in *On Photography* (1977)) that taking pictures can be a substitute for experience, and anyone who has seen tourists enter a room, snap a photo (or pan with a video camera), and then move briskly on to the next room knows about this. Sontag calls this “converting experience into a souvenir.” Don’t take a picture – stop and look! If I need a picture I’ll buy a postcard or a catalogue in the gift shop later, or copy a picture from the Internet.

- I don’t not take pix because of what Sontag wrote – Sontag put the words to a phenomenon I had noticed myself, but didn’t quite have the words for. I found it most liberating to stop doing that, even though I had a little disc camera I could slide into my pocket and no one would notice and you just pointed it etc. Usually I took pix mainly of heraldic stuff on monuments, signs etc. – sometimes now I wish I had a camera to record those, but I have a suitcase full of prints of such stuff from European trips which I never look at. Not having a camera also permits me, especially in India, to be part of the scene instead of stepping outside it to take a picture of it, a very distancing act. What I forget, I forget – I can’t imagine now going back to carrying a camera around.

Besides, unless a person is an artist, where taking the picture is part of what he is there to do (and usually even then), the pix never record the impression anyway. I see tourists at some panoramic site like Bryce Canyon pointing their cameras over the vista point – they will be disappointed indeed when the print does not communicate anything like what the scene really was, the depth, the breadth, the majesty, the *Gestalt*. Also I am a collector by nature, and having the camera I began making sure I get a picture of *everything*, did I miss one of the armorial plaques, and documentation becomes the focus of the experience. That’s not where I want the focus to be.



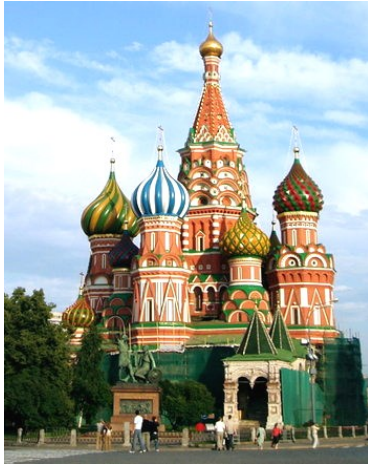
they have in Italy, for example in the Villa Farnesina in Rome (left).

I like wax museums and funicular railways and high vista points; I like riding bus and streetcar lines from one end of

I like palaces, ideally with a royal connection. Palaces with suites that have been lived in during the 19th or 20th centuries are the best. I like anything with heraldic decoration, and military museums because of the flags and uniforms and medals. I like totally painted rooms like



town to the other (Lisbon tram pictured above). I like museums of city history (usually there is a model of the medieval city to compare with the modern street plan). I generally skip science museums, unless there is something very special there (like the preserved mammoth in St. Petersburg); often I skip art museums too, unless they are especially notable or have a particular collection that interests me. I like museums of decorative arts, and anything Art Nouveau or Art Deco.



I skip churches (and synagogues and mosques) unless they are something unusual or historic. Except where there is English-language theatre or movies, I skip the night life too – I am usually in bed by 8 o'clock, but at the military museum when it opens at 10 the next morning. If there is something unique in the town (catacombs of Rome, St. Basil's Church in Moscow (left), leaning tower of Pisa, Lenin's Tomb, sewers of Paris, Churchill's War Cabinet rooms), I make sure to see it.

I also like shopping for heraldic books – that is all I shop for, except in India where I have clothes made by tailors. But I do that in a similarly methodical way, gathering addresses from the Internet, the phone book, the tourist office, and other sources, plotting them on a map, going from one to the next (a good way to see the town on foot), asking at each one where else I should look and which stores I should skip – they know who won't have what I'm looking for. Many cities have a brochure put out by the local chapter of the antiquarian booksellers guild (seal at right), listing all their members and often containing a convenient map – booksellers listed in a brochure like this are more likely to have material suitable for my collection than those selected from the phone book. But I keep at it, and usually find quite a lot. On my last trip to Florence I went on foot to just about every bookstore in the city – more than 50 of them – and found some good things.



I never use a car in European cities, and always like to lodge in the center of the old city. Sometimes I go to the accommodations kiosk at the airport or train station – if you know the town plan you can usually find something reasonable in the old quarter. The Internet makes this even easier, and with Google Earth (and even on some hotel-selection websites) you can know in advance just where things are. As I have grown older and stouter, having an elevator has become more important to me, but I don't need a phone in my room (who's going to call me anyway?), or a television, or a computer port, or care about most modern amenities, and I'm even willing to have the bathroom be down the hall if necessary. I can usually find something suitable at a reasonable price. A helpful Anglophone staff is a big plus.

- A few years ago I tried staying in an apartment found on the Internet (in Vienna) and it was such a successful experiment in terms of convenience and cost that I will try to do it again for stays of any significant length in European cities. I have already reserved an apartment for my post-Ethiopia stay in Rome in the fall of 2010.

Shabat is important on any long trip. By *shabat* I mean one day every week, or at the most 10 days, *without any tourism*, devoted to sleeping in, staying home and reading, maybe sitting in the park, but not *accomplishing anything* on the tourism list. Without this a tourist, especially as ambitious and methodical a one as I am, can burn out fast. To keep my energy up requires a day off – often but not always on a Monday when the museums are closed anyway. I am pretty firm about this, and regret it when I’m not.

I prepare to leave on a trip in the same methodical way I plan what I will do when I get there. I print out a checklist of everything I might want to bring. Of course I don’t always bring everything (no need for an overcoat in July), but it’s all on there. I have a system of pouches. One (the privy pouch, I call it) is for things I need constantly, like toothpaste and Swiss Army knife and gluestick for the notebook. Another is for useful things I don’t need all the time – magnifying glass, spare batteries, picture wire, eyeglass cleaning solution, a small radio. A third is for medicines, and another for homeopathic remedies and salves. I have a special pouch for spare eyeglasses, and another for a portable reading lamp, and another for small paper things (post-its, labels, a checkbook, an extra notebook, spare business cards). This pouch system allows easy packing because the pouches stay packed even when I’m not traveling, and just need to be thrown into the suitcase.

