

Jim and Emmy's Travel Journal

Great Britain, The Country of England

1970, 1980, and 1985

1970

We arrived in Germany on August 18, traveled to Austria a few days later, spent several days in Italy, crossed Switzerland, then entered France. After several days in France, including a visit to Paris, we drove to the Normandy Coast. We then crossed the English Channel in a Hovercraft, for a visit in England.

F, Between Paris and Calais, Sep 3, Thu - 14

We had a beautiful drive through the picturesque French villages. Sure wish we had time to look around this area. We arrived at the English Channel and decided to take the Hovercraft to England. They have room for 35 cars and VW campers, and maybe a 100 people. There are large fans under the craft blowing down to lift the Hovercraft a few feet above the beach. Then propellers drive it forward as it rides above the sand on the beach, then above the water. Not a very smooth or nice ride, but it was the quickest way there.

We arrived at Ramsgate at noon and drove to London, trying to keep on the "other" side of the road. Driving around London was fascinating, but still a problem. None of us thought London looked as intriguing as Paris. We went to the American Express Office and for \$30, booked two rooms including breakfast, at the Hotel Durand. Emmy says the accommodations are mediocre. We had a shower in our room, the Lindas had a sink, and the toilet was down the hall.

Again we walked and looked, then ate dinner at a little restaurant with the word Kentucky in its name. Don't remember the food, which most likely means it wasn't worth remembering.

GB, London, Sep 4, Fri - Hotel

The breakfast at Hotel Durand included with the room price, was excellent, with ham, eggs, cold toast and all the rest.

We went to Oxford Street then walked to Buckingham Palace to see the first part of the changing of the guard. Later we walked to the Guards' Chapel. It had been rebuilt after being destroyed in the war. We walked to and into Westminster Abbey. Rode the Underground (subway) to the Tower of London and visited the Crown Jewels deep down, and well guarded, in the basement.

Shopped for about 3 hours, and Linda S. finally bought a new coat she has been wanting because of the cold weather. We may be brought back to London to pay for our three traffic tickets! After the time expires on the parking meters, the clock continues to run so the police know how long we over-parked. Also,

one ticket tells us we are not supposed to feed the meter and stay parked at the same spot.

We drove toward Bracknell (west of London) to visit with Emmy's friend Peggy (pen-pals during WW II). We stopped at a restaurant along the freeway and had steak dinners. The waiter was going to charge for a glass of water, but we talked him out of it.

Found Peggy's home at about 9:00 PM, well after dark. We visited until 1:30 AM talking with Peg, husband Don, and son Tim. Tim is studying to be a dentist, and has three years to go. Don works for the Royal weather bureau. The Lindas slept in the VW in the driveway, while Emmy and Jim slept in the house.

GB, Bracknell, Sep 5, Sat - Peggy G.

After having a nice breakfast, Peggy gave us a box with two sterling silver napkin holders. A nice gesture of friendship. Don called Windsor Castle to see if the Queen is at home. We aren't going to visit with the Queen, but we can't visit Windsor Castle if she is there.

We left at 9:00 AM and drove west to Stonehenge, a very tiring drive. Only one road goes there, two narrow lanes and so much traffic, and we must remember to drive on the "wrong" side of the road! Emmy said Stonehenge is unimpressive, while Jim thinks Stonehenge is just outstanding. It's the oldest and about most fantastic man-made object in the world, but then he's just the driver.

We then drove back to Windsor Castle and toured the castle. Picture taking was not allowed, but Jim got a few by just clicking, without aiming. We got back to London in the late afternoon, drove around and took some more pictures. One is a prize picture of Westminster Hall with the bridge in the foreground. We then drove to Dover to catch a boat back to the mainland.

We found we can take a boat up the English Channel to Zeebrugge, Belgium rather than just straight across the channel to France. Will save some driving time and miles, and the boat ride is a change. Found a place to camp on the grounds of a castle on the cliffs over looking Dover and the English Channel.

GB, Dover, Sep 6, Sun - 15

We bought another alarm clock (don't know what happened to the one we bought in Rome) so we can get up very, very early (at 4:30), to catch the boat. From the ferryboat we could see the pink (!!) cliffs of Dover shining in the dawns early light. We had a good breakfast, ham (or greasy thick-cut bacon) and eggs and all the trimmings, soon after we left the dock. Emmy and the Lindas slept (and felt seasick!) while Jim really enjoyed the ride.

