

Europe trip 1970

9 June

Left Oxford about 7:45 am and after a long journey (about 140 miles). Arrived at Dover at 13:30. Averaged 25 mph. Through the center of London. Traffic in London was not too bad but in some areas on the way out the smell was quite bad. In Dover found that the turtle top carrier did not fit and we got a substitute. Ferry left 15:00 and arrived Calais 16:30. Drove through France with quite a few messy shacks, and Belgium with a lot of resort areas with caravans and tents. A relief to drive on flat, straight roads. Belgian customs did not want to see anything, simply waved us on. Dutch customs at Sluis looked at passports and gave directions to camping 'De Meidoorn', where we arrived about 7:30. Got tent set up and slept comfortably. Cost fl. 8.50. Not bad. Very nice place.

10 June

Packed up and left about 11. Drove through Goes, via Breda, Tilburg, 's Hertogenbosch, Oss, Kesteren, to Wageningen. Cherries not quite ripe, unfortunately. Crossed three ferries, and bridge at Rhenen. Found camping 'De Eng' at Wageningen. Very nice. Set up tent, had supper, then brought George to Dronkelaar. Arrived there near dark, about 9 o'clock, and gave the aunts and uncles a start. They were just having their evening 'pap', in preparation for bed. Delivered George and headed back to camp (about 30 minutes). Children sleepy and tired. Lack of sleep causes fighting, apparently. Weather tropical, very un-Dutch.

11 June

Visited IBS, Wageningen. Got acquainted with Drs. Vander Zweep, Van Oorschot, (Mej.) Van Anandel, and W. De Groot. Talked about and saw some of their work. [Notes on the visit are not included in this diary].

Dixie and children spent the afternoon at the swimming pool, taken there by a camping neighbour. Weather hot, temperature at or near 80F.

12 June

Went to Amsterdam. Planned for 8:30 but left at 11 instead. As a consequence several bad moods. Arrived Rijksmuseum about 12:15 or so and spent 1.5-2 hours there. Very nice. Very few people there. 'Nightwatch' no more impressive than many other paintings, except perhaps in size and amount of detail. Lots of pottery, Delft blue, and two beautiful doll houses. Parked near Dam on a meter and had dinner at Bijenkorf at 2:30. Not bad, but still expensive, at fl.31 for the six of us. Bought some souvenirs, walked into a diamond shop to watch some being polished (gimmick to attract sales), walked into an art shop (expensive) and drove around a bit to find the Free University. Buildings were new and impressive. Found, to our surprise, a good-sized hospital associated with university. On the way home a lot of weekend freeway traffic. Almost like California. Not problems, though, and got home around 8, ready for a night's rest.

13 June

Sunny again today, but a bit cooler. According to newspaper, many farmers in Groningen face serious trouble, with no rain since May 1 on grain or beets. Drove through Otterlo,

Stroe, Garderen, Putten, Nijkerk, to Bunschoten and Spakenburg. Very nice drive through the country side. Saw many farmers haying, saw a 'schillenboer', the market starting in Spakenburg, and some of the local ladies in their finery coming shopping. Not as nice as the one or two we saw in Leeuwarden or in Zeeland.

In Amersfoort went to an art shop and, after some looking, bought two paintings, for fl.342, to be sent to us in Edmonton July 15. Bought some groceries at Albert Heijn, some cherries in 'De Nude', after driving through Doorn, Leersum, Amerongen, Elst, Rhenen, Achterberg. Cherries are the first of the new season (the stand opened today), and quite expensive—fl.1.25 for a small box. Bought two boxes which gave each about a dozen cherries. A cool breeze blew back at the tent, but died down at about 9 o'clock. On the way through Rhenen we stopped to walk around the Christian School, and found quite a long piece built onto it at the back.

Butter at the camp store was fl. 3.60 a pound, and milk 65 cents per liter. Gasoline, super, about 60 cents per liter, of fl.30 for a tank full (50 L).