I usually travel with an indestructibly hard plastic Samsonite suitcase in an easily recognizable bright yellow, further identified with hotel stickers in the old steamship fashion, a briefcase for maps, books, and papers (like itineraries, hotel confirmations, travelers checks, shot record, academic and library credentials, copy of my passport ID page), a supply of essential medications in case my suitcase is misdirected, and a soft shoulder bag for what I will actually use on the plane. That’s enough luggage – if I buy clothes in India or books in Europe I will buy a cheap bag there to bring them back in.

I also make it a policy to leave everything neat at home – not only work (when I was working) all done and house tidied up (bachelors tend toward clutter), but all errands done, bills paid, letters answered, every deck cleared. This means a clean slate four or five times a year, which is good for the soul.

I used to send postcards from my travels, but by 2008 the list was more than 50. As a result it got very tiresome to write them and send them, and anyway you can’t say very much in a postcard. So in Bombay in January 2008, with an Internet office just around the corner from my hotel, I got the idea of sending an e-mail instead of a postcard – I

would only have to write it once, and I could say more. I ended up sending three from India on that trip – because this sequence of e-mails contains the story of my visits to the royalty of Gujarat I attach them as Document 30-5. The next such e-mails I sent from New York later that year and early the next – in the second of these I included a picture for the first time. See Document 30-6. After that I sent a travelogue e-mail after every trip, but they grew much longer – too long for inclusion here – and are full of pictures from the Internet. They are fun to write, and knowing I will be writing about the trip helps me notice telling details. I will send a complete set up to Yale as a Supplement.



Tailpiece: Unattributed, from the Internet

Document 30-1: List of countries visited

COUNTRIES VISITED

(in order of first visit)

* = airport stop only, never upgraded

1. USA	34. Liechtenstein
2. Canada	35. Yugoslavia
3. Ireland	36. Turkey
4. United Kingdom	37. Bulgaria
5. France	38. Nicaragua
6. Puerto Rico	39. Portugal
7. U.S. Virgin Islands	40. Gibraltar
8. Germany	41. Andorra
9. Switzerland	42. Malta, G.C.
10. Italy	43. *United Arab Emirates
11. Monaco	44. India
12. Vatican City	45. Tunisia
13. San Marino	46. *Peru
14. Austria	47. Argentina
15. Denmark	48. Brazil
16. Netherlands	49. Uruguay
17. Belgium	50. Paraguay
18. Luxembourg	51. Russia
19. Spain	52. *El Salvador
20. Morocco	53. Belize
21. Mexico	54. Guatemala
22. Japan	55. Singapore
23. Taiwan	56. Bangladesh
24. Hong Kong	57. Malaysia
25. Macao	58. Indonesia
26. *South Korea	59. Thailand
27. *Greece	60. Sri Lanka
28. Israel	61. Maldiv Islands
29. West Bank (Israeli administration)	62. Nepal
30. Syria (Israeli administration)	63. Slovakia
31. Egypt	64. Hungary
32. Sweden	65. Bahamas
33. *Norway	66. Panama
	67. Costa Rica

Document 30-2: The County Project

As of July 4, 2010
Includes independent cities

<u>State</u>	<u>Counties</u>	<u>Visited</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. Virginia	134	134	100.0%
2. Wisconsin	72	72	100.0%
3. Florida	67	67	100.0%
4. Pennsylvania	67	67	100.0%
5. Louisiana	64	64	100.0%
6. Colorado	64	64	100.0%
7. New York	62	62	100.0%
8. California	58	58	100.0%
9. West Virginia	55	55	100.0%
10. South Carolina	46	46	100.0%
11. Idaho	44	44	100.0%
12. Washington	39	39	100.0%
13. Oregon	36	36	100.0%
14. New Mexico	33	33	100.0%
15. Utah	29	29	100.0%
16. Maryland	24	24	100.0%
17. New Jersey	21	21	100.0%
18. Nevada	17	17	100.0%
19. Maine	16	16	100.0%
20. Arizona	15	15	100.0%
21. Vermont	14	14	100.0%
22. New Hampshire	10	10	100.0%
23. Connecticut	8	8	100.0%
24. Rhode Island	5	5	100.0%
25. Delaware	3	3	100.0%
26. Dist. of Columbia	1	1	100.0%
27. Montana	56	51	91.1%
28. Massachusetts	14	12	85.7%
29. North Carolina	100	79	79.0%
30. Minnesota	87	66	75.9%
31. Ohio	88	64	72.7%
32. Mississippi	82	53	64.6%
33. Oklahoma	77	47	61.0%
34. Wyoming	23	14	60.9%
35. Nebraska	93	56	60.2%
36. Iowa	99	57	57.6%
37. Georgia	159	90	56.6%

38. Missouri	115	61	53.0%
39. Michigan	83	43	51.8%
40. North Dakota	53	26	49.1%
41. Illinois	102	47	46.1%
42. South Dakota	66	30	45.5%
43. Kentucky	120	53	44.2%
44. Tennessee	95	41	43.2%
45. Arkansas	75	30	40.0%
46. Hawaii	5	2	40.0%
47. Indiana	92	34	37.0%
48. Kansas	105	37	35.2%
49. Texas	254	85	33.5%
50. Alabama	67	20	29.9%
51. Alaska	8	1	5.6%
TOTAL	3132	2103	67.15%

[Document continues ... →]



Map showing counties I've been to (as of June 2010)⁴⁶



Map showing counties not yet visited (as of August 2010),
not including Alaska or Hawaii

⁴⁶ Note similar maps of France and India in the lower right corner of the picture.

