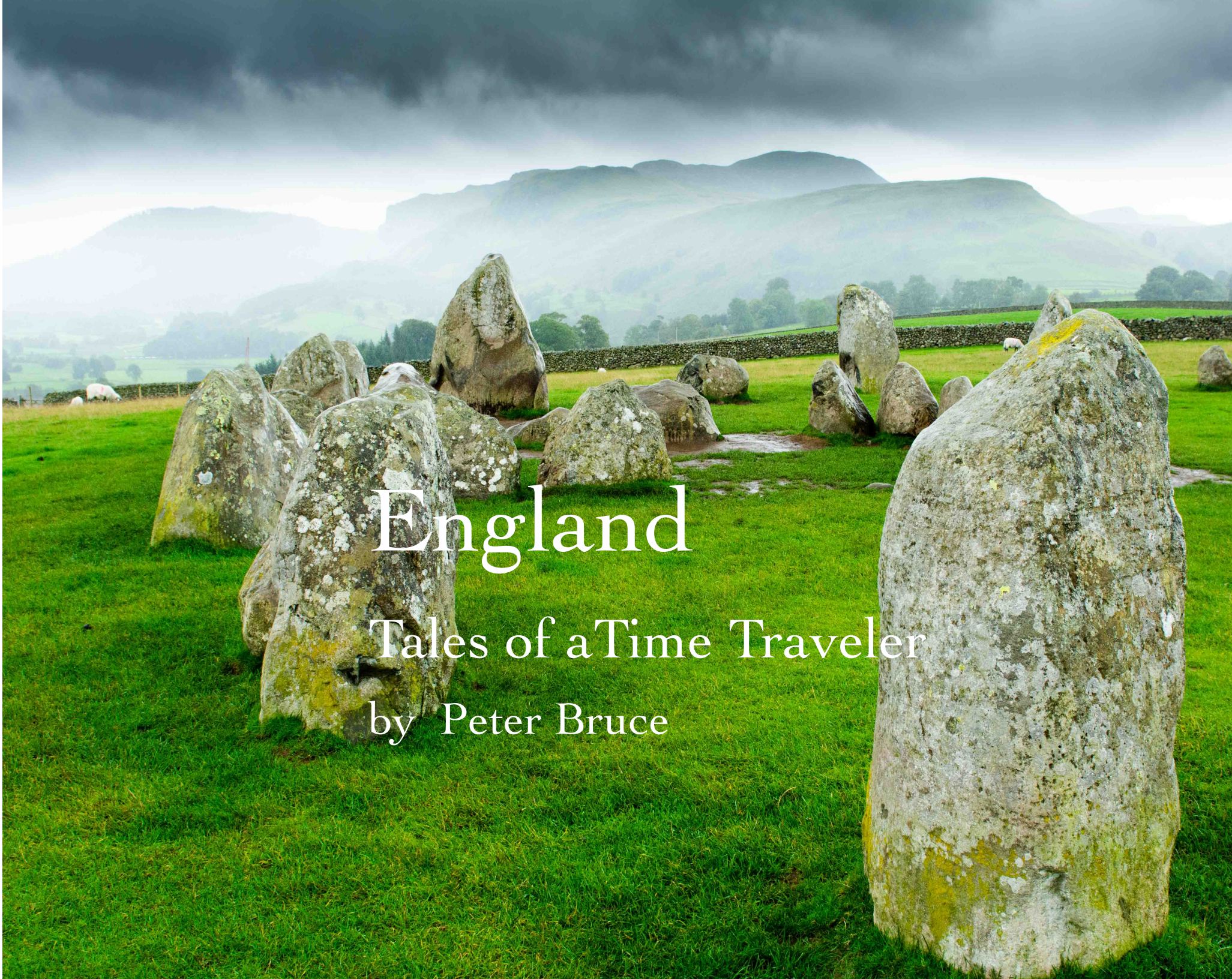

England

Tales of a Time Traveler

by Peter Bruce

Dedication

To you Randi – you who supports me, endures me and loves me.

You are a gift from the Gods. Thank you.

Acknowledgements

A huge thank you to my friend and editor Joanne Will whose writing skills and political acumen keep me on the right side (not Trump right) of propriety and kindness. — almost.

Copyright

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Why England?

Why not England? My wife Randi and I are from there. Well, not exactly. My parents were English; Randi's ancestors left England for the American colonies in 1630. But our roots are in England and they're deep, almost 900 years deep. Visiting England was a chance to see a country my ancestors called home, to learn something about the lives they led and the challenges they faced, perhaps tread in their very steps and maybe, just maybe, feel their presence.

Sleuthing For Stories

I'm a genealogist. Ah hell, that's a lie. My cousin John is a genealogist. My forté is copying John's hard work and passing it off as mine. I'm a dreamer, a romantic. Facts are good – the when and where of my people. But for me, stories are better. I want to know who my people were as people, what they did for a living, how they lived, the times in which they lived, their adventures, missteps, achievements and loves. I want to know their stories.

I like to think of travel as a state of mind or better yet, a way of being in the world – wide-eyed, inquisitive, accepting. If we bring those qualities along when we travel, we invite others to engage with us, befriend us. The universe provides; we grow richer. For that matter, why not be that person every day, be that traveler right in our own backyard – with our partner, family and friends?

Travel As Discovery

Travel, I find, is a great teacher, if I'm listening.

Travel reminds me that people are, at the heart of things, the same the world over. It has always been so. Parents everywhere rock their child to sleep, complain about their teenagers, and feel the joy of holding a grandchild. They aspire to a comfortable life, do good for others, leave a legacy, love their family and friends, complain about the neighbours, and argue over money and their in-laws. There is comfort in that -- comfort in knowing that I am part of a greater whole, the human community, comfort in understanding that we are indeed all one.

I must learn to slow down, engage with the people of a place. When we know something about a place's history and culture, when we've chatted with shopkeepers, talked politics in the pub, discovered something about the person sitting next to us on the bus, we add a depth, a richness to travel that a river cruise or another venue cannot replace. There is little substance for me in staring through the rain-streaked glass of a tour bus watching a country and its people swish by. I must connect to understand.

Travel In Your Own Backyard

Travel doesn't have to be exotic. Flying off to Katmandu or Timbuktu (no longer recommended for non-Islamists) sounds exciting (guaranteed at the latter) but the thrill you derive may not be more satisfying than visiting the neighbourhood of your childhood. Better yet, you get to come back. We can't all do that. Your childhood home might be on another continent; it might have been razed and redeveloped; or it might require time and/or money you don't have.

But if you can get there, consider it. Travel back in time. Are the places I knew as a child still there? Does lemon balm still grow among the Hamilton's shrubs? Do water skeets still live in the big ditch on 11th Street? And rats? Is the tree house still 25 feet up in the Favelle's Douglas fir? Is the ramshackle cottage of ancient and kindly Mrs.Trail still hidden behind the undergrowth? What of the sweet long grass behind Donnie's house where I lay on warm summer days? Or the rafters of Sharon's garage where I hid from an enraged man whose passenger door was mysteriously crushed by a flying boulder? What of huge Ghost Hall perched high among the trees, its three kindly spinsters, and the rank smell of must and decay when they opened the door? Or Goat Trail, the narrow rock ledge six terrifying feet above the forest floor in Leyland Park.