We returned by ferry to Belgium, visited The Netherlands, crossed West/East Germany to West/East Berlin (still very much behind the Iron Curtain), then visited Emmy's cousins near Germany's western border. We left Frankfurt for the US on September 14.

1980

We arrived in Germany on May 9, spent time in Mettlach and later entered France. After a week in France, we climbed the Pyrénées Mountains into the little country of Andorra. Couple of days later we drove south into Spain, turned left for a few miles, then left again and returned to France.

From France, we crossed into Italy and spent time visiting Pisa and Florence, then crossed to the Island of Corsica (part of France) by ferry. A couple of days later we boarded another ferry to Sardinia (a part of Italy). Several days later, an overnight ride on a ferry brought us to Sicily, then another ferry to the Italian mainland. During our trip through Italy, we visited Naples, Rome, Florence, Venice and dozens of other beautiful little Italian towns, and the little country of San Marino.

We spent a night in Yugoslavia, several days in Austria, then two days in Hungary. We returned to Austria, spent a night in the tiny country of Liechtenstein. We crossed between Italy and Switzerland a couple of times on the way from St. Moritz to the Matterhorn. We then crossed Switzerland, and into France at Basel, and soon returned to Germany. After a few days at Toni's, drove across the little country of Luxembourg, then into France, on our way to Paris.

Crossed border from France into Belgium, later boarded a ferry for a ride across the English Channel to visit England.

We found, like the other day, there is no one waiting, and almost no one on the ferryboat. Just this morning, and after we arrived in England, we heard over the radio about the long lines of people begging to get on a ferryboat. The British media is no better than we have at home.

We had expected to get on a boat for a four hour ride to Dover, and now find we are going to New Haven and the trip will take seven hours. This ship was supposed to sail from France but because of the strike, is leaving from here. Thank goodness we don't have a schedule. There are a lot of big trucks and their drivers, but not many vacationers.

On the ship we met an older couple from England who had recently vacationed in the US. Their grandson lives just a few blocks from friends Peggy and Don in Bracknell, and since they don't have a telephone (didn't have one in 1970, but later we learned they have a phone now), we gave him a note to deliver saying we will be a little later than expected.

We landed at New Haven and tried to get used to driving on the wrong side of the road. We drove through Lewes, then through Brighton where there is a castle kind of thing, built like buildings found in India. Looks out of place. The Brighton Pavilion is another example of a bad building in the wrong place, and after awhile people get so attached to it, it's considered a monument. From what we hear and see, Brighton is a pleasant vacation resort, and looks like it may be quite expensive. Again, it's not a resort for our kind of vacation, but then what is! This is the place where political party conventions are held. (In Brighton in 1984, a bomb, set by the IRA, killed five people and narrowly missed Margaret Thatcher.)

We hear few campsites in Great Britain have electricity, and we are at one of those few. Must find out how to find those with electricity, because it's too cold without the heater.

GB, Littlehampton, Aug 27, Wed - 88 - 50 - 11,220

We left the campsite at 8:30 and drove to Arundel. There's a castle on the hill and Emmy fed our stale bread to a lot of ducks and swans in the river. We've found that each fresh loaf of bread we buy generates two loaves of stale bread to feed the ducks, etc.! They were going to present Shakespeare's play, "A Midsummers Night Dream" tonight in the castle.

We visited a couple of antique stores. One store had a very interesting set of copper door handles (12 to 14 inches high, complete with a three inch wide copper plate) but for \$115 they weren't indispensable. They have Irish and Scottish beef available in stores in England, and it looked a lot better to us than the beef we have been buying on the mainland.

In Chichester we found an extra good loaf of bread, then stopped for lunch just outside Fishbourne. A farmer near Fishbourne struck the foundation of a Roman ruin, while digging a ditch. They have since excavated a large area and have built a protective building over much of it.

While in Chichester we did a brass rubbing. We have seen similar things done in Boston on old tombstones. We laid a sheet of paper on a brass "picture" then rubbed over it with a crayon. Not all that exciting, now that it's over.

A former neighbor, Joanne W., asked us to buy a couple of ice tea glasses in a certain Waterford Crystal pattern. We found some here, but prefer to wait until we get to the factory in Ireland.

We thought we would visit the Isle of Wright. When we got to the dock, found the ferryboat was sold out and there was a long line of cars waiting to go to the Isle of Wright. Then there would have been a long line of cars waiting to come back, so we didn't bother. We also found it was too expensive to suit us, about \$50 for a very short trip.