Document 30-3: Letter from 1973 describing cross-country trip

[The stationery was from my student work-study job answering the phone on Saturday in a Theatre Arts office which was closed on Saturday, which allowed plenty of time for writing private letters.]

Columbia University in the City of New York | New York, N.Y. 10027

SCHOOL OF THE ARTS
Theatre Arts

402 Prentiss
632 West 125th Street
535 Cathedral Parkway
New York 10025
24 October 1973

J:

The postcard did indeed say "heading east". On ~~September~~ ^{August} 11 I filled my little orange car (which you have seen, although not with the searchlight I had mounted on the roof in California) with everything I owned in the world, with the exception of 27 cartons of books (which I mailed at enormous expense). The back seat was full and the passenger seat was full and the trunk was full and it was very cozy... shipshape... self-sufficient... two 5-gallon drums of gasoline, to counteract Mr. Nixon's gasoline shortage... highway flares, little spray cans of stuff to spray on the electrical system when it rains, spare fanbelt (check) maps of every state in the Union (check) salt tablets for the heat (check) American flag on the aerial, to give a more shiplike effect on the Nevada sands (aye aye) window decal from Canadian Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (yahoo!) selected short stories of Aldous Huxley, two dozen prerolled marijuana cigarettes, etct =. And I took off.

Across the bridge, leaving San Francisco, melancholy, off the freeway (last freeway on my route until Pennsylvania) at Hayward, through the Valley and up the mountains and through Yosemite at night, enormous ghostly gleaming monoliths, scary in the moonlight (full moon) (what else?) and out the other side at 41 AM, Lee Vining, California,

no room at the inn, so I sleep in a sleeping bag in the sagebrush under the blinding moon, stoned and excited. Until 4:30, when I awaken for the 96th time and give up sleeping, the sun not yet up, back into the car, everything back in its place (that being the only way anything will fit) and across the line into Nevada.

People badmouth Nevada, but I like it. It is empty and desolate (168 miles without a town, on my odd eccentric route) but the colors are strange and pale and beautiful and unlike anything I have ever seen anywhere else. The Nevada statehood commemorative stamp captures them very well. Nothing to be seen for hundreds of miles but vultures (one of whom dropped the corpse of a rabbit on my car... bloodstains lasted through Illinois...) and rabbits and butterflies and the like. Occasionally a truck. But rarely even that. All day long, through Nevada, alone, fantastic... Then Utah. Dirt roads through much of Utah (I refuse to drive on the freeways; I refuse to come near anything built ^{after} ~~before~~ 1930 on my trips through America). Have you ever been to Utah? Unbelievable. Cliffs that go on for miles and miles, canyons and valleys and precipices and pinnacles and anything ~~any~~ you can think of, in reds and browns and greens like the Grand Canyon throughout the whole state. Abandoned soldier's grave... Indian wars. Capitol Reef spectacular; prospectors on donkeys in my mind, Bryce Canyon, really remarkable, intricate, beautiful, ancient, perfect... And into Colorado, on the route taken by the French friars 300 years ago, by the Spanish slavers coming up to steal Indians to work in the silver mines of His Most Catholic Majesty, Mesa Verde, 13th century cities cut into the cliffs, like the lairs of the most beautiful and cunning of animals, the builders of highrises on the Palisades should be ashamed of themselves...don't match.

And down into the forests of Texas, New Mexico, and back into Colorado, the Continental Divide, over the mountains, ~~was~~ not the high 13,000 foot-type mountains of Northern Colorado, but mountains nevertheless, and then the long slide down to the plains, which begin in Eastern Colorado. 87 miles, Walsenburg to La Junta, straight as anything zoom, stoned still, into the Plains.

People also badmouth the Plains, because they have never been there. They get on an Interstate highway, which looks exactly the same in Kansas or New York or anywhere else, nothing to see but fields and the horizon and the identical Interstate exit signs, and they say "Kansas! What a bore! We just couldn't wait to leave. So flat! and nothing to see...!" Which is nonsense. Since I don't use the interstates, I was ~~able~~ ^{able} to see the Plains as they are; the plan was to take the trip the way I would have had to have taken it in 1935. which means going through the towns instead of bypassing them (why would you want to bypass the towns in Kansas? What is the hurry?) And they are beautiful little towns, too. Kansas and Oklahoma and Missouri (George Washington Carver birthplace) (Cape Girardeau, old river houses on Spanish Street) (Ozark mountains) the Mississippi River, and the East.

Illinois, Indiana, southern part, in the valley of the Ohio River, lovely, county seats laid out around the courthouse square, each building with its date and builder carved in the top, brick and stone and the Union Civil War Memorial, and ~~this~~ ^{my} flag flying in the awful August heat, Grand Island Illinois; Posey County, Indiana; gingerbread Victorian Public Library in Evansville, Indiana, lovely building in rather grim 18900 industrial surroundings, time for a joint on the lawn before Kentucky. (Oh wow.)

Kentucky is magnificent, in places, although the strip of highway before Louisville is a nightmare of McDonalds and Col. Sanders and

so on. But off the main highways, where the real country is, it is still lovely. You can usually tell when the reassurance signs, the little markers saying US 43 or Ky. 229, to remind you that you really are where you are, lapse back into the old rusty style of 40 years ago. Then you are home (or I am home, at any rate; some people claim to like 1973 McDonaldburgers). Traveling off the main highways becomes a game of dial-ap-period. You can tell, as you turn into one of these roads (which are often not even printed on the maps... people living there don't even know about them... you have to find old men to give directions, or sniff your way along the old roads that the freeways have "superseded") you can tell your period. 1935 is base, but sometimes you pass a turnoff and zap! 1915. Or earlier. In Kentucky there is a road called the Old Frankfort Pike, a tiny 1 1/2 lane road you can barely see from the 6-lane freeway, and the period is 1840. Trees meet overhead (in spots the highway is ~~now~~ known as "Shady Lane", a name which, however, postdates the name Frankfort Pike), and unbelievable thoroughbred horses on either side, cheering the little orange car. Freeways on both sides, and in the middle one solitary reactionary stoned voyager... Shriners parade in Louisville. Gzonk.