I've returned to my childhood town many times. The memories flood back as I idle the car down main street. There's the cop shop; remember the cells? And there's the fish shop with its tile walls, iced counter, the fresh smell of the ocean and the wide-eyed stares of ling cod and salmon. And there's Mr. Munn's laundry. And the Herrington's flower shop. Julie lived over there in that alley with her mum. There were little shops where that parking lot is. Shane lived above one of them with his rough, chain-smoking photographer dad. Down there was the Lions Gate Times where I stuffed flyers into newspapers for a paltry sum. And right there was the empty Hollyburn Theatre where my buds and I kept five cops busy for an hour hunting us down. Remember pretty Miss Middleton with the bright red lipstick who sold admission tickets in the booth – the one who rented our

bedroom downstairs and entertained men in the evenings to make 'ends meet.' She was nice; her stay was short.

Not all our memories of childhood are pleasant. Unhappy memories might arise too. Yet perhaps there is value in recalling them – a chance to let go of what cannot be changed, return to what can be changed and more fully appreciate what is.

Chance

Have you ever stopped to consider how some tiny decision on your part changed the course of your life? I have, and I've come to realize that my life IS the result of many small decisions, and not much more – decisions made by me as well as decisions made by others I've never met.

In 1925, the chocolate business started by my father's family went broke. Had it thrived (as it did in the hands of my mother's family) they would have remained in England and my father would not have met my mother in Canada. My mother would not have been in Canada had her brother not been blinded in one eye in an accident, prompting a family move to Canada where he could find a suitable occupation like farming. As it turned out, it was engineering. And if my mother and father had not met, chances are, you would be doing something else right now which might have brought you fame, fortune and the happiness you deserve. Not to be.

Thus, one begins to see how decisions, which may seem inconsequential at the time, even go unnoticed, can immensely impact your subsequent personal life and all the lives that flow from you. Indeed, every action, large or small, reverberates across society and through time. Serendipity shapes the world, for good or for bad, despite the best efforts of human beings to plan things otherwise.

The Three Roads

And that brings me to the matter of how we choose to travel. There are three ways to travel as I see it. The first way is the 'One Road Approach' that calls for establishing destination choice criteria, researching the options, making a Plan B, and creating a detailed itinerary. It takes months. Yet there is great comfort in knowing where one will spend the night, with whom, ("With me," says Randi) and where one will be between 10:30 and 10:45 the next morning.

The second way to travel is the 'Any Road Approach' favoured

by my son Robin, an inveterate traveler, who, when the urge strikes, stuffs a few items in a backpack just large enough to house my travel socks, and within the week, he's gone. Not for 2 weeks, for five months.

The more I travel, the more I think he's got it right, at least right in good measure, for despite my best laid plans, I (we) invariably end up in the same place as Robin anyway, with no plan or a plan in tatters. You see the plan just never works. A good chunk of it anyway. Stuff comes up, 'unexpected contingencies.' -- the two museums planned for Tuesday morning are swapped out for a long breakfast; the cathedrals do not allow photography; we can't find the venue (that's a big one); we eat up the time for two venues looking for a 'toilet' and when we find it, are obliged to spend another 30 minutes rounding up the 40 pence entry fee; and an evening we might have spent lingering in a quaint English pub is instead spent in bed…sleeping.

Furthermore, we can merrily plan a trip -- where we go, where we stay and what we do when we get there. However, if we haven't been there before, it's all a craps shoot, isn't it? We never know what we're in for until we get there. In the split second that it takes to click 'Submit' on the sign-up form, we are at the mercy of the universe. It may take us to a joyful place; it may not. But wherever it takes us, we're in for the ride.

Thus, struggle as we might to design and orchestrate our lives, we are in the hands of a greater power. There is no escaping it. We might just as well go with the flow and let serendipity whisk us into the magical world of the unexpected. "Fine," says my good wife, "but at 4:30 sharp, I take my bra off and pick up my book." That could be interesting.

There is a third way to travel: the Middle Road Approach. The Middle Road Approach calls for making a plan. It does not require one to stick to it. The tricky bit is accommodations that, for places in high demand like Britain and the Continent, need to be booked well in advance. That limits your 'in the moment' options to hotels and to outfits like booking.com which sometimes allow cancellations with full refund within days of check-in. Accommodation aside, though, the rest could and in my growing view, should be up for grabs when you get there. By allowing who you meet, how you feel and what you bump into to dictate your itinerary, your visit in all likelihood will become a real adventure. The Middle Road Approach is the one we took on this trip, not because we wisely chose it but because the universe chose it for us ... on Day 1.

I'm learning to 'go with the flow,' to let go of the plan when

sticking with it subtracts from the adventure. I'm learning to treat my Great Plan as a guideline, even as a point of departure from which the Great Adventure will unfold as it will, growing here, shrinking there, adjusting to whim and circumstance.

In This Book

This book is part travelogue (an odd one at that) and part time machine. My wife Randi and I travel to England for the first time where we explore the haunts of our ancestors, enjoying 'what is' today and pondering 'what was' in days gone by.

It is also about the capacity of serendipity to render our plans useless. The point is that all of it — the stuff that should have been and was, the stuff that should have been and didn't happen and the stuff that happened that was unexpected — IS the travel experience. All of it is grand.

WARNING

Reading this is the equivalent of digesting the travelogue version of War and Peace. It is suitable only for the retired, the un-employed, road maintenance personnel and advisors to Donald Trump -- people with copious amounts of time on their hands who view reading this as an opportunity to put off waxing the car.

So put together a ham sandwich, a glass or two of wine (hell, bring the bottle), grab some overnight gear and head for the recliner. This could take a while.

Part 1: The Northeast

Yorkshire

Gatwick to York

York and Yorkshire

The Papal Pinch

Quakers

The Indomitable Mary Fisher

Tanning

Ships

Rail!

Gatwick to York

WestJet found Gatwick Airport, just south of London where it's been for a good long time. We found the washroo...uh, the toilets. The One Road Approach called for us to go first to York, then move counter clockwise around England, arriving back in London where we would stay for a week. In total, we'd be in England for 23 days.

Yup, we'd be on the move, all right. No time to dally on the beach at Brighton or surf the curlers in Cornwall. There were landscapes to see, people to meet, villages to wander, a thousand years of history to uncover, friends and ancestors to visit and all of it, to capture in photos.

York it was. But how to get there? I had the train tickets, I'd plotted the steps and estimated times. What I didn't yet know was that the devil lay waiting in the detail. Indeed, the devil would be our travel companion.

It's a bit of a trek to York. It's tucked away in the northeast corner of England. Although by Canadian standards, the distance is hardly notable. It takes under 3 hours to drive there from London, the same time it takes me to drive on Vancouver Island from Victoria, where I live, to Courtenay. If you drove the length of Vancouver Island one way, you would have covered the distance from London to York and back to London again.

The real challenge in getting to York is to clear customs at Gatwick Airport in a timely way, catch a train into London's St Pancras Station, find King's Cross Station nearby, validate your train tickets, find the right platform, the right train at the right time, the right car and the right seat and sit on it, ideally before it departs. We did so with a great deal of running about like headless chickens and had little time to spare.

Trains are a quick and painless way to travel in Britain. It's because they endure no roundabouts; it's A to B as the crow flies. Although their average speed ranges between 95 and 105

kilometres per hour, they can reach speeds of 210 kilometres per hour. British commercial trains are another animal. Maximum speeds for them run to 300 kilometres per hour and 400 kilometres per hour for Maglev trains. Magnetic Levitation trains do away with conventional wheels and track and use powerful magnets to minimize friction by suspending the train above its guide. Fascinating, eh?