We toured Lord Mountbatten's home in Romsey. All Emmy could say was, "My kitchen is better, my bathroom is better," etc., and so on.

GB, Bournemouth, Aug 28, Thu - 89 - 90 - 11,310

We have heard a noise in one of the brake shoes, so went to a Chrysler garage to see if we could find what it is. They did send us to a place for a new piece of mirror to replace the one broken by the bus in Brest, and suggested a place in Bristol for the brake problem.

In Ringwood we bought some excellent Irish beef, or at least it was excellent by the time the cook was done with it later that evening. We went through Dorchester on the way to Gastonbury, but before we got there, we saw a little town off to the side. We drove in and around this little British town and discovered a dozen or so old stone houses with thatched roofs and an old church and school, an interesting detour.

The Cathedral (Gastonbury) is one of the most interesting ruins we have seen. Perhaps more interesting for the setting than for the building. Imagine a huge lawn with enormous pieces of Gastonbury's old Cathedral sticking up out of the

ground. Someone had taken what exists and completed a picture of what it must have looked like. Must see Gastonbury again someday!

In the towns there are many shops selling wool, leather and sheepskin coats. A big business in this part of the country. We drove on to Wells, another attractive old town with a charming old Cathedral (Wells). There are graveyards right up to the door, and inside there are more graves below the floor, and in the basement, and there are memorials to heroes from Wells, hanging on the walls (the memorials are hanging, not the heroes!), and setting in a nich in the wall, or where ever they would fit.

While standing in front of the Cathedral, Jim turned and looked down a street lined on both sides with stone houses that all looked almost alike. Looks like there was a condo project in Wells, a century ago.

At the campsite in Bath, they had both electricity and a sign saying "Complete." Although it appeared there were plenty of room, the old sour-puss would not let us in. We looked and looked for another campsite, and looked and looked for a B&B, but all we found were very expensive small hotels that didn't look like places we wanted to stay.

At a gas station, near Bath, we asked about a campsite. One of the customers knew of one. We followed him to an old farm house where there was camping space next to the barn, but we were not able to plug in the electricity. It hasn't been too cold lately.

GB, Bath, Aug. 29, Fri - 90 - 160 - 11,470

We left at 8:30 and went looking for the auto dealer in Bristol. We went round and round and up and down, and just as we were about to give up, there it was. It seems the Dodge brake problem is solved for \$15, then we drove on to Bath.

How do we explain a city like Bath, England? The old Roman bath is about one floor down from street level. Don't know if all the new streets and buildings in the city of Bath were built on top of old ones, or if the Roman Bath was down one floor originally. The water is still hot, but is no longer used. Bath's Roman Bath has a swimming pool size hot tub, and around it are various rooms including a sauna and steam room. There is a restaurant, much newer than the rest of the building, called the Pump Room.

The Cathedral (Bath) can be seen while standing one level down, next to the Roman Bath. Nearby, the bridge that crosses the river in Bath is called the Italian Bridge, because it contains stores, like the Ponte Vecchio in Florence, and Rialto Bridge in Venice.

We drove to Stonehenge again. In 1970 it was possible to walk right up and touch the stones and see what they are really like. There are now so many tourists they have put a rope around Stonehenge, so we can see but not touch. Still about the most intriguing, oldest, man-made thing, anywhere.

Sometimes it's tempting to try and explain what this is, but when you consider that whole libraries are filled with books on the subject, it's difficult to say more than Stonehenge consists of huge (twenty-five feet tall, twenty-eight ton) rocks that were put in place 5,000 years ago. It still accurately predicts

eclipses, change of seasons, and more of that kind of things. They sure built it in a spectacular way.

Has been raining all day again. We stopped at Warminster and looked again for a 12 volt bulb to fit in a regular lamp, which Jim has wired to work with the RV Battery. We have had no luck up to now, but here the sporting goods store had one.

We went on to Salisbury and found a campsite outside the town, and there is no electricity, even for the office. The campsite in Salisbury is just an open field where someone had put up an office to collect the money, and some portable potties.

GB, Salisbury, Aug 30, Sat -91- 100 - 11,570

The Cathedral (Salisbury) is splendid, and its spire, magnificent. Cathedrals are usually situated in the heart of town, and have other buildings right up against them, so it's impossible to take a good photograph. In Salisbury, the Cathedral is situated in the middle of a huge lawn.