14 June

Went to church in Rhenen in the morning. I went alone. Church at 10. I got there 9:35, and met the 'koster', with black jacket and 'streepjesbroek'. Virtually everybody was in church by 9:50 or so and they talked quite a bit. I recognized van de Willik, van Doesburg, and Kap, who came in as senior elders. Young visiting minister had good sermon on Luke 9:57-end: "Who puts his hand to the plow, and looks back, . . .". He drew parallels between the man who wanted to follow Jesus, but first had to say goodbye to his family (called it apparent decision, really indecision), and a slave to drink who will quit "after tonight's party", or a glutton who will go on a diet after the next birthday party. Also used illustration of child who hurt knee and wants to cry. Mother does not say "Go ahead, cry; lie there", and does not blame the stone, but tells child to get up and go on playing—best cure, and quickest.

According to a camping neighbour the average wage in Holland is fl. 120-150 net.

In the afternoon drove to Apeldoorn to see tante Hillie (Koningin Hortenselaan 19) but found them not home. In Wezep, Tom Olthuis also not home, so we returned to the tent. Quite a bit of Sunday traffic on the road, so speed was low.

15 June

Packed up and left Wageningen about 9 am. Slightly overcast, but cleared up as we went along. Shopping in Arnhem impossible because shops were closed until 1 pm. Soon crossed the border into Germany, with no trouble. Got some German 'Gelt', and we were on our way. Drove along main and not so main highways, saw farmland and river, and eventually reached Köln at about 4 o'clock. Campground near freeway bridge was soon found, and we got the tent put up. Cost DM 7.80. DM value about like the Dutch guilder. First attempts at German not too fluent but it got us what we needed. After supper drove into Köln, wandered around the outside of the Dom—huge, impressive. Unfortunately they closed as we arrive (7:30). Drove around town a bit and then headed for camp again. Germans load you up with coins just like the English, Talked to some people from Michigan, California, Spain. The Spanish couple suggested we should really go to Spain also. Michigan people did not brag about roads in Spain.

16 June

Up bright and early at 7, and on the way by 9. Drove into Köln again, and walked around the Dom a bit. Huge place. We just beat some German school classes, so avoided the rush. Downtown Köln obviously is a real tourist place, with souvenir stands and expensive shops all around. As we headed south along the freeway to Bonn, and then along #42 and #9 close to the Rhine, the overcast changed to rain, our first rain. Shopped for lunch in Königswinter, another real tourist town along the Rhine. Had to find our what colouring books are in German (Mahlbücher), but did locate some. Children more peaceful today than yesterday. Along the Rhine very scenic, with terraced vineyards on steep slopes, and towns in the Rhine curves, castles and castle ruins on the hill tops, remains of ancient city walls, the Lorelei rock. With the rain not as beautiful as it might be, but still nice. We outran the rain near Mainz but at Worms it caught up with us again, just as we entered camp. We pitched tent in the rain, then went shopping for supper. Soon after that the rain stopped and we were OK. Toilets were not very clean here. Cost DM 7.40.

17 June

After breaking camp went into Worms and looked at the old cathedral (old, impressive) and the Luther monument (Lutherplatz). Overcast, but took some pictures. Hopefully they'll be reasonable. Window shopping (holiday today) showed relatively cheap watches and clocks but expensive clothes, at least in shops in the centre of town (tourist prices probably). Left for Heidelberg about 11 or 11:30 and when we arrived there the weather had cleared and it was beautiful, warm, and sunny. Had lunch by the Neckar and went up to see the ruins of the old castle, up on the hill overlooking the town. In the old part of town the streets were narrow, but traffic was relatively light so we got through OK. From Heidelberg to Stuttgart was about 90 or 100 miles, and we drove the first 50 or so along the Neckar, on the Bundesstrasse. Good highway but slow because of curves and, for us, because of nice scenery (though Dixie slept partway through it). Several locks on the Neckar held up traffic but at one place the locks were not even operating. Drove the last 40 miles or so on the Autobahn and soon reached Stuttgart and a campground on the Neckar, in the city. Quite nice. DM 8.70 per night. We set up camp and a bit later it began to rain, to last all night and off and on the next day. We were dry and comfortable, however, and pleased with the space in our tent. Met John and Lilian Toews (head of History, University of Calgary) and three girls. Medieval historian on sabbatical, spending the summer in Europe.