Three seats down and across the aisle from us was a woman who believed she was still in her office. For the first two hours of the trip, the entire car was treated to the inner workings of her job. She was on the blower, at full volume, non-stop. One woman, who apparently could take no more, moved to another car; the rest didn't seem bothered. Perhaps they were all Yorkies heading home and that's just how Yorkies talk. Certainly, she herself was not bothered. I did ponder inquiring with the conductor as to whether they still had open cars at the rear of the train where social misfits could wail into the wind with abandon. Ah, but we Canadians don't complain; we grumble beneath our breath.

York appeared at the end of the line precisely on time at 4:47pm. Had I looked closely, I might have seen train spotters on the platform, clicking their stopwatches at the exact moment the train's wheels came to a halt, then penning an entry into their little black books, disappointed perhaps, that they had failed again to catch out the rail service. I did see the train spotters later. They were chatting over coffee in a rail platform cafe, debating the best routes to get from Huffington to Pough Corner.

York, Yorkshire

York and Yorkshire

We rolled our baggage along the platform with the half-hearted energy of new arrivals thinking 'what now?' "It's an easy 20 minute walk to our digs." I said to Randi. I had plotted a route and calculated the time. It pays to plan. "Which way?" she replied. Well, how should I know, said I very much to self. I've never been here. Boldly, I pronounced "This way."

It was a 'hither and yon' adventure, the first of many on this trip. We left the station by the front door, which seemed reasonable, except it was the back door we needed. Like lost dogs, we wandered the streets, asking the way from sequential good Samaritans, retracing our steps, consulting Google maps. By the time we turned the key at 45 County House, twenty minutes had become two hours. There are times when having the name 'Brrruce' is a distinct liability, or more to the point, being married to one. "Aghh, Mr Brrruce. Hail a cab next time, ya cheap jock."

If you ask a Londoner if he's ever visited York, he'll likely reply "What for?" or "Where is it?" or "No time." It's not that they're down on Northerners, they're just caught up with being a Londoner. A good number of Northerners, on the other hand, have a firm view of Londoners that is less than admiring. In a 2013 poll, 42% of Northerners held a low opinion of Londoners, one percent more than the Scots even and much more than the rest of the UK. Yet only 28% of Londoners thought less of Northerners, possibly because they had never given a thought to anything more North-ish than the Manchester United, so how could they think poorly of folks they knew nothing about?

The animosity of the North for Londoners is summed up in this popular Yorkshire joke:

A Yorkshire farmer see's a bloke drinking from his stream & shouts,

"Ey up cock! Tha dun wanna be drinkin watta frm theer, it's full o hoss piss an cow shite".

The man says "I say old chap, I'm up from London. Just here for

a few days of touring. Might I ask you to speak a bit slower please".

The farmer replies "IF-YOU-USE-TWO-HANDS-YOU-WON'T-SPILL-ANY!"

Yorkies, much as they'd like to, have hardly cornered the market on English wit. Londoners are not slow to rebut:
A general inspecting troops in Hampshire ordered the parade to don gas masks. He paused opposite a northern soldier. Pointing to the eyepiece of his respirator, he inquired: "Soldier, where is your anti-mist?" Don't know Sir" came the reply" Think she's oop with Uncle Albert in Oldam."

Where was I? Ah yes, Yorkshire. It is by far the largest county in England, although three of them will fit on Vancouver Island where I live. At least the land will fit; the Yorkies will not. They are a bawdy lot, loud spoken and opinionated, frugal and proud, and as full of fun and kind-heartedness as one could find anywhere – provided of course that you don't wear a red rose on your jersey to footy matches or hail from London.

Who Let Them In?

Things were fairly peaceful in the days when Celts controlled Yorkshire. Then the Romans came in 43 AD and shook things up. Here's the thing: when the Romans come to your neck of the woods they typically don't knock on the first tree. They knock the trees down and use the wood to build a massive house smack dab in the middle of your neighbourhood. Then they come calling – house to house, to get acquainted.

I'm just guessing now, but when a phalanx of highly trained soldiers wearing head to foot armour and holding spears behind an impenetrable wall of shields halts in perfect unison at your door, it would give you pause for thought. My thought is that one would quickly find a soft spot for the newcomers and invite them in for dinner. That they did…and like boorish guests the Romans overstayed, for four hundred years. By the late fourth century, Rome was rapidly losing its grip and by the early fifth century they had left England forever.

For two hundred years the Celts and the Angles happily filled the vacuum left by the Romans until the arrival of a new top gun – the Vikings from Denmark and later Norway.

Yorkshire folks thought they knew something about strong-minded intruders. The Romans had meant business. If you met a Roman century on a country road, you likely wouldn't stop to

chat; you'd run for the nearest copse and lay low. But if you came face to face with a horde of screaming Vikings with descriptive names like Eric the Bloodaxe and Bjorn the Skullcleaver, chances are you would simply shit yourself on the spot and stand there, jaw in hand, until one of them lived up to their family name.

In this way, the Vikings took over a large swath of northern and central England and called it the Kingdom of Jorvik (thus York). For a hundred years, Vikings with anger management issues hung out in England until the locals finally said "This is ridiculous," and kicked them out.

The Normans

Next came the Normans who were actually Vikings who had forgotten they were Vikings. They were Vikings with a difference. The Normans had completed therapy, quelled their anger issues and learned to use their brains more than their reproductive gear.

The Normans were the new Romans. They rapidly built hundreds of large stone castles that served as bases to suppress rebels and control the land. The Normans never left. They just became the new fabric upon which the tapestry of England would be woven for centuries to come.

Those centuries passed. There were more hardships and wars – the Great Famine of 1315-1322, the Black Death of 1348-1349 that killed one third of the population, the Wars of the Roses in the 1400s, the English Civil War of 1642-1651, and multiple foreign wars before and after including the Crusades, the Hundred Years War, two World Wars and the Great Depression. There you have it – one thousand years of "I never said that." "Yes you did, just now." "No I never." "Yes you did..."

York Today

Back to 2018. York is a fortified town, that is, it is (or was), surrounded by a wall, significant remnants of which survive today and can be walked. Inside the wall is the old town, where lie all


BOAT TRIPS

the interesting venues for tourists, notably the cathedral known as Yorkminster and the Shambles, a fabulous and quaint medieval neighbourhood filled with pubs, eateries, boutiques, hotels in period conversions, 18th century government buildings, gardens and museums. The entire area can be walked from any side to the other in twenty minutes. Car traffic is light and limited to people with business within the walls. Everyone else walks and rides bikes.

Our lodging was just outside the city walls in an 18th century hospital conversion. It is a stone three story Georgian structure called County House. It suited us perfectly. Just inside the front door of County House on the wall to the right is a plaque with the names of the donors who contributed the capital to build it.

These were the days before income tax when all major non-military expenditures were underwritten by the good graces of the wealthy. On the plaque was a Dr. William Richardson, probably a relative of mine, as the Richardsons of our family hailed from Yorkshire. Did he work in this hospital 150 years ago, walk in the room in which we slept?

Villages in the North York Moors, Yorkshire

Goathland, North York Moors, Yorkshire

The Papal Pinch

On our third and last day in Yorkshire (we could easily have stayed three weeks), we boarded a tour bus and headed for the North York Moors and the little town of Whitby on the east coast. It would be an eight hour day. That was my frustration limit for photos forgone to meet a schedule.

Guuisborough, about an hour's drive north of York, had been on my 'must see' list, but there simply wasn't time and the reason for going had become less than compelling. There was a derelict cathedral there built by King Robert the Bruce, to whom I must somehow be related. The hope was that if I stood within the walls of this 13th century structure, I would assuredly be struck through the heart by a bolt of spiritual connectedness and the king and I would be soul-mates forever.