It was market day, and we shopped around the town. They were making sturdy wooden chairs in one store in Salisbury. Would have liked to have one, but there is no way to get it into the camper and no way to get it home. Went into a large indoor flea market type of antique store, more like a warehouse. Bought a couple of small items.

We drove on to see Don and Peggy. The young boy on the ferryboat had given us specific directions. He did miss one traffic circle, but then who's counting. We arrived at 1:00 PM just as they were about to leave for nearby Ascot Park, the same one where Queen Elizabeth races her horses. Their son, Tim, is a dentist and his club is having a charity bike race with bikes built from odds and ends. His wife's name is Gill, and they have three children.

Dinner was at the Manor House, an old and well preserved brick building with ivy all over the outside. We had porterhouse steak with baked potatoes, like in a US steak house. Don't ever see baked potatoes on the European mainland. Cost was \$65 for four, we think that's more than it would cost in a similar place at home.

They asked if we would like to see slides of their vacation in Yugoslavia. We said yes, then Peggy said they have been naturalists for the last 30 years, and Don is the president of the club. We then watched pictures of naked people, and didn't see many pictures of Yugoslavia. Years later we found a nudist campsite in Yugoslavia, and the passenger insisted we find another place for the night.

We slept in an upstairs bedroom. When we were here in 1970, Emmy and Jim slept inside Don and Peggy's house, and the two Linda's slept in the camper in the driveway.

GB, Bracknell, Aug 31, Sun - Peggy

This being Sunday, we expect to be able to park and drive and walk and park in London, much easier than on week days. There was a traffic jam as we neared downtown, and some people backed down the on ramp to get out of the mess. Since we were on the "wrong" side of the road already, we couldn't figure exactly how to copy what they did. We were sure we would back into the wrong lane, or something.

We visited the flea market in "Petticote Lane," but it was in such a poor area we were afraid to park and leave the van for very long. The goods for sale seemed to be mostly cheap and used clothes, and not many fleas. We are enjoying London more than we remember we did in 1970.

They have just cleaned the British Museum building. It has blue and beige horizontal stripes. We drove across the Tower Bridge. Understand they are going to open parts of the bridge-tower for tourists. Attended a chapel service in St. Paul's Cathedral (London) conducted by the chaplain to the Queen.

In the evening, friends of Peggy and Don came over for a visit. Margaret and Brian have a son in America, and they are thinking of moving there in a few years when he retires. Emmy says Peggy reminds her of Peggy's Aunt Alice who Emmy knew when Emmy was a child near Chicago. Peggy and Emmy were pen pals years ago during WWII, arranged by Peggy's Aunt Alice. (Margaret and Brian visited in our home in Culver City one year. Aunt Alice died in 1991 at the age of 96.)

September 1980

GB, Bracknell, Sept 1, Mon - Peggy

Last night the handle on the camper's sliding door broke.

Today Jim went to the Dodge dealer to try and find a replacement. Of course in this country all sliding doors are on the other side of the vehicle, and their part didn't fit. Jim designed a replacement part for the broken door handle, and helped them build one that did work fine. They were so interested in what he designed, they charged very little for all the cutting and welding they had to do.

Today we rode the train to London and had a nice day. We went to the Portobello Market and found it's closed on Monday, but there were a couple of interesting antique stores in the area. We then went to Covent Gardens, and found the flea market called Jubilee Market, was only open on Monday morning, and by now it was Monday afternoon. Emmy just ain't got no luck at all on some days.

We did find Mrs. Thornton's Special English Toffee, and it really is! We don't know if Mrs. Thornton's Toffee will spoil after a few days or not, as it has never lasted long enough to find out. Covent Gardens was the location of the fruit and vegetable market for London for many years. They have built a new market place outside London, and have converted the charming Covent Gardens buildings in this area into tourist shops and restaurants. Jim thinks this is one of the most interesting of this kind of development we have seen, in the many of cities that have tried it. They have done similar things in San Francisco, Seattle, Atlanta, Sacramento, and other places. We did find a nice heavy brass kettle that we bought.

Had a light supper in the coffee shop of the Hotel Strand Palace. Omelet, soup and salad, etc.

GB, Bracknell, Sept 2, Tue - Peggy

Took the train to London again this morning. Costs about \$12 each for a round trip. First we went to Westminster Abbey. Emmy had expected the coronation chair to be some fancy kind of thing, and while the Queen likes it, it's a very old and very rough looking board bench that looks like children carved their name in it years ago.