West Virginia... in places, although the roads stay in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the houses bring you back to c. 1780, which may be even a bit beyond my own period. Long wooden slats and brickwork patterns which haven't been used anywhere else (and maybe not there~~d~~) for a long, long time. West Virginia is my favorite state of all, except California. The capital is destroyed with chemical fumes. Scary, W.Va. is gone except for a concrete slab where the railroad station used to be and an ominous sign commanding attendance at the Scary Creek Church of God. Put in Teays Depot, once you find the road, xthere is suddenly a whispery glen with a

USGrant Post Office, whispering "1873". Silence, green leaves, dead soldiers.

Maryland, Antietam Battlefield, Paw Paw, West Virginia (I was going to send Paw Paw a postcard, but it was 6 AM and the shops were closed), Pennsylvania, York-Lancaster Gen. Burgoyne etc and then transmission trouble forced me onto the freeway after 11 days; off at Elizabeth NJ and onto the Staten Island ferry for the triumphal entry. And New York, home (?).

Here endeth the patriotic section of this letter. Incredibly beautiful country. Spacious skies (check). Amber waves of grain (check). Purple mountains' majesties above the fruited plain (check). Vast, full, beautiful, new but getting older. 11 days through 16 states; 105 counties I'd never been in before.

So here I am. I am living on West 110th Street, in a room on the roof of an old apartment house. The owners of the building call it a "penthouse", which I think is excessively grandiloquent; room on the roof really says it better. I do, however, have a view of the river and, facing west as I do, one (1) spectacular New York sulfur dioxide sunset a day. Palisades turning brown and yellow, weeing beneath the highrises. From the roof itself I can see everywhere; I am on the 16th floor and am the tallest building around. University cathedral bridges river Empire State skyline... really quite something. If I had to leave Bernal Hill with the view of SF, this is only fair. At least it looks like New York.

And New York feels like New York. I don't have to tell you of the power and beauty of New York. SF and NY fill such totally separate needs in me that I can be in one (either one) and know it is where I should be, and still miss the other one overwhelmingly, knowing that that is where

[The letter then continues for several more pages, on other topics.]

Document 30-4: How not to get sick in the Third World

The secret to this is to regard everything that can go into your mouth as an enemy and a saboteur. You must accept in advance that you will not eat very well. But if successful what you eat will stay eaten.

Rule One is no water except bottled water!! No matter what anyone says, don't believe it!! Even bottled water should be bought in the largest possible store and the seal checked carefully– tap water is sometimes sold in used bottles. If you buy water in a small shop get the kind with bubbles, if available, so you know it really is kosher.

No Water is not as easy a rule as it appears. You have to THINK ABOUT EVERYTHING YOU PUT IN YOUR MOUTH! Ice, of course, is water. That delicious fruit drink probably has water in it. Even fresh juice may have encountered water in the juicer or the pitcher or the glass. Bottled soda pop is OK, usually (although sometimes contaminated in washing of bottles for re-use) but wipe out the glass before drinking– it may have been washed in contaminated water. If wiping out the glass is impossible socially, don't drink the drink.⁴⁷ Similarly if you drink from the bottle, wipe it off before letting it touch your lips – there may be melted ice on it. Ditto for plates and silverware. I carry my own boy scout knife-fork-spoon-cup set and wash it myself in bottled water. Eternal vigilance! Brush your teeth with bottled water. Keep your mouth tightly closed in the shower, and dry it with a towel before opening it. Don't rely on water-purifying tablets– they don't always work for all contaminants and they make water taste horrible.

Even salads can get you. Were they washed? If so, they were washed in contaminated water; if not, they are full of home-made organic fertilizer. Don't eat them. Likewise cooked vegetables, pasta, stews, anything made with water. How long were they cooked? You have to boil water for quite a while – 14 minutes, I think, or maybe 21 – to get all the bugs for sure. Have you personally watched that soup boil for 21 minutes? If not, don't eat it. Ditto tea – everyone will tell you tea is safe, and usually it is, but usually isn't good enough. Again, the secret is to think about every drop and morsel before you touch it. If everything is first assumed to be poisonous, and you have to be affirmatively satisfied it is safe before you eat it, you'll be all right. When in doubt, don't!

Stock up on safely-sealed bottled water. Have enough for long bus trips and hot afternoons. Don't ever get down to your last bottle. Dehydration is dangerous too. While on the subject of water I should say: DON'T bathe in the Ganges, or in any Indian

⁴⁷ It might help socially if you explain that it's water rather than dirt that you're afraid of.

river or even in the ocean at an Indian beach. The water is badly polluted. Whatever you may have heard about its purity and healing properties, a dip in the Ganges is a prescription for instant hepatitis.

So what can you eat? Not much. Accept it. Reverse the rules you follow in America. In the third world, packaged and processed is better for you than organic and fresh. In India I lived on processed cheese in tinfoil (imported is best), olives, imported salami, bread baked before my eyes (but packaged crackers and indeed most breads and cakes are fine), candy bars, and similar items. Things in cans may be deadly if canned locally– stay away from them if possible (imported canned food is OK, but respect the expiration date). Fruit is fine if you peel it yourself– inside is sterile. Ditto peelable raw vegetables like carrots and radishes and cucumbers. Raw peas can be delicious and are kosher if you buy them in the pod and open them yourself. Bring a simple fruit-peeler with you. Fruit served already peeled may have been washed after peeling– don't eat it. Dates and honey are always OK; they are immunized by their sugar content from harboring bacilli or amoebas. Bananas are widely available in tropical countries and sterile if the peel is unbroken– eat all you want.