Then too, somewhere in Guisborough was my rellie, Sir Thomas Chaloner (1559-1615). Now there was an interesting man. The Chaloners had Welsh roots which went back a thousand years. Princes and princesses lay in their family tree. Their expansive estate in Guisborough was a gift from King James I for the military support Thomas's father, also Thomas Chaloner, had provided in a successful campaign against the Scots.

Thomas was well educated and intellectual, and possessed a magnetic, affable personality and a noble bearing which allowed him to move in high circles. He was a favourite of King James I, who paid Thomas a princely sum for overseeing the education of his son, Prince Henry, Prince of Wales.

In 1580, Thomas began making extended trips to Italy where he socialized with the nobility and with the learned men of the age. On his return, he quickly became a court favourite and married into an influential family.

On one of his trips to Italy, he visited the alum works in the Papal States. Alum was an economically important commodity in the day and Italy not only had high quality alum, it had plenty of it. It was used for curing leather, for medicinal purposes and as a dye fixative in cloth.

The pope was no fool. He understood market economics. If you own all of something and everybody wants it, you will very quickly become filthy rich. He did — own it all and become filthy rich.

Thomas had a cousin, also Thomas Chaloner (imagine the confusion at family gatherings!), who was a naturalist and student of geology. Thomas the naturalist had noticed that where alum deposits lie, a particular clay is found and that the leaves of the trees which grow there are discoloured. He also discovered that there were several instances of this correlation on the Chaloner's Guisborogh estate. In other words, they had the alum. They just needed to know how to process it and they would make themselves fabulously rich.

As legend has it, when Sir Thomas visited the alum mine in Italy, he convinced two key mine workers (with hard, cold cash in hand) to hide in barrels and return with him to England where the men would set up an alum processing plant. When the Pope was informed of the ruse, he was outraged, issued a curse on Thomas and excommunicated him.

Setting up the processing plant had its challenges, but in time the alum flowed out and the money flowed in. Regretfully, when King Charles I noticed just how much money the Chaloners were making, he took over the operation, earning for himself a banquet hall full of dough and a special place in the hearts of the Chaloners. Still, they needn't have fussed. Like sulphurous gas from a volcanic cauldron, poetic justice has a way of rising above the surface. In this case, it was the people of England who arose and dumped Charles into the Tower of London.

When the leg-shackled king shuffled into court, took his place in the witness box, then looked up to face his trial judges, his heart must have skipped a beat. One of them was Thomas Chaloner, son of Thomas, the courtier and, as it turned out, signator of his death warrant. Charles just lost it — you know, his head. Alum was in Britain to stay.

Sir Thomas Chaloner (1559-1615)
10th Great Grandfather

Sir Thomas Chaloner (1559-1615)
10th Great Grandfather

Quakers

The story of my mother's family in Britain is as much about the inspiring lives of the people I recount as it is about the religion to which they subscribed, the Religious Society of Friends, or Quakers. For I have no doubt that their unwavering moral compass and the mutual support they afforded each other within their religious community served as the essential foundation upon which their remarkable endeavours were realized.

As our trip of England begins and with it, my foray into the family tree, allow me if you will to give a brief primer on this group of people who did so much to drag the western world out of the dark ages and into the light.

I am not a religious man. Indeed, I abhor organized religions for the grief they have brought and continue to bring to this planet. Yet I make repeated references in this book to the Quakers. The reasons are twofold. Firstly, for three hundred fifty years, my mother's family was largely Quaker and thus I have a vested interest in learning about it. Secondly, the Quakers in my view are worthy of honouring for the astonishing amount of social reform that they were instrumental in bringing about at the cost of much heartache to themselves. So it is my considerable admiration for Quaker principles and social action (they put their money and their sweat where their mouth was) which brings me to speak of them here.

My mother's extended family lived all over England and , with the odd exception, they were all Quakers. They had deep Irish roots too, in Dublin, Belfast, Limerick and Cork. They were close-knit — they married, socialized and worshiped within the Quaker community — and they were all committed to providing not just social relief, but far-sighted social change.

In the 1600s, there was growing unrest among commoners over the wealth, power and dominance of the Protestant Church. These 'non-conformists' were losing the faith in increasing numbers -- enough to be seen as a threat by the establishment. They were heavily persecuted and, routinely prosecuted – their animals, crops and lands were confiscated, their backs were

lashed unmercifully and many were imprisoned. Some languished in dungeons for years, some never returned. In the early days, Quakers were obliged to hold clandestine meetings in a member's home, taking the chance that neighbours would not report them.

By the 18th century, persecution was more limited to constraints on what a Quaker could do for a living. They could not hold public office, teach in the universities or work in the military or clergy (nor would they). This, as it happened, served them well, for it required them to make a living as merchants, craftsmen, educators, inventors, industrialists and scientists. Make a living they did. As the Industrial Revolution gained steam, Quaker businesses became renowned for innovation, quality and fairness, and they thrived accordingly. Quakers married within the Quaker community and Quaker businesses collaborated for mutual gain. They were devoted to their faith that called them to live a life of integrity, worship, hard work and community service. Our Yorkshire Quakers were no exception.

Although many of these entrepreneurial Quakers became wealthy, they never forgot their religious commitment to serve the community – not just the Quaker community that required little help, but the community-at-large. This was not an obligation; it was a strongly-held devotion.

During the Irish potato famine of the 1840s, Quakers were on the streets of Dublin, Belfast, Limerick and Cork, operating daily soup kitchens that kept many from death's door. Quakers lobbied for prison reform (Elizabeth Fry), the cessation of press-ganging and child labour, better working conditions in the factories and on ships, the abolition of slavery and equality for women, including the vote. Quakers were, I believe, the most progressive, effective, comprehensive, intractable force for social reform in the western world , ever (and in their early days of proselytizing, probably the most insufferable).

Quakers valued education and educated with values. For hundreds of years, they built and operated their own schools, seven of which, continue to operate in England today. Contrary to the harsh, rote learning approach to education taken by mainstream school teachers, Quaker teachers encouraged, inspired, invited discussion and spared no resources to provide their students with an exceptional education.

Mary Fisher

In December of 1651, in the small town of Selby, Yorkshire, a man gave a talk to the Tomlinson family. Invited to listen was their indentured serving maid Mary Fisher (27). The man was George Fox who several years prior, had begun to preach his new religion, later known as Quakerism. George was a year younger than Mary, affable, magnetic and well-spoken.

Mary listened intently and by the end of the talk she had committed her life to the cause of spreading the word of Fox's simpler, individually defined way of relating to God.

Mary lost no time with her quest. Within the year she was imprisoned in York Castle for 'speaking to a priest.' She remained there for 16 months.

Following her release in the autumn of 1653, Mary and Ann Austin, a 50 year old mother of five, arrived at Cambridge University where they admonished the students of the seminary for choosing a life in a church filled with privilege and corruption. The incensed Mayor William Pickering demanded the Constable to "whip them at the Market Cross till the blood ran down their bodies."

Mary was on a roll. Within two months she was again imprisoned, this time in Castle Garth, York, where she was thrown in with 60 Dutch prisoners of war. The men soon made threatening sexual advances. But the courage shown by Mary and the other Quaker prisoners so moved both the prisoners and their gaolers that they ceased to harass them.

When Mary was again released she set her sights on spreading the word of Quakerism abroad. In 1655, she and her companion Ann Austin boarded a ship in London and became the first Quakers to arrive on the shores of Barbados. Their conversion attempts were not well received by the largely Anglican residents, many of whom were too busy cavorting and drinking good Barbados rum to listen. And I'm guessing that most of them were not of a mind to free their slaves who allowed them the

luxury to drink and cavort. However, Mary and Ann did manage to convert the Lieutenant-Governor.