Ate at a mid-eastern sidewalk cafe in London. Lamb meat is bar-b-que'd on a vertical spit. They cut off the meat (actually stacked slices of lamb) and put it into a piece of pita bread, then add some kind of sauce, and Emmy loves it.

At the Victoria Station we caught a special double decked bus for tourists. It took us past many interesting locations, and the most famous tourist sights.

Later we visited Harrod's Department Store, which must be about the best department store in the world. Harrod's covers a square block, is several floors high, and they not only have everything to buy at generally high prices, they have the best possible service. They are especially famous for their meat market and other food stands.

We see musicians playing their instruments in the London underground (subway), right under signs telling how much the penalty is for doing just that. Really enjoyed the city today, and although very tired when we got "home," Emmy fixed pop corn. Don and Peggy liked it with syrup sprinkled on it rather than salt.

Emmy washed her hair tonight and used the camper heater to dry it. Since she was warm Emmy took off her sweater, but while doing that, she caught hold of her blouse, and accidently started to remove it. Don said that for a minute there he thought Emmy was joining the nudist club. They should be so lucky!

GB, Bracknell, Sept 3, Wed - Peggy - 217 - 11,787

We left at 9:00 this morning and drove to Windsor Castle just a few miles from Don and Peggy's. We did not tour inside today, as we did in 1970. Jim got a haircut across the street from the castle while Emmy shopped the area.

We drove to Oxford and parked in the parking lot of a very new, very nice big shopping mall. Walked around town, climbed a tower to see out over Oxford, and watched the people "punting" in small boats on the river. Also walked around and through the botanical gardens.

Late in the day we stopped and bought a new battery for the camper (not the truck) as the old one is so bad we don't have enough light to read at night. Emmy bought a finger puppet at a weavers exhibition, in a little town along the way.

We drove into Wales, and a few days later boarded a ferry to (for five days) and from Ireland, and now drove back through Wales to England.

Emmy was almost sleeping while we were driving, and when Jim said, "We will turn here and not have to drive through Chester," Emmy said, "Wait a minute, some tour book said be sure to go there," and she woke up and looked it up, we did and we are glad we did.

Chester is one of the more interesting cities we have seen in England. There's a wall and gates, and inside the town, the shopping streets are lined with

unusual half-timbered houses and buildings. The stores have two floors of shopping. The second level has a balcony to walk on to get from store to store. At a town hall near the Cathedral (Chester), they held an antique market of some kind and Emmy found a berry spoon for \$10. Don't think berries would have tasted any better in the \$175 spoon she didn't buy in Ireland, especially since she hasn't even eaten any berries with this spoon either!

It's very, very windy again today, but it has finally blown the clouds away. We now drove toward Blackpool looking for a campsite that is supposed to have electricity. Just north of Blackpool we found a campsite at 7:00 PM. The sign said "Full Today," but no one was in the office and it didn't look full, so we just went in and parked. Sometime in the middle of the night, someone pounded on the outside of the camper telling us we were trespassing, and we were a fire hazard. Jim said we would pay in the morning, so he went away.

In the morning he was agreeable and apologized for waking us. Said he was always having problems with the police for letting people park close to each other. We found others had come in after we had. This man was making more money than expected.

GB, Blackpool, Sept 14, Sun - 102 - 204 - 13,086

This morning we drove and walked through Blackpool. It was almost deserted, and is the most outlandish place we could imagine, and still not describe.

Compared to Blackpool, Las Vegas is "My Old Kentucky Home." There is a very high steel tower (a poor man's Eiffel Tower, several hundred feet high) rising out of a Blackpool building. Has been there for a hundred years. Along the main streets are huge decorations hanging from the light poles. One Blackpool street has a Christmas-like decoration, another has a merry-go-round hanging from each light pole, and the third is a bird cage with a couple of large lovebirds inside. We would guess each of these ornaments is at least five or six feet in diameter.

The beach at Blackpool is very wide and there are long piers, with buildings (restaurants?), quite a distance from shore. The whole town is filled with hotels, restaurants, what appears to be small time gambling joints, and just about any item that could be found in a resort like this. We now understand why some people use the word "Blackpool" as a derogatory adjective. But we sure would like to come back here "in season" to see what it's like when filled with people.

The British Conservative Party holds its meeting in Brighton (a "better" resort), and the Labor Party holds its meetings in Blackpool (a "common man" resort).