18 June

Still rainy in the morning. Went off to the University of Hohenheim (1500 students, mainly agriculture), about 5-6 miles south of Stuttgart. Got there about 9:45, while working hours are 7:45-17:30—probably 2 hours for dinner, because work week is about 43 hours. Talked at length with Herr Dr. Werner Koch (about my age) who had recently become leader of the weed science section. He is 'Dozent', but in time may become professor. Nice, soft-spoken, friendly fellow. Speaks excellent English (was with Buchholtz in Wisconsin for a year, about 1962). Ph.D. here comes 2.5-3 years after 4-year diploma. Koch rates this below an American Ph.D. Such a Ph.D. may not teach a course until he is "habilitated", after about 6 years' work, another thesis, and

examination, and a public address. Apparently Fr. Franz Müller is working on this now. Koch has an extensive field program, in cooperation with state personnel (Baden-Wurtemberg), but a relatively small group of permanent people. The university has very few permanent positions. Koch gets quite a bit of industry money for his work and uses this to pay some of his staff. I must send him *Setaria* reprints when published. Müller (loud voice, fair English) has done some interesting work with MCPA on perennial weeds at a number of stages of development. Has good isotope facilities. Helmut Köcher is employed there now, sort of, and may work on a Ph.D.. Employment opportunities for PhDs are scarce, but diploma graduates apparently have enough opportunity in industry. Demand for 'herbologists' there is still growing. Weed Science is called 'Herbologie'. Quite a bit of interest in programs in developing countries also. Koch's problems and views seem close to mine, relative to foreign student, teaching of weed science, research responsibilities, and relations with government personnel. His direct interests are more in ecology (competition, seed population studies) and he treats herbicides as another ecological factor. It sounds like a smaller percentage of German cultivated fields is sprayed than is the case in England.

At Supper time and evening ate hamburgers and talked at length with the Toews' (close to their 13th anniversary apparently). Quite enjoyable. A play put on by the children came to an abrupt halt when a bitchy neighbour lady came stalking out and scared them. Dixie and children had gone to a mineral bath place in the afternoon—cold pool and hot showers, and apparently had quite a good time. Toews;' also took Dixie to the co-op for groceries.

19 June

Had some rain during the night. Packed up and left about 10:30. Drive east along the Autobahn to Ulm where we stopped to look at the tallest church spire in the world (161 m), in an old church with elaborate wood carvings. Very nice. Along the way saw many women working in the fields. In several cases no men. Freeway went through Schwabische Alps—considerable up and down. Nearer München a bit flatter and quite a bit of dairy industry, with fewer field crops. Some areas even resembled Holland. Weather good all day. Found 'Camping West' just outside München—good place with clean facilities. Bought some food in Dachau, just a few miles northwest of München. Tomorrow will visit the prison camp museum. A bit of rain comes down as I sit down to write this (21:30) but probably it will not be serious. Had some huge strawberries for supper (worth about 4 marks)—tasted good.

20 June

Spent about an hour at KZ Gedankstätt—prison camp museum, just outside city of Dachau. Built in 1933 already. Very impressive museum. Also reconstructed barracks (most of them levelled). Fence, moat, and watchtower still intact. Large monument and 'Never again' stone. Walked through crematorium and stood in gas chamber. On grounds now have Protestant Church of Reconciliation.