After a brief stay, they must have decided that Barbadians were a hopeless cause and that discretion was the better part of valour, for they sailed for New England. Their ship, the Swallow, docked in Boston, Massachusetts Bay Colony on the 11th of July, 1656. Word had reached authorities earlier that the women were coming and they were immediately imprisoned without food, water or visitors.

In the last half of the seventeenth century witch-hunts had become common practice in both England and New England. At its peak in England (1645-1647) over a hundred people (largely women) were put to death; in New England, thirteen women and two men were executed in the witch-hunts of 1647 to 1663. In the Salem trials of 1692-1693 20 more were put to death; five died in prison.

The two women, suspected of being witches, were intimately examined for any sign. A mole or any unusual mark on their skin would be a death sentence. None were found. For five weeks, they were imprisoned. Mary and Ann survived only through the kindness shown by the elderly owner of a Boston inn, Nicholas Upsall, who through bribes, brought the women food and water. The captain of the Swallow was ordered to return the women to Barbados. From there, they found their way back to England.

What happened to Ann at that point, we don't know. But for Mary, this was merely a test run. She next decided that the entire Muslim world was needful of enlightenment and that the quickest way to convert the unwashed millions of the Ottoman Empire was to convert their leader, Sultan Mehmed IV, aka 'The Warrior.'

After a lengthy sea voyage, Mary and her five companions arrived at Leghorn (Livorno), northwest Italy. There she sought the help of the English Consul to arrange an audience with the Sultan. The consul quickly realized that such a meeting could result in political disaster for England, in no small measure because the English navy had just the previous year sunk nine of the Sultan's ships, and too, that Quaker zeal was likely not a good match with Muslim propriety. The consul suggested that her quest was perhaps, unwise. Undaunted, Mary persisted until the harangued official relented; arrangements were made for Mary and her companions to board a ship then in the harbour that would take them to the Sultan.

Once underway, Mary discovered that she was the victim of a ruse; the ship was heading only for Venice. However, en route, a terrible storm drove the vessel well to the east of Greece. Mary saw an opportunity. She arranged with the captain for her group to disembark at Zante in the Greek islands. Mary had learned that the Sultan was not in Constantinople; he and his army were encamped at Adrianople on the modern day border with Greece. At Zante, the party of Quakers went separate ways, leaving Mary to make her way to Adrianople alone. For four or five weeks she walked through Greece, Macedonia and over the mountains of Thrace, relying on the freely given generosity of Greek peasants for food.

In the autumn of 1657, just prior to Mary's arrival at Adrianople, the Sultan had decided to move his capital from Constantinople, a place he loathed and feared for its disloyal and mutinous elements, to Adrianople. With him came his court and his 20,000 man army, now camped on the outskirts of the city. Two thousand tents were arranged in circles along the banks of the River Moritza. It was a dazzling display of power. In the centre were the sumptuous, gold-embroidered tents of the Sultan and his Grand Vizier. The Grand Visier was the Sultan's chief council and overseer until the young man reached the age of majority. He was but sixteen at the time. These central tents together constituted a fabric castle complete with administrative offices, accommodation for pages, summer houses and of course, lavish dwellings for the Sultan and Grand Vizier. The opulence and magnificence of it all took the breath away.

The immediate challenge for Mary was to convince the Grand Vizier, Kiipriilli the Elder, revered and feared chieftain of the Albanians, to grant her an audience with the Sultan. Kiiprilli was elevated to Grand Vizier to carry out an agenda. His task was to return stability to the Ottoman Empire. It was crippled with internecine struggles, failed foreign campaigns and a demoralized army. Kiilpiili was a strong governor and a man of ruthless reputation. During his five years in office, Kiilpriili had 36,000 influential persons summoned to Constantinople and quietly strangled. By the end of the purge, not a man remained in the empire that could or would offer resistance to the Sultan.

There is no record of Mary's interview with Kiilpiili. What we do know is that he heard her out, then advised the young king to grant her an audience. The following day, Mary, aged 35, was ushered into the throne room with all the pomp and ceremony of a visiting Ambassador. Ranks of servants, guards, eunuchs and

pages surrounded the Sultan, all dressed in a splendour of gold-embroidered coats and feathered caps.

Amidst this riot of gold and scarlet stood Mary, dressed in a simple grey frock, her countenance quiet, her deportment confident, her face filled with intelligence, intention and the presence of God.

Mary was received by the Sultan with kindness and deference -- a sharp contrast to the treatment she had borne at the hands of her countrymen. In the way of Quakers, Mary said nothing, waiting for the inward light to guide her words. There was an awkward silence. The Sultan offered to dismiss his courtiers, that Mary might feel more disposed to speak. She declined and at length, when the light came to her, Mary conveyed her message.

All in the room listened carefully and with gravity until she was done. Then she asked the Sultan if he had understood her message. He replied “Yes, every word of what you have said is truth.” He invited her to stay in Turkey, and when she declined, he offered her an escort to Constantinople, for the journey was treacherous. Again she declined and made her own way unimpeded.

There can be no doubt that this plucky young woman, Mary Fisher, with her unwavering determination, courage and devotion inspired countless people across centuries to convert and advance the Quaker cause.

Tanning

Our tour bus wound down and down off the heights of the North York Moors as we edged our way towards Whitby on Yorkshire's east coast. There are no shoulders on these roads and no second chances. If you want to be home for dinner, you had best pay attention. As we neared Whitby, we passed through the little village of Great Ayton. It was here in the early 1700s that Captain James Cook (1728-1779) spent the latter years of his childhood.

William Richardson

When Cook's family arrived, the Richardsons had been farming the area for one hundred years. They were well landed and well off. Young James Cook left Great Ayton for the history books, but the Richardsons remained. William Richardson (1660-1740) decided to supplement his farming income by tanning leather.

The word 'tanning' today conjures up images of lying on a tropical white sand beach or less appealing, in a proprietor's well-lit coffin-like box in the midst of a Canadian winter. However, in the 1800s and for twenty thousand years before that, tanning meant something entirely different.

Leather then was widely used for personal wear, harnesses, and hardware and in large quantities for fitting out sailing ships and factories. The new endeavour went well and all three of William's sons became tanners. Generations of sons grew the tanning business at several locations, the largest and most successful of which was on the River Tyne and known as E&J Richardson (est. 1863). The factory was huge.

On The Ropes

By the turn of the century, however, the tanning industry, like the sailing ships it serviced, was on the ropes. The Richardsons moved on to other things. Today, Hugh and Tom Richardson of Northumberland, have a thriving ice cream business. From the hides of dead cows to the cream of live cows. Nice.

John Richardson Wigham

The tannery Richardson's adapting to changing times is no surprise. Indeed, as often as they were obliged to adapt, it seems they were the force of change itself. Take the case of John Richardson Wigham (1829-1906), a Richardson on his mother's side. John was a Scottish lighthouse engineer and a Quaker, of course. John's mother died when he was one. At 15, John apprenticed under his brother-in-law, Joshua Edmundson of Dublin, Ireland. The company worked iron, founded brass and offered gas generation plants. Then, in 1848, Joshua died. Aged 19, John took over the business. He focused on building improved gas plants and the enterprise flourished.

Marine Applications

John's Richardson relatives built ships on the Clyde, which gave John the idea to develop brighter buoys and eventually, brighter lighthouse lights. By 1868, the Wigham lighthouse light was 13 times brighter than any other light then known. In 1870, a clock mechanism was added, which, when combined with a revolving lens, created the world's first lighthouse with a group flashing characteristic. Edmundson and Co. had entered the world stage.