Milk may be infected with TB or cut with water– avoid it. The same with milk-based drinks like *lassi*. You should also avoid alcohol, first because there may be water in the glass and second because your system is already under siege and it isn't a good idea to give it a poison. But beer is OK in a clean glass or from a hand-dried bottle and is often the only alternative to yet more sugary third world orange pop. Ice cream is sometimes OK as it is made in large factories usually, but can be served in a wet dish or can have been made with local water or TB-infected milk – better not unless you get it in the original package.

For social reasons you may have to accept the assurances of your hosts and eat in restaurants or hotel dining rooms. If you can possibly get out of it, do so. Say you're on a special diet for your health– it's true.⁴⁸ If you can't avoid restaurants, roasted or baked chicken is one of the safest things because it isn't cooked in water and you know it has been cooked a long time. Ditto deep-fried in oil (although the oil may be a bit off, but that's usually a reasonable chance to take). (Fried eggs are OK too, as are hard-boiled in the shell. Poached eggs are not.) Wipe the plate. Skip the soup. Skip the vegetables. Skip the salad. Skip the dessert. Really. (The rolls are OK but the butter may have TB or have been stored on ice.)

⁴⁸ If you tell your doctor what you plan to do s/he'll say you're doing the right thing– then you can claim doctor's orders for all your precautions.

Hot food which has been allowed to cool is especially dangerous in hot climates. This is another reason for avoiding restaurants, although restaurants which cater to foreign tourists, or those in snooty hotels, are usually OK. Fish and especially shellfish can be contaminated by polluted water, and are notorious for transmitting cholera. Need I say not to eat anything bought on the street except bottled soda, bread and cakes, unpeeled fruit, candy and dates? Or some other dish which survives your stern analysis, like the eggs fried in a wok on the Calcutta streets, and served in a chapatti – but refuse the salad greens that go with it. In India *pan* is OK, although not very filling.

The best defense is to be compulsive about not eating anything unpackaged. Go to a large store and stock up on cheese, crackers, candy, sardines imported from Europe, nice hard imported salami, and so on. You should bring a supply of imperishables with you to last until you can go shopping. Hard salamis are very helpful, as is processed cheese in individual foil-wrapped packets. Live on this stash and on bottled water (or beer or pop), and make no exceptions! At night the air is loud with the groans of tourists who made just one exception – the ice cream, the tidbit on the street, the bowl of soup (it may have been the bowl, not the soup, that did them in). Be fanatical. Accept feeling silly. Accept feeling hungry if you have to. Blame it on your doctor, or insist you have to stick to a special diet. You can be quite vague as to just why. And you're not lying– your body's unfamiliarity with the local bugs actually does restrict what you can safely eat. And don't believe what anyone tells you!

Such a restricted diet may make you deficient in vitamins. Be sure to take vitamin supplements every day. You will be exposed to unfamiliar germs everywhere, not just in the water– extra vitamin C will help your immune system cope with them. Wash your hands carefully, and dry them just as carefully, before eating anything. Keep hydrated.

This may be overkill. But it beats underkill. Good luck! And bring some Lomotil anyway, just in case. A shot of gamma globulin to boost your immune system is a good precaution also. And it can't hurt to recite the Kali-mantra a few times before eating: *Om Kali Durga nemo nemaha!*

DOCUMENT 30-5: E-mails from India

Letter from Bombay, January 4, 2008

This looks like I sent it from my office, but actually I am now in the back room of a telephone office in Colaba (a neighborhood in Bombay) where slow but working Internet connections are available for small amounts of rupees. I was desperate to hear what happened in Iowa⁴⁹ (and delighted by the result), and while I was here checked my e-mail and am now typing a sort of e-postcard. I haven't seen any actual postcards for sale, so maybe this will have to do.

Bangkok was hot and steamy (I traveled 26+ hours door-to-door to get there) but I saw some amazing things. The Grand Palace complex and the fabulous Italian marble throne hall in Dusit are two of the best places I've ever seen. Learning the Bangkok river ferry system, so I could buy the right ticket and know where to get on and off, was an adventure – a little bit of risk too when we hit a wave and I got a splash of polluted river water right in the gob. I kept waiting for the bloody flux to start but Lord Ganesha has protected me so far, that and a typhoid shot and Havrix. I could have spent longer in Bangkok, and seen some *wats* and taken a trip outside the city and its famous traffic jams, but that is perhaps for another time. I was just there to break my journey, and I was glad to get back on the plane and finally get to India.

The first smell of India when you step out of the airport is always a rush, and it was this time too. I said the Kali mantra all the way through the electrifying trip into Bombay – I would have said hair-raising but unfortunately it wasn't. Bombay is also hot and steamy but I have a breezy shady room on a high floor of a low-end hotel of the high-end class so I don't even need a/c in the room – as in SF the open window keeps me cool. I have been eating practically nothing but eggs and fruit and biscuits, although tonight I branched out and ate some baked chicken in the hotel restaurant. So far so good. My early morning idyll at the fish dock reinforced my practice not to eat meat or fish in India (chicken is different since that chicken was alive a few hours earlier).

I have been going around town with hired drivers and have ordered some clothes from a tailor and done some other shopping for various things I planned to get in India, and even spent a day on tourism (another tourist day tomorrow). I have been tracking down revenue stamps and stamped or engraved court papers and other relics with the arms of the princely states of India – I am learning quickly how to find this material, including old letterheads and similar debris of the past. It is an intriguing project. I have some

⁴⁹ [I was speaking of the Iowa primary, which started Barack Obama on his path to victory.]

pictures of princely state court stamps pasted in my pocket notebook so I can ask around without speaking Marathi or even Gujarati.