Left Dachau about 11:30, headed south to Austria. Through Garmisch-Partenkirchen, across border, got some Austrian Schillings (1 S is about 4 cents Canadian). Beautiful drive, though a bit hazy, through valleys, along rivers, to Imst, where we camped (S 60) in what was an orchard. Very quiet and peaceful. Along the way we saw many farmers

and families busy haying. It looked like it might rain, but it never came. Drove up the mountain a ways, for a beautiful view of town and valley.

21 June

Did not go to church today and it hardly seemed like Sunday. Talked to a Dutchman from Ijmuiden a bit. All showered (S 3 for about 4-5 minutes of hot water), and left about 11. More traveling through pretty valleys—hot today, 83 F in one place. Drove roundabout way along Hochalpenstrasse, over 2032 m pass, opened only fairly recently. Well above timber line, with 10-ft snow banks lining the road on both sides here and there. The last mile or two in low gear—quite steep. A snowball fight for Mark and Joan, and we went down again, through a lot of switchbacks, mostly in second gear. Through Swiss customs, who took a good look in the back, into Liechtenstein and, without seeing another order, into Switzerland. Into the Rhine valley with flat country, with none of the bright, balconied, picturesque Tirol houses on the hillsides. Quite drab by comparison. Found Camping 'Idyll' near Bodensee (fr. 10) which suited the children because it had a swimming pool. It was hot, I got a bit sunburned, and the children had a nice swim before supper. Cheese is not called 'Käse' here, but fromagie. Obviously Swiss-Deutsch.

22 June

Went into Austria, just across the border, to buy some souvenirs and then headed west to Basel. Except for the first bit, we followed the Rhine valley, fairly broad in places, narrower in others. A hot day, even for traveling. Had lunch in a city park in Winterthur (?), to be stared at by many passers-by, especially schoolchildren. Road to Basel consisted mostly of two-lane, quite good, with some stretches of freeway. Just south of Basel found Camp Waldort. After supper looked in vain for a laundromat.

23 June

Phoned Dr. P. Dubach (Geigy) and arranged to come about 2. Good payphone system here. All automatic. Show amount of money deposited and returns unused coins when through. Scouted around and found laundromat 'mit Selbstbedienung' and got most things washed, for fr. 11.50. Back to camp for lunch. Children desperately wanted to go swimming but it rained all afternoon while I went to Geigy.

[I talked to Dr. Gast, Dr. Dubach, Mr. Weiss, Dr. Riedel, Dr. Ebert, and wrote several pages of technical notes, which I did not reproduce here.].

Back at the camp it had rained most of the afternoon, so no swimming.

24 June

Nice day. Talked to a teacher from Toronto (Mahon, brother of plant physiologist Mahon with Cummings at Queen's University). broke camp and left for Zurich and then to Zug. First drove into Germany to buy some souvenirs, but found all stores in Lörrach (first German city) closed for the day after 12:30. Thus an unsuccessful trip. In Zug camped between lake and railroad track, about 30 feet away from both. Children had a nice swim, then it got windy and we had some rain. Train noise was bad for a while. Fast electric ones and lots of them. During the night, fortunately, there were few if any trains.

25 June

Got up early to try to get the van serviced, but no luck—could not be done immediately. So went off, after kids tried to swim but were scared off by swans. Went south and west along two lakes, including Vierwaldstätter See, through Luzern and Interlaken to Lauterbrunnen—Camp Jungfrau. Under Staubbach Falls, looking to Breithorn (3760 m), but not quite in view of Jungfrau (4160 m, 13000+ feet). Very nice camp, with free hot showers even, and a well-stocked store. Valley a bit like Yosemite valley, with high rock walls on both sides. Sun had already gone over the edge (also clouds came in), and we went up to the base of the falls where we got good and wet. Thunderstorm brought some rain, but nothing serious. Neighbouring site taken by two GB tour buses, with some 30 girls (and also a few boys) on a nine-week tour. Quite a few NL cars in this camp also. The other day met an American (army type) who considered Dutchmen the lemmings of Europe. They could be found almost everywhere. Trip from Zug to Luzern to Interlaken was nice, but poor for pictures because of haze and low clouds.