Other inventions followed - better oil lamps, gas-lights, electric lights, gas-powered fog signals, buoys and acetylene lighting. John died in 1906, hard at work on a new innovation.

Eliza Wigham: Women's Rights

True to their Quaker beliefs, his sister Eliza Wigham was a leading Edinburgh figure in the Scottish campaigns for women's rights and abolition. For his life-saving accomplishments, John was twice offered a knighthood. In keeping with the Quaker abhorrence of titles, he twice declined.

Rail!

Tom, our tour guide, had given us an hour to poke around Whitby, a lovely little fishing port where the Richardsons, for generations, once flourished in both tanning and shipbuilding. Tom gave us a choice to either hop back on the bus or take the Whitby to Pickering steam train to Pickering where he'd pick us up. It was not really a choice.

Tickets in hand, we waited on the station platform until The Northlander, with its seven carriages rolled into the station, let out an enormous hiss and stopped. There is something magical about trains, especially steam trains. Perhaps it's a guy thing, although I noted that everyone on the platform, men, women and children, seemed tickled to be there. I was. Fifty minutes in a time machine. How good is that?

The Northlander ambled along through the valleys of South Yorkshire, skimming the edges of occasional small villages, crossing pretty creeks, garnering little attention from the locals.

Anxious to take pictures, I left my seat and walked forward to the debarking platform where I could reach through the window in the door and shoot the loco and cars as they arced around curves. My mind wandered to September 27, 1825. It was opening day for the Stockton and Darlington Railway (S&DR), a day for the history books, for it was the world's first public railway to use steam locomotives. The objective, of course, was to make money by moving coal from the collieries of County Durham (North Yorkshire) to ports on the east coast. There, colliers, coal carrying sailing ships, many built by Wigham Richardson, would transport it to market, notably London.

The public had been invited to go for a ride. Seating for 300 had been installed in a dozen coal waggons. Six hundred turned up, stuffing the seated wagons, additional empty wagons and the wagons filled with coal. They were off. A man on horseback waving a flag led the way. Smoke and steam belched from Locomotive No.1 and on the gentle downslope, the remarkable speed of 12 miles per hour was reached.

Men on horseback galloping alongside could not keep up and fell away. Then something else fell away — a wheel on the wagon carrying the surveyors and engineers. The wagon was

promptly removed and off they went again. Then repairs on the locomotive were required, a 35 minute stop. In two hours, travelling at an average speed of 8 mph, the train reached the Darlington Junction where ten thousand people were waiting to greet them. That evening, 102 people gathered at the Town Hall to celebrate the extraordinary achievement.

Getting to opening day had been a challenge, to say the least. Quaker Edward Pease was the major promoter of the railway. He issued shares promising a five percent return on investment. Two-thirds of the shares were sold locally and the remaining shares were purchased by Quakers across England.

Building the railway required the consent of Parliament. A private bill was presented but failed, as the proposed route passed through the Earl of Eldon's estate and one of the Earl of Darlington's fox coverts. A new route was proposed which satisfied the earls, but not Viscount Barrington whose estate the alternate route transgressed.

The challenges continued but one by one were surmounted by Pease who drove the project forward. The S&DR received Royal Assent on 19 April 1821. The terms: anyone could use the railway with their own suitably built vehicles on payment of a toll; the line must be closed at night and land owners within five miles of the line could build branches and make junctions. The S&DR became known as "the Quaker line" and Edward Pease, in some circles, was referred to as the 'father of railways.'

This really was the beginning of the Age of Railways in Britain. More railways built by others followed; new industries were born in iron and steel and locomotive manufacturing, and railway mapping and industries which depended on the efficient transportation of their goods, flourished.

The day before our steam train ride to Pickering, we had visited the incomparable National Railway Museum in York. I had a field day, spending hours shooting British locomotives representing a century and a half of improvements. Among them was 'The Rocket,' designed by George Stephenson in 1829. Stephenson was Pease's engineer partner and the technical genius behind the S&DR project. The Rocket brought together several innovations which made it the most advanced locomotive of its time and served as the template for locomotive manufacturing for the next 150 years.


THE
MOORLANDER
80136
33
A
GENTLEME

Waiting for the train

Stephenson's 'Rocket', an improved version of Locomotive 1

Volunteers carry out all operations of the railway

Ships

John Wigham Richardson (1837-1908)

John Wigham Richardson was born in Newcastle-On-Tyne to Quakers Edward Richardson and Jane Wigham. He attended Bootham School in York, famous for its high quality education based on Quaker values. John's nephew, Charles Merz, pioneered electricity distribution, inventing the concept of synchronized grids now used world-wide.

The family business was leather tanning, however John's interest was shipbuilding. He apprenticed first as a draftsman, then in steam tug construction. In 1860, at age 23, John started his own shipyard, Neptune Works (known widely as Wigham Richardson), with a loan from his father. His was one of the first shipyards to build steel ships. As a pacifist Quaker, John did not build vessels for the British Navy.

In true Quaker fashion, the shipyard's steam engine also powered the neighbourhood's electric lights. As well, John's concern for his worker's well-being led him to found the Worker's Benevolent Trust, a precursor to trade unions. In his latter years, John left the Quaker faith and became an Anglican, probably because of pressure from his business partner, Swan Hunter, to bid on lucrative Admiralty contracts.

The first ship built was the 65 foot paddle steamer Victoria, used as a ferry carrying passengers, carts and livestock. As years past, Wigham Richardson's ship-building experience grew with the size and complexity of the ships they built. At the same time, they built marine engines which they used in the ships they constructed and which they sold to other yards on the Tyne and across Europe.

Wigham Richardson went on to build all manner of ships. In 1888, after 28 years in business, they built a four-masted, twin-funnelled ship, 408 feet long, with accommodations for 1040 passengers. From 1895 to 1901 the yard was expanded to 18 acres, allowing the construction of 12 freighters.

The company's timing was exquisite. They got in on the ground floor of steam-driven steel ship building at a time when there was a high demand for efficient marine travel for both cargo and passengers on coastal and trans-oceanic routes. As well, it was a time of mass migration and a desire by the wealthy to travel in

style. Large ocean-going vessels with unimaginable amenities became both essential and avant garde. By the early 1900s, however, Wigham Richardson found itself unable to advance to the high-in-demand, lucrative liner contracts. It had the expertise, yet It simply could not raise the capital alone.