Up to 10:00 AM it was a nice sunny day, but now it's cloudy. Seems the weather is very undependable, in other words, it's normal. It would be a surprise to visit someplace in this world, and hear the people say, "This is normal weather, just exactly the weather expected for this time of year!" Of course in the California Desert, where we live, the weather is so much the same, day after day (especially in the summer), that the TV weather report could say, "... recorded at an earlier date."

We drove through the Lakes District. It's considered by many to be one of the most beautiful parts of England. Green rolling hills, hedgerows, stone houses, magnificent landscape, with sheep and cattle, and on and on. We left the main road and just drove around through the area.

On weekends it seems the British people just have to get out of the house. As we remember from 1970, the roads are just packed on Sunday, and traffic becomes almost unmovable. Churches, and some houses, in the England's Lakes District, use one kind and color of stone for the main building, and the corners and the edging around windows and doors are a contrasting color.

They are water skiing on the lake, but it's so cold we don't know why anyone would be out there. Went through Windemere, and Ambleside. Since this is a tourist area, we see a lot of B&B (Bed & Breakfast) places. Some of the Lake District homes are built of thin stones or slate stacked horizontally. Attractive, but not cheerful, very dark and dreary looking. The lakes appear to be very full of water. Not flooding yet, but it looks like another rain will put them over the edge.

We see sheep of grey, black and mixtures of colors. Many ferns in the forest, but it must be getting too cold for them to last much longer. Now we are in a big forest of pine trees. We bypassed Keswick and Carlisle, but stopped in an antique store nearby and bought some little brass bowls. What are we going to do with all of this stuff.

We drove on to Scotland for a few days, then returned to England.

The Roman Emperor, Hadrian, had his Army build a wall across England in about 100 AD or so. They manned the wall for over 200 years (that's as long as the US has existed!). Some of the foundations are still here. At few places near Hadrian's Wall, there are foundations of the buildings where the Army lived, including the Commandant's home or office, baths, latrine, and a headquarters building. We then drove west along the wall, and stopped and looked at more parts of it. By now it was raining and very windy. We dressed the best we could, and suffered as little as possible.

At one place a man in charge of the area gave us a plastic copy of an old Roman coin. He said he had found the original on the wall many years ago. We see places where the people in the area used "dressed" stones from Hadrian's Wall to build other walls and buildings. A large castle nearby, was also built using stones from the wall. That was before anyone cared. In Rome, and other places, the Colosseum, abbeys and Cathedrals were used as rock quarries years ago.

We see the town of Hornby on the map, but Emmy's friends with that name were from Wales. We located a campsite with electricity about 15 miles north of York. The man in the office asked if we were going into Ripon to see the "Wakeman," then explained that for 1,100 years, without missing one night, at 9:00 PM a man blows a horn to tell the town-folks, all is OK.

For one of the few times this trip, we left the campsite after dark and drove the narrow curvy roads to Ripon. We were a little early, so drove on to see the Fountains Abbey, a ruin just a few miles from Ripon. We got there just a couple

of minutes before it closed, so only saw it lit up, from outside the wall. Pictures show it to be beautiful.

Back in Ripon, the Wakeman was dressed in a three cornered hat, brown overcoat with brass buttons, and he blows an old animal horn. There is a statue in the town square, and he goes to each corner and blows one loooonng note. Then he must go to the Mayor's home and blow it again. Years ago the Wakeman was responsible to see no one broke into any of the stores on the town square. He was paid something by each merchant whose store had a door that opened onto Ripon's square. Some of the Ripon merchants built their store on the square, but placed the door just to the side, and far enough away not to qualify for the Wakeman-tax.

The first horn lasted 800 years, and is now carefully displayed on special occasions. This one is about 125 years old. Some of the Wakeman have had the job for many years, and some for just a short time. This one was the substitute for awhile before becoming the main horn blower. We visited the Cathedral (Ripon) also. Small but interesting.

GB, Ripon, Sept 18, Thu - 106 - 227 - 13,802

This morning we went to York, a most intriguing city. There are many half-timbered buildings, museums, a city wall with gates, and most important, the York Minister, as the Cathedral (York) is called. The famous "Five Sisters" stained glass windows are here. We were able to walk on the wall and see the town and Cathedral from there. One of the shopping streets is supposed to have been a shopping street for over one thousand years. Incredible! (A few years later there was a very bad fire in the Cathedral, but we have seen on a television report that it has been repaired.)