26 June

Got up early (6:30) to a beautiful bright (and dew-wet) morning. Bought tickets for the mountain railway and got on 8:42 train from Luzern to Wengen (uphill all the way at 5-10 mph). At Wengen we got off and walked five minutes to the sky tram to Männlich (50 people max per load). This took us well above tree and snow line to a point from where we walked to Kleine Scheidegg in about an hour, mostly gently downhill, one third to half the time in soft snow, up to 3 feet or so deep, otherwise on good foot path. Dixie and I got shoes and socks quite wet, children had boots on. Sun was warm and bright, and sky blue, with an odd cloud. Haze not bad. Beautiful views of Jungfrau, Silberhorn, and neighbouring mountains. Got some sunburnt noses, but no other damage. Wengen is a very quiet town except for tourism—town is not accessible by car, only by train or on foot. From Kleine Scheidegg back to Luzern by train (cog) via Wengen and back at camp at 1:45. Cost about fr 61 (about \$15). After lunch children swam at local pool. Karen got jumped on her face by the diving board, and all were hot and tired after the day's exercise.

27 June

On the road just after 9, stopped for some souvenirs and postcards in Lauterbrunnen., The 90 miles or so to Lausanne took until about 3 pm. On the way over the Jaun pass (1500 m) came through a roaring rain and hail storm, but at Lausanne it was scorching. Had been in the 90s for several days. Children had a nice swim in the pool near the camp. We missed the camp at Lausanne itself, and instead ended up at a Morges, 6-8 miles west. Nice camp, rated 1a, but very crowded. After supper a roaring thunderstorm came up, and for a while we were worried about the tent blowing away, but everything held together. When the wind died down, the rain came, and it rained all night as well as a good part of the next day. Had a long discussion with John and Joan Gregory. He is, by his own statements, a well-known composer and conductor of serious modern music. New to me, however. Of Italian background. Interesting to hear about the musician's life a bit.

28 June (Sunday)

Woke up early, to cackling of some children in a neighbouring tent, and more rain. Alternating hard and gentle rain until about 3 o'clock. Did not go to church—bad habit being acquired. Amused ourselves in the tent much of the time—thankful for big enough tent to do that.

In the afternoon went to Geneva, about 30 miles along freeway. In Geneva beautiful sunshine. After some searching found Reformation monument, near university. Had trouble getting in because the area was closed off for some children's program. Policemen spoke no English and I had trouble with their rapid French. Some other people were there also, and one policeman then he personally conducted us to the monument. Very impressive. Done by a Hungarian sculptor apparently. Looked for the UN building briefly, but failed to find it after driving along Geneva streets for some time, and decided to head back to camp. There the sun had come through the clouds again and the place looked more cheerful. Lausanne under sun-lit clouds looked beautiful at 8 o'clock. Interesting to note that all the cities that we have seen, or at least passed through, seem to be just ordinary places full of people, in spite of the pictures that the mind builds of the, through association with historic people or events, or for no good reason at all.

29 June

Left Lausanne and drove some 240 miles to Auxerre, about half of it on a toll road (8 francs for about 100 miles). Intermittent sun and cloud turned to pouring rain at Auxerre. Found the camp with little trouble, and set up the tent in the rain. Fairly soon thereafter the rain let up and only a few drops fell during the night. Camp was fair, with dirty washrooms, and well-stocked store. Cheap at fr. 6. Saw rolling and flat lands, some forest, and some ancient-looking farm buildings. Parts of toll road Paris-Lyon obviously quite new—our maps did not show them. Setting up the tent in rain is quite workable—glad we brought boots for the children to walk in the wet grass.