The Mauretania

The issue was resolved in 1903 when Wigham Richardson merged with Britain's other large ship-builder, Swan and Hunter. The merger was specifically designed to allow the companies to jointly bid on the contract to build the super liner Mauretania for the Cunard Line. Their bid was successful and the new company Swan Hunter Wigham Richardson went on to build many more ships. Between 1906 and 1912 Swan Hunter Wigham Richardson was in its prime, producing the largest tonnage of ships in the world. In 1907, the company's output in tonnage accounted for **15% of the world's shipping.**

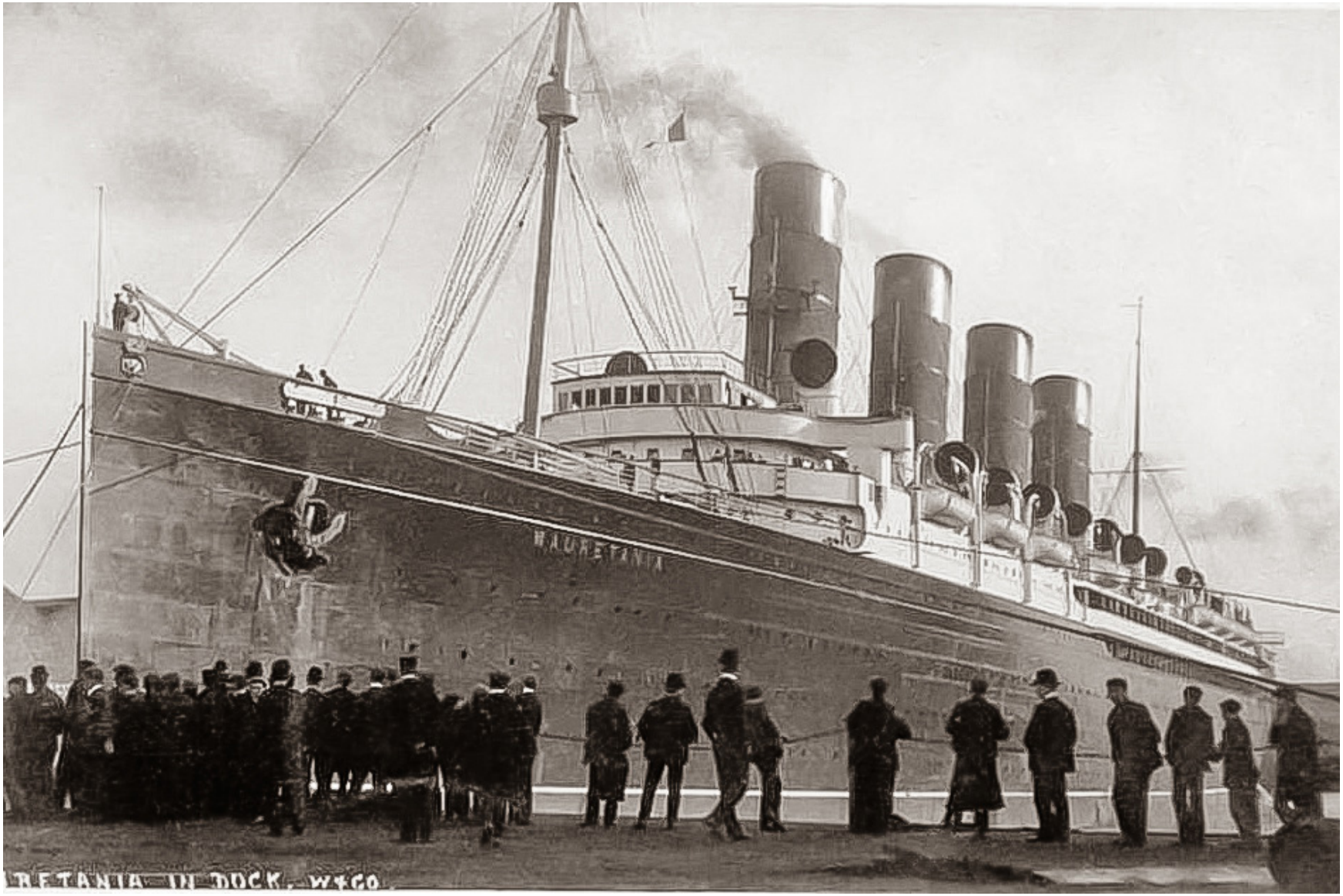
The Mauretania made its maiden voyage in 1907. It held the Atlantic Blue Riband speed record until 1929. During World War I Mauretania was used as a transport and hospital ship. Over her lifetime, she made 269 double crossings of the Atlantic in addition to her work in the war. She was much loved by her loyal patrons. Even today, she is the largest ship ever built on the Tyne.

On July 4, 1935, at 6:30am, she arrived in a half-gale at Rosyth, Scotland to be scrapped. A lone piper stood on the quayside playing a funeral lament. When her great engines were shut down, Mauretania gave a final deep shudder and fell silent. Twenty-eight years of hard service came to a close. The following Sunday, Mauretania was opened to the public for one last time. Twenty thousand people showed up.

Interior of the Aquitania

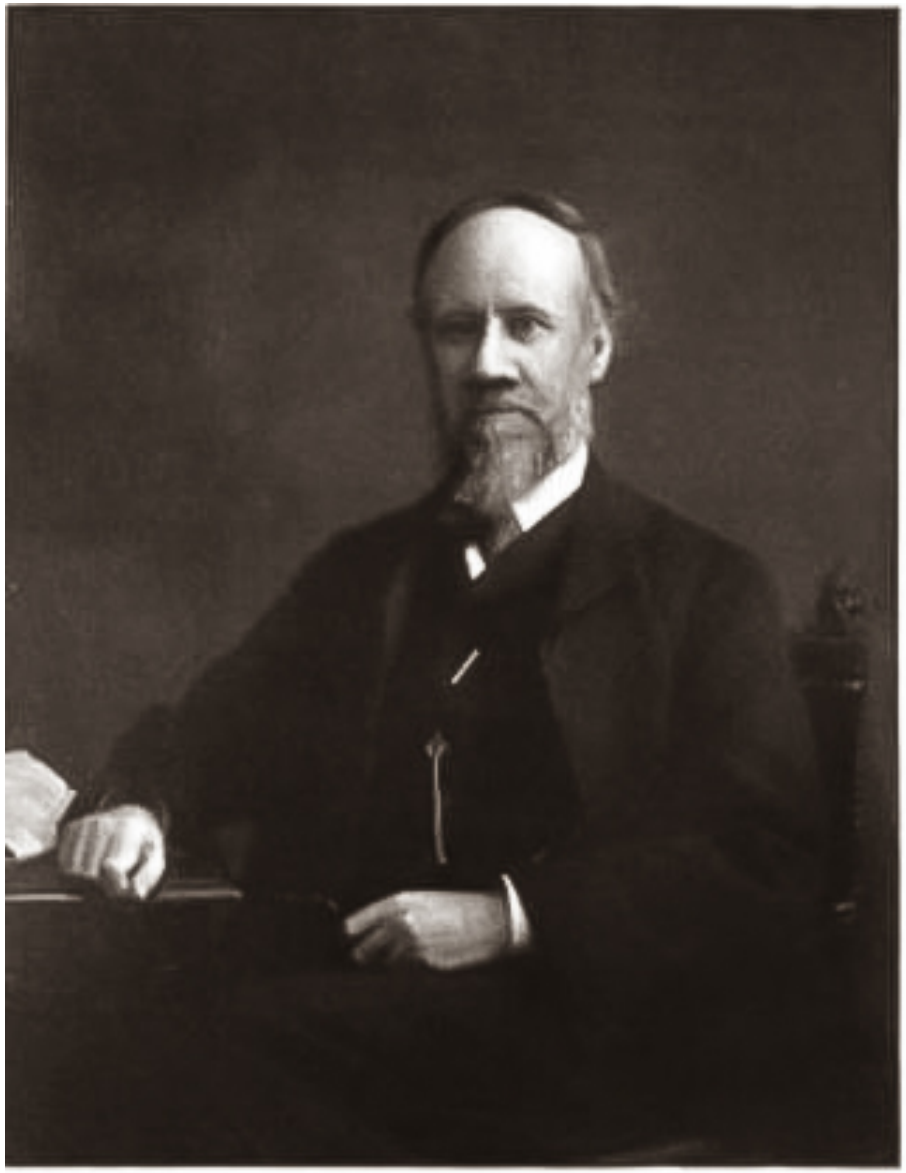
Interiors of the Mauretania

Interior of the Aquitania



Mauretania

John Wigham Richardson
(1837-1908)



Part 2: The Northwest

Lancashire and Cumbria

Getting About

The Dales Non-Stop

Retreat at Green Acres

The Lake District

Getting About

On The Road Again

Time to move on, I'm sorry to say. In three days, we did a lot – took a walking tour of York, visited Yorkminster and the National Train Museum (fabulous), learned about the Romans, Vikings and chocolate, toured the North York Moors, passed through the little village of Great Ayton where Captain James Cook was raised, visited Whitby on the coast, and rode a steam train from Whitby to Pickering.