Fulfilling a vow, I did a great *puja* at the Mother-Church Ganesh temple called Siddhi Vinayek – very satisfying. It was a trip fighting past the shills demanding my shoes (because I know from experience the shoe thing comes later), and squeezing down the line of people, more crowded than a NY subway, clamoring to offer their flowers and so on to the Brahmin *pujaris* who are taking it in as fast as they can and offering it on the altar and shoveling it off to make way for more, working hard like railroad firemen, while a temple full of spectators watched on closed-circuit TV. I got my offering in and got my *tikka* on the forehead from the *pujari*. Because I hardly eat in India (not trusting the food) my glucose level had fallen very low, and so it was great to receive back from the *pujari* the little sweet cakes which are given as *prasad*. Then I did the second part of my vow and found a very remote Ganesh shrine in a distant part of Bombay near a naval base, and made an offering there too. OM GANG GANAPATIYE NEMAH!

I am settling into India as a familiar and well-loved place, which Bangkok for all its attractions wasn't for me. On my fifth trip here I really do sort of know my way around, even though I have never been to Bombay before. For example, now I know how to calculate from the obsolete taximeters what the real fare should be, so I just take taxis without problems or negotiations. But however familiar India seems, it is always really 75 times more unfamiliar. Bombay has more of its old architecture than many other Indian cities, and the skylines and building lines in almost any street are wildly foreign and surreal. I'm not speaking now of the British monumental buildings, which are themselves kind of surreal, but of ordinary back streets with carved wooden projecting balconies rather than the dreary concrete shells of Delhi. Looking for old court stamps in the back bazaars is great fun, just what I came here to do, and I have enough sense to get in a taxi and go back to the hotel for a shower and a snooze before it gets to be too much or too hot or too exhausting.

I am pacing myself so I don't collapse – Monday was *shabat*, a total day off spent in my room reading Philip Roth's superb *The Human Stain*; Sunday will be *shabat* again before setting off for the Gujarat journey. I will check in again after the New Hampshire results are in.

Feel free to pass this letter along as you wish.

David

Letter from Rajkot in Gujarat, January 11, 2008

This is the first e-mail access I have had since my last letter. I am in Rajkot, a middling-small city (by Indian standards) in the Kwathiar Peninsula in Gujarat. I have been going around the state with my trusty copy of Hansdev Patel's *Royal Palaces and Royal Families of Gujarat*. With the pictures in the book my driver (not my first driver, who turned up drunk and almost killed a policeman, but my replacement driver) asks the way. Then I carry the book to the palace gatehouse, and am usually shown in to see the rajah or the rajah's son and given tea and conversation and shown around. I have met with five of them so far and I am blown away by the courtesy and hospitality I have been shown in Limbdi, Wadhwan, Dhrangadhra, Wankaner, and Rajkot – Gondal tonight. Of course they all know each other, and Limbdi calls Wadhwan and says I have this American gentleman here, will you see him tomorrow, and Wadhwan says fine, and when I see him he calls Wankaner and says can you put him up tomorrow, and so it goes. Wadhwan is having the Italians build him a *mozzarella* plant to make cheese from the milk of his water buffaloes. This magic book gets me in everywhere – and, of course, help from Lord Ganesha, whose icons and *murtis* I see in every palace, and then I show the icon in my book to show I am a member of the Club too, and it is like a secret handshake.

India on the back roads is very different from the craziness of Bombay, but it is certainly crazy enough to keep a fellow alert. I have not seen a single foreigner since I left Bombay. I spent last night in the royal guest house at Wankaner and had dinner with the rajah (I use the term inclusively, including *thakor sahebs* and others – for details see page 94), who was environment minister in Indira Gandhi's government. All these rajahs are highly cultivated people who speak beautiful Cambridge English; I hope I am holding up my end of the conversations.

I have seen some other things also, besides palaces. I watched the oxcarts bringing in the sugar cane. I stopped the car to let the goats and sheep and pigs and camels pass me on the road. Tomorrow in Junagadh there will be a Hanuman temple where they have chanted the Ram mantra without stopping for 41 years or something – I plan to help for a while. The next day we reach the sea at Porbandar and I will take a day off – what is Gujarati for *shabat*? And then another week, including the Rann of Kutch. And then Udaipur and back to Bombay to pick up my clothes from the tailor and so on and buy some Indian states revenue stamps and watch the Republic Day parade and then stagger back home. I am tired but not reeling, and have not been sick so far, and I hardly feel like I'm on a trip anymore – this is just my life now. But it will be good to get back home.

Jai Hind!

David

Letter from Udaipur in Rajasthan, January 21, 2008

This is my third and last e-postcard from India.

The Gujarat trip, with all the royal palaces, was terrific, but after about a week I had had enough. I was palaced out and sick of moving. However, I was also in a very remote part of India, so I couldn't just call it quits. So what I decided to do during my day off in Porbandar on the Arabian Sea was cancel the part of the trip planned for Bhuj and Mandvi and points north in Kutch (*Khachchh*) and instead make tracks for Udaipur a few days early. (I had to call the Maharajah of Kutch, who expected me, and tell him I was not coming.) So we arrived in Udaipur (my driver Mustafa and I) a few days early, after 10 days on the road instead of 14, and I had a week in Udaipur instead of four days. This was better both because it cut the road trip short (if 10 days and 2050 km over questionable roads can be called short), and because it gave me unhurried time to enjoy Udaipur.