30 June

Left Auxerre for Paris (100 miles). All along toll road (fr 8). In Paris got off autoroute at wrong place, and after a quick tangle with Paris traffic got on autoroute again. After some looking found camping area in Bois de Boulogne, on shore of Seine, but were refused because of non-membership in AAA or RAC. Were directed to Versailles municipal campground ((fr 13.65) where we found a good place, even with washtub-size sinks for washing clothes. Talked with some Canadians (Ed Whyte from Ottawa—telephone man) who had just returned from the Philippines. Shopping in French is a bit hazardous but we got 'bifsteck haché' from the butcher, at fr 10 for 700 gram, and a 3-foot loaf of bread for fr 0.80—cheap. Good strawberries also for fruit salad. The Whytes rented a Fiat camper from Avis for \$22 per day. Included cooking and sleeping facilities for four. Unlimited mileage, but pay for gas. Not unreasonable.

1 July

Went sightseeing in Paris today. Train from Versailles to Paris-Montparnasse, then Metro to Tour Eiffel. Train round-trip fr. 16.80, metro 1.10 per trip per person (any distance). Climbed 365 steps to 1st étage of tower, then took lift to 2nd étage. Charge 1 fr for stairs, 2 fr for lift. Second étage less than halfway to top (lift charge to top 8 fr). Tower built 1887-9, 302 m high. Quite impressive. Nice view of Paris, but overcast and windy.

Afterwards took metro to Arc de Triomphe—amazed at the traffic on the Place de l'Étoile and the nimble-footed but sometimes confused-appearing traffic policeman. Dixie did some shopping around but bought little, and around 6 we went back to camp. First metro train was old and very noisy. A later one on rubber tires was new and very quiet. Back at camp everyone was tired, and after supper had a good night's rest.

2 July

Left Versailles about 10:30 for Boulogne. Took autoroute to Rouen (partly toll road), the good to fair two-lane, slow in places because of trucks, hills, and curves. Via Rouen the distance was longer than expected, about 200 miles, and we only reached Boulogne about 4:30. Strong cross- and partial head-winds did not help the driving any. Strong on-shore winds caused Hovercraft cancellation. We were booked for Friday but decided to try today. Were sent to boat for 5:45 which was full (everyone disappointed), but got on 7:45 boat for Dover. Had a fair meal on board before departing. Sea was rough, with high waves (children excited, behind lounge windows). Arrived Dover about 9:20 and soon found good camp site about 4 miles NE of Dover (Martin Mill). By about 10:45 of 11 we were all in bed. Camp was dry and warm and grassy, with just a slight breeze. Also cheap, at 9 shillings for the night. Children happy to be back in England, where they can read the signs. Left-hand driving no problem.

3 July

Got up rather late and packed up. This time everything had to go inside, but we managed with little trouble. First to Dover to return the hired things. Then for a look at Dover castle, one of the oldest around, up on a high hill (on the cliffs) overlooking Dover and the Port of Dover. In the distance France is visible. Very commanding position. Then on to Canterbury and a look at the huge cathedral. First lunch at Wimpy House, because the restaurants finished lunch at 2 and we arrived at 2:05. So hamburgers it was. But the place was clean, including the washroom, and the food was good. Strawberries were in season, at 2/6 a pound. Saw a crew of 20-25 picking in one field. Cathedral large and impressive, with much beautiful stained glass. Not at all busy (yet?). Difficult to photograph because of the nearness of other buildings. Then by about 4:30, off to London. Traffic on motorway heavy, going east. Saw two accidents. Struck by observation that fewer cars on English motorways drive as fast as Mercedes and MW in Germany and Citroen and Renault in France. Also, therefore, much less impatient light-flashing. However, more tendencies toward suicidal passing on two-lane roads. No 'ugly ducks', so prevalent in France and also in Holland.

From the outskirts of London called Chinnery's and arrived there about 7. Had a nice visit, with tea and sandwiches, etc. and left again about 9:10. Getting through London was relatively easy at this time but it still took 1.5 hours to reach the A40, and we reached home about 11:45, a good 2.5 hours from Chinnery's, and 2945 miles after leaving on June 9. Good to be home again.