The Options

It's easy enough to get about in England— discount airlines, trains everywhere, rental cars and (I know this will sound odd to Canadians) walking. We've tried the discount airlines and we've tried the trains. They do get you there but attempting photography en route is a lost cause. I'm a photographer, you see, so being able to take photos of discernible objects which do not resemble the inside of a dryer mid-cycle is important to me (Brits: we colonials use dryers to render our clothes wearable after a wash). As an added bonus, one's undies never fall off the over-the-stove drying rack into the soup pot.

Why Bother

I've noticed that once you're in a country you must find a way to get about. One could just stay at the airport, I suppose, but my thought is that plane spotting would have limited appeal by Day 3. Apart from that and awkward sleeping arrangements, the airport could have real merit -- for those on a fixed income and for Scots, like me.

There is plenty to do in airports beyond plane-spotting. You can go for a cruise on the people-movers (one way only), make involved product inquiries at the duty-free shops (time is on your side), plug in your razor and curling iron at the corridor outlets (no charge) and learn your choice of foreign languages in the seating areas.

I have not run this idea past Randi, but I am fairly certain that her vision of foreign travel is a notch or two beyond the concept of

'airport-as-destination' and involves moving about occasionally. And that notion brings me in a roundabout way to the topic of this epistle — getting about in England.

Freedom Road

Renting a car has distinct advantages. With a car, one has full command of the itinerary. I can stop at will to take shots, giving Randi time to calculate the hours remaining to bra removal. Thirty-nine percent of Americans aside, 'freedom' is not spelled T-R-U-M-P, it is spelled H-E-R-T-Z. At least that was my theory. You might have noticed that I did not speak to walking. It's because we can't. Colonials, by and large, are not taught to walk. We can shuffle with an odd sort of gait, (more like a duck than a stately Canada Goose), just far enough to sit in or on some form of conveyance. Brits, on the other hand, walk. In their cities, only an idiot would drive a car. In the country, only an idiot would drive a car.

Who actually drives all those cars, though, is a bit of a mystery. Tourists, I suppose, including us. We rented a car. No more airports and train stations. We were heading for a great adventure, flitting hither and yon as the spirit called. Serendipity was our companion now. She sat right next to Garmina on the dashboard, sporting a wry smile and a twinkle in her eye.

Wherever one lives in Britain, the roads are narrow (more on that to come), the cars fast and the traffic thick. People walk to the shops, to work, to the cricket pitch, to the pub and slither home. That's it.

The Rental

On our last day in York, we made our way to the Hertz lot. Getting there was routine — 40 minutes to find it, 10 minutes to get the car. The 40 minute bit was merely irritating; the 10 minute bit was bizarre. When I opened the driver's side door, you would not believe what I saw. Nothing. There was no steering wheel. I returned to the office. "Look, I'm impressed that self-steering vehicles have gone mainstream in Britain, but I believe I ordered a car with a steering wheel."

"You'll find it on the right side, sir."

That was annoying. "If it was on the right side, I would have found it on the left. However, I did not. I'd like a car with the wheel on the left please, which IS the right side."
"Not certain I'm following your logic, sir, but that is the car we have available for you. Actually, you will find that all 253 million British cars are the same, sir. Wheel on the right."

“Remarkable. And not one Brit thought to make inquiries at the factories? There is something seriously wrong there.”
“Yes sir, have a nice day. By the way, do drive on the left.”
“On the left!! On the left! I’d be dead in a minute.”
“I’m afraid you might be if you don’t sir. That’s how we do it here.”
“Ridiculous,” I grumbled.
“STAY LEFT!!,” screams Randi as we left the lot. Ah yes, momentary lapse. Shift to second. “Where’s the stick?”

Day 1

Day 1 of the Great Road Adventure was, shall we say, interesting. Randi might describe it with a tad more zeal. “Oh God!” was commonly heard; “look out!,” was equally popular. In this way, we lurched (standard shift) and staggered our way through the Yorkshire dales to Liz’s house, our friend in Kendal, on the edge of the Lake District.

Fortuitously, our friend Garmina joined us for the drive. She is English, thirty something, confident, elegant and smart as a whip. I really don’t know what we would have done without her. I am not demeaning your navigational talents in the slightest Sweetie, but one must admit, Garmina was a life-saver.

Tucked inside the little screen on our windshield, (uh, windscreen) Garmina gave us moment by moment directions: “In 500 feet, enter the roundabout on your left and take the third exit to Mulberry Lane.” Or “Stay in either of the two right lanes and in 100 feet take Exit 23 to Gone By Road…. Recalculating…” Well, she wasn’t perfect. And those dirt roads through the forest were somewhat unsettling, but, in the end, they did get us to where we wanted to go.

At the roundabouts, things got tense. Were you with us, you might have heard something like this:
“Keep going, keep going. NO! That’s the second exit! We want the THIRD exit!”
“Bloody hell.”

“Recalculating. Continue on this road for 9 miles, then turn right.” Unspoken: You are about to tour three counties, eleven villages at 20 miles per hour and experience the exhilaration of 23 roundabouts. Enjoy. Oh, and cancel your accommodation for this evening.

Yes, corrections could be lengthy affairs, yet dear Garmina, unlike her fleshy companions, never uttered an angry word. After the sixth foul up, your average navigator would have popped a

blood vessel: “You bloody idiot, you’ve done it again! What did I tell you the last time? LISTEN. Now we’re in the royal soup. We can’t turn round ’til the next county!” No, Garmina -- patient, calm, understanding Garmina -- was the digital equivalent of Buddha.

You might have picked up that after a few roundabouts, we concluded that driving in England was a two-person affair: one to steer (me) and one to navigate (Randi). The steering bit went so-so. Remember the intelligence tests in primary school where you were given an object, then had to identify its mirror image? Let’s just say that my response likely led to my new home at the back of the class, next to a boy who hummed. The point being, (is there really a point to all this?), Randi was indispensable, counting down the distances to the next heart-pounding roundabout, giving comforting feedback such as “Good job, honey, you missed him completely” and so on.

Barelies

As with most folks, I love to observe people. After a half century of doing just that, I have arrived at the conclusion that when it comes to getting from A to B in a vehicle, there are two kinds of people.

The first group, whom I call ‘Barelies” provide barely enough information to survive the journey. A Barely will typically indicate a change of direction by saying, “Turn left.” On the surface, this seems entirely appropriate (assuming it was left that you wanted to go). However, and herein lies the rub: that is only half the required instruction. The missing information is “in 400 feet.”

The omission of this key piece of information usually proves to be a mere inconvenience. The travelers may find themselves in the wrong county at dusk and spend the night by the roadside huddled or more accurately, interlocked in their rented Morris Minor. However, the omission can result in grievous mishap. If the navigator says "Turn left" (full stop) where there is no road to the left, well, one can see that there is an immediate problem. Furthermore, a Barely is also prone to saying ‘left’ when he or she means ‘right’ and vice-versa. This of course, gets awkward, particularly at roundabouts and when you find yourself in Wales and your Gaelic is not up to snuff.

There is one other thing. And this is important. A Barely uses the English language loosely. Compass directions have no