When I say questionable roads, I am not kidding. On my earlier trips to India I have traveled on some bumpy potholed tracks. Now in many places in Gujarat and Rajasthan these are being replaced by gleaming new four-lane divided highways. The key phrase is "are being replaced," because they're not replaced yet. Instead the new highway is materializing in tiny disjointed pieces. So you bump along the track and then suddenly a lane of new highway appears. All the cars going both ways switch from the track to this new lane, which continues for a while and then stops. Then maybe the other side will appear, so all traffic in both directions, including animals, switches from the supposed northbound lane to the supposed southbound lane. The signal for this will be a few rocks across the road – each set of rocks prompts a decision – do we accept that this means *road closed* and switch to the other lane, or do we keep going on this lane expecting a place to escape will appear later? I got pretty good at predicting this. Then the new road completely stops for a while, until it picks up again at some arbitrary future point. Sometimes the old potholed road will go for miles, and then there will be 100 meters of completed four-lane divided highway (except for signs and lights, of course), and then nothing for a while. Or an elaborate overpass will be constructed with no road leading into it or out of it. Or vast earthworks and excavations continuing for miles, with abandoned modern earth-movers just sitting there, and concrete foundations with rusted rebar reaching to the sky, and no one working except maybe a couple of isolated laborers loading earth into wicker baskets with short-handled hoes. I tried for days to figure out why the Gujarat and Rajasthan governments, or the fancy German contractors whose signs appears on some of these works, would construct modern highways in tiny unconnected increments with all the attendant extra costs and delays. I still can't figure it out.

These were the main highways. Using the *Lonely Planet Road Atlas of India and Bangladesh*, Mustafa and I also picked our way along some tiny minor roads, single-lane

affairs through the thornbushes and outback that looked a lot like Indian reservations in New Mexico. The roads got us where we aimed for, although the villages mostly had different names than those shown on the map. Of course I couldn't read any of the signs, as they were in Gujarati, but it was fun doing it, and we came out where the map said we would. We even found our way on a road we knew had to be there, though it was not in the (2001) atlas. I have added three new Indian States, 20 new districts, and two more Union Territories to my life list.

Udaipur is a delightful town, without high-rises but with lots of cows. I spent a few days just resting and sleeping and reading novels, and then started exploring. I am staying in a nice hotel with a trustworthy rooftop restaurant, right across a small square (not square of course, it is a *chowk*) from a steep temple to Lord Jaganath (= Juggernaut) called the Jagdith Mandir. They sing *bhajans* every morning at 5:30, but earplugs and a carefully chosen room let me sleep right through. The hotel is in the heart of the old city, which is also the district of the curio shops, which I have been trawling for a special kind of old stamped court papers from the princely states. I have been making as much noise about this as possible, so shop-owners now stop me on the street and ask if I am the fellow looking for old court stamps. I show them samples (which I always carry with me) and ask do you have anything like this, not from Mewar (the old Udaipur State) or Jaipur which I already have, but some other state? I have come up with quite a few. Jaipur stamped paper is especially beautiful (the state seal shows Arjuna in his chariot, from the Bhagavad Gita)⁵⁰, and the local curio industry uses them to put paintings on. People are surprised when I say I don't want any with paintings, and think I must want them to paint on myself. But strangely, that is not my plan at all.

The Udaipur City Palace is a marvel of Mughal-style architecture and decoration, and I have taken some boat trips on the famous lakes and took a taxi up to a castle on the top of the highest crag looking down on the lakes. I have watched the graceful but mischievous monkeys leaping along the roof-lines outside my window, and into the doors and windows along the way (I close the windows when I'm not in so they won't ransack my room looking for bananas and cookies). It is not hot in Rajasthan, although it will be hot again for my last few days back in Bombay, picking up the clothes I have had made and keeping some appointments to buy court stamps and watching the Republic Day parade on January 26.⁵¹ And then home! I am eager to get home. This trip was about a week too long. But when I try to think which days of the trip I would have preferred not to have had, I cannot think of a single one.

Jai Hind!

David

⁵⁰ [Actually the Sun Chariot of Surya.]

⁵¹ [It turned out this parade is held only in Delhi.]

DOCUMENT 30-6: E-mails from New York

(October 2008)

Greetings from New York! I have been here for about a week and a half now. New York is the same as it always was, only more so – still huge and fast-paced and full of the very best of everything available 36 hours a day. As David Letterman memorably said, New York: the city that never sleeps, and looks like hell in the morning. Except New York looks beautiful in the morning. The traffic doesn't move, but the city looks beautiful.

I feel a curious ambivalence about the hugeness and relentlessness and the crowding and the skyscrapers and so on. It is exciting, but also exhausting. I grew up here, and so it feels like home, and yet it also feels very strange. As I walk the same streets I walked as a child and as a teenager and young man, everything feels exactly right – the trees look the way trees are supposed to look, the pattern of lights at night look just the way I first learned a street should look. The massive roof lines on the streets – so high, so wide, not only on Park Avenue but on ordinary streets like West 35th – those are my native hills. I know just where everything is – I don't need a map to find anything, my feet remember the way. I was in the American Museum of Natural History just the other day, and passed the diorama of Peter Stuyvesant and the Indians I first saw 60 years ago. I felt like I was still wearing short pants and an Eton cap.

But on the other hand, it is very wearing. The noise, the pace, the crowds, the traffic, the horns, the intensity radiating everywhere, the ubiquitous sense that this is The Major Leagues, and if you can make it there you can make it anywhere, the very fact that this is the absolute center of the whole world – it is a little hard for me these days. It was a great place to grow up, but it was good that I left – I don't have the stamina for it. For two or three weeks, though, it is wonderful to be here. And it isn't all Times Square – Riverside Drive is a quiet leafy street, as beautiful as any in Paris (well, *almost* any). East 74th Street, where I am staying on my brother Christopher's couch, is pretty nice too. So is West 111th Street. The buildings (when you lift your eyes above the ravaged ground floors) are a museum of architecture – Beaux Arts and Italian Renaissance and Art Deco and exuberant Victorian and even some good post-modern. I have been riding the buses rather than the subways – with the gridlocked traffic it takes much longer, but I am in no hurry – and there is always something to see from the bus windows.