A sign in the Post Office said we can get an annual color TV license for 34 £, or for a black & white TV, about half that. We prefer commercials. In the town of Mansfield there is a shopping mall very similar to those at home. We also shopped the outdoor market. Mansfield is a coal mining area, and it smells like it. There are "tipples" at the entrance to mines, all over the place, we have also seen them in Germany and elsewhere. (A tipple is a high tower used to pull little cars of coal out of the mine, then tip [that's where they get the word "tipple"] them over to dump the coal.)

We are camping in Sherwood Forest. The only robber here is the man who charged \$9 for this campsite, and out of season at that, but with electricity.

GB, Nottingham, Sept 19, Fri - 107 - 118 - 13,920

We drove through Nottingham, but saw nothing notable. In Coventry we stopped to see the Cathedral (Coventry) that was bombed so badly, early in WW II. Parts of the wall are still standing, and the spire is still complete and open for climbing the 168 steps. On top we met a college professor who knows Jim's Brother Johnny. One of the students with him, knows Jim's Nephew Charlie.

They built a very modern new Cathedral (Coventry) right next to the old one. Wonder if all these Gothic churches looked as "bad" to people hundreds of years ago, as the new ones look to us now. That needs an explanation: This new Cathedral looks better than most new ones, even rather pleasing, but to Jim's eye, it just doesn't compare to the beautiful old Gothic Cathedrals. German people

helped to build the new Coventry Cathedral, and the English people helped build a hospital in Dresden. Emmy found the hour and a half here very inspirational.

This afternoon we went to Stratford-upon-Avon, and found it to be just as delightful a little town as we can find anywhere. We can understand how ol' Willie Shakespeare must have liked the place. Avon is the name of the river, and there is a narrow canal nearby. We noticed the people on the very long narrow canal boats (would guess they were maybe seven feet wide, and maybe 30 to 40 feet long) operated the gates of the locks in Stratford, themselves.

Stratford is loaded with half-timbered houses, hotels, and store buildings. We saw Anne Hathaways' thatched-roof half-timbered home with flowers all over. There are others that are similar, in the area. Bought a few things at the outdoor marketplace, including a brass hourglass. (Well now, the stand is brass, but of course the glass part and the sand are made of something else.) We also bought four slabs of Mrs. Thornton's Special Stuff. Thought it would be easier to carry to the US, and it should last better if it isn't broken into small eatable pieces like they usually sell it.

Looked in the Royal Shakespearean Theater, and many other places in the town. Saw the Trinity Cathedral (Avon) and its cemetery where Willie the Shake is buried.

A daughter of a friend, Leslie and her husband, are stationed at the US Air Base near here. Talked to them by phone and received directions, and will stop to see them in the morning. Our campsite tonight is nice and electrical.

GB, Stratford, Sept 20, Sat - 108 - 150 - 14,070

This morning there was a huge spider web connecting the camper to a nearby tree. Wish there was some way to keep that beautiful web! It was very foggy as we drove to the US Air Force base to see Leslie and Dion.

They are living in on-base housing, and it's a very nice two story, two bedroom place. Leslie's mother, Rosemary (Emmy's friend from Canoga Park days) had just left for home a couple of days ago. Leslie's new baby was born on Sept 12. We had a cup of tea and talked for an hour then left.

Drove to London and on to the Greenwich area. Found an antique market/flea market—Emmy likes that better than eating—and bought several brass door handles that were supposed to have come from some Georgian homes built in the 1700's. Whatever they are, they are nice, and very low cost. The brass is rather pink, and we were assured it's old brass. Bought a brass coffee pot also, and we don't drink coffee either.

We visited the Greenwich Observatory and saw where the "0" longitude is located. It was originally along one wall of the room where the people were working, but either the wall or the longitude has since been moved a little. This whole thing was started as a means of keeping track of the location of ships.

We stopped to talk to a used car dealer who had some campers for sale. He said we should not even talk about selling our camper in England until we register it with the government. If we are caught even talking about selling, they can confiscate the vehicle! Said this government is very tough about such things.

We had dinner at Gill and Tim's tonight, along with Peggy and Don. A delicious meal, and an excellent hostess and host, in their very pleasant house. They said they plan to vacation in the US in the next year or so.

GB, Bracknell, Sept 21, - Sun - Peggy

Remember the little boy we met on the ferryboat, the one who delivered our message?

Well, his father is a pilot for British Airways, and is interested in buying our camper. The offer is \$6,800, but out of that will come \$1,500 in customs duties, and the balance will be in monthly payments, and we don't like that too much. Also, we received a letter from Toni that included a letter from the US Army schoolteacher we met in France, the one who agreed to post a "For Sale" sign for us. So we must wait and see.

We drove to the Bracknell shopping center today. This is one of the "new towns" they have been building around London. Did not do a very good job of designing it to be livable—no character at all, really poorly laid out. Designed by engineers who don't have to live here, and not by and for real people. We took Peggy and Don to the Manor House for dinner again tonight. Again very good, but expensive.

GB, Bracknell, Sept 22, Mon - Peggy

Drove into London today, and went directly to the Jubilee Market (flea market) at Covent Gardens. Emmy bought a Sheffield mint spoon and a set of small brass bowls, and of course some of Mrs. Thornton's addiction. We had a nice, expensive (\$16.50 each) lunch at the Carvery at the Hotel Strand. It was a buffet with several large prime ribs cooked to different degrees, ("under cooked," and "cooked through,") and we could use the knife ourselves and eat all we wanted. Bob and Estelle had eaten here in 1971 and told us about it—will send them the bill!

Drove to Cambridge this afternoon. Beautiful buildings, and an appealing town. Went up the tower of the Holy Trinity Church to look over the city, but mainly saw a black cloud representing a big storm. We saw a beautiful rainbow in England this morning, reaching the ground at both ends, and at times it was a double rainbow. We drove to the campsite near Harwick, close to the dock where we will catch the ferryboat to Holland in the morning.

GB, Harwick, Sept 23, Tue - 109 - 332 -14,402

Surprise, we were the first vehicle on the ferryboat from England to Holland this morning. Cost \$100 for a 7 hour trip. There are first and second class areas, and three movies for 1 £ each, but no thanks. We advanced our clocks again and arrived in Holland at 6:45 PM.

We rode a ferry across the English Channel to The Netherlands, then crossed West/East Germany to West/East Berlin, and back to Mettlach, Germany. After a couple of days showing Hannah and Toni a bit of the Alsace, France, we returned to Mettlach. On

October 26, we returned to the US .

1985

We arrived in Germany on May 30, did some sightseeing in Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, and France, then returned for a week at Toni's. After a few more days in France, we crossed the western border of Switzerland, and later entered Italy, where we visited from Milano, to Venice to Rome, then crossed Italy to Pescara, boarded a large ferry boat and crossed the Adriatic Sea, to Split, Yugoslavia.

After Yugoslavia we went to Vienna, Austria and got visa's to visit Czechoslovakia and Poland. From there we crossed into East Germany, then back to the West. We caught a ferry to Denmark, another to Sweden, then ferried back to Denmark, crossed Germany, and back to cousin Toni's.

After another week or two, we drove to Rotterdam, put the camper and us on a ship and on October 21 we sailed to London.

GB, Tillbury, Oct 22, Tue - SS Stefan Batory

We were docked in the Thames River near London when we awoke this morning. We cleared custom's and went to the train station next door and bought round trip tickets to London. It took an hour to get to Fenchurch Station, located in the financial and insurance office part of London. We walked from there past the Bank of England, St. Paul's Cathedral, and over to Oxford Street.

We finally caught a cab for a short distance. He either was tired of the traffic, or he misunderstood where we wanted to go, as he let us out long before we got where we expected to be. We walked further down Oxford Street to Selfridge's and a few other department stores, where Emmy decided even if she found a suit or a dress she would like well enough to buy, the price would scare her away. Prices and styles were equally atrocious.

Of course, we stopped and bought some of Mrs. Thornton's Special Toffee, but we quickly ate almost all we bought. We walked over to Piccadilly and bought a battery for Jim's watch, had a malt at Baskin Robbins 31 Flavors, and walked to Trafalgar Square, then to the McDonald's next to the Charing Cross Station. (Nothing like these English style restaurants.)

From there we walked to Covent Gardens and looked around for a while. For some reason, Jim forgot to wear his walking shoes this morning, and we have been walking around London too much for the shoes he has on. We walked a little more, then caught a cab back to the station. After we got on the train, we found this one would stop one station too soon. When we arrived there, several people gave us different information as to when the next train would arrive.

There were three other people from our ship who were on the same train from London, so we all piled into a cab and for a dollar or so each, we arrived at the pier in style.

We left the dock at 4:00 PM, went down the Thames River, made a U-turn into the English Channel and headed for Canada.

We spent the next 10 days crossing the Atlantic Ocean to Montreal, Canada on the SS Stefan Batory. From there we drove home to California.