And the museums are better than they ever were, especially the Metropolitan, where I have already been several times. I have been twice to the Michael Rockefeller Wing – the first time to the Oceania section, the second time to the African – looking at one jaw-dropping item after another. The same in the French paintings, and the Egyptian Wing, and the European decorative arts rooms, and indeed everywhere in the greatest museum in the world. This weekend I am going to check out the Tibetan armor. I went to a special exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art, about Van Gogh's painting of night scenes – my

brother Adam got a free press ticket. Later I took my ease in the sculpture garden, in the exact spot where I used to sit when I was a member 50 years ago. *Plus ça change ...*

Museums and theatres and friends and family and the streets of my youth – a very good way to spend a few weeks in the softest, gentlest, most clement October I can ever remember. I left my coat behind in San Francisco and asked my friend Makiko to FedEx it to me, and then I didn't need it. Tomorrow Christopher and I go up to Yale to deliver huge boxes of family papers to the Library there, and see the room where archivists in white gloves will reverently preserve my parents' old checkbooks. And on Sunday I come back from the center of the world to cool foggy San Francisco, where the rooflines are two stories high instead of 60, and shops and restaurants are not open all night, and everything is a lot smaller and quieter and more bite-sized, and nothing is nearly as splendid except the views. And that will be just fine, although I would prefer it if I could take the Metropolitan Museum of Art with me, and put it perhaps in my back yard.

Since this is a postcard, here is a picture (by Andreas Feininger, from sometime in the 1940s).



(April 2009)

Dear Friends: Greetings from the East Coast!

I arrived in Washington on April 13, as the last of the cherry blossoms floated down on soft spring breezes to cover the brick sidewalks of Georgetown and Capitol Hill and the leafy lawns of Chevy Chase. It takes an Eastern spring to remind me how raw California is – even in San Francisco spring means that we go from brown to green and then, soon, back to brown again. But a Washington spring is full of colors with the trees in bloom, cherry and dogwood and magnolia and lilac, and green leaves and wide lawns and cheerful fountains, and broad avenues and gracious mansions and smoothly pillared stone façades. The White House looked somehow different now that Mr. Cool has taken the place of the Usurper. Even the Capitol seemed as if it might harbor some nobility somewhere – but I go too far.

I spent a few days in Washington, seeing friends and my nephew Noah, and going to museums – the new Smithsonian American Indian museum, and the Byzantine collection at Dumbarton Oaks, and a show of 1934 paintings from the Public Works of Art Program, and some fine small Art Deco bronzes by Paul Manship. And then I left for New York.

In New York the spring was even gentler and more sensuous than in Washington. The air felt like nothing – the way the water feels in the tropics, when it is the same temperature as the air and you can hardly tell the difference. The magnolias were in bloom in front of the monumental apartment houses on Fifth Avenue, graceful flowery boughs adding delicate accents to the buildings' strong straight lines. New York, for all its energy and verve, can have a hard and angry edge, but the breeze and the flowers washed it away, and without the hard edge New York is irresistible. Then it got hotter, and then it got colder, and then it rained, and then it blew, but the city remained transformed by the memory of the wonderful softness. Maybe you had to be there.

So I settled in at my brother Christopher's house on East 74th Street. I saw friends and relatives and went to theatres and museums and sat in the park and ate the hot dogs and kebabs available it seems on every corner, and also bagels and lox and matzo ball soup, and foul-smelling cheeses you can't find in California, and drank Dr. Brown's diet black cherry soda. I have been to the Metropolitan Museum three times already – to see photographs by Walker Evans (and his famous collection of picture postcards), and a show of late Bonnard interiors, as colorful as Matisse but with the soft focus of Monet, and just today to the 19th century European painting rooms – there must have been a billion dollars worth of Van Goghs in one room alone (the Irises were my favorite this time, but I have a different favorite every time I see them). I saw a program of very funny one-act plays by Ethan Coen, in a little theatre on West 20th Street, and have just come back from a brilliant production of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* (Pulitzer Prize for Drama, 1938). I went to see it because Edward Albee said it was his favorite play, and I

can certainly see why – as a play it is easily spoiled by sentimentality of the Henry Fonda variety, but there was not a milligram of sentimentality in this production. It was the sort of experience that theatres were created for.

And then I walked part of the way home, the spring evening still gentle as a kiss, from Barrow Street in the West Village where the theatre was, past the Waverly Place house where a girl friend of mine lived 45 years ago, past Two Fifth Avenue where my grandmother lived, along Washington Square that Edith Wharton wrote about, to the East Side. I stopped for a while on a bench in Washington Square Park and watched the NYU students frolicking like puppies with their illuminated frisbees. Above them the trees feathered leafily like those of Corot whose paintings I had seen in the Met just that morning. And above the trees, the sky, never quite dark in Manhattan even at midnight, and a bright sickle moon sharp as a knife blade. I have to say it: I♥NY.

Also: a boat trip down the East River, past Wall Street and the old red brick warehouses of Brooklyn, past the Statue of Liberty, through the harbor full of ships as it has been for nearly 400 years (no masts now like Whitman wrote about, but the same idea), and out into the Ocean to Sandy Hook, New Jersey (and back again). And also: a ride on a poorly organized Chinese bus to State College, Pennsylvania, for a visit to Joel Solkoff, which once I got there was great fun – we tootled around town doing slaloms and pirouettes in electric power chairs, startling the locals. And a bunch of other stuff too – I have been a busy beaver these past few weeks, like the beaver on the New York City seal.

Still to come: more friends and relations, and more museums, and a retrospective show of fabulous jewelry at Cartier (!), and a jazz club in the Village with my brother Adam, and a reunion at a school I loathed 50 years ago (but I have been reconnecting with my classmates), and then on Sunday on to Boston and more friends, and some work on a project in the peerless library of the Flag Research Center. And then back, finally, on May 7, to San Francisco, which although not the Big Apple and short on cherry blossoms, and it does sleep sometimes, and Edith Wharton never wrote about it, is still and will always be my own foggy sweetheart home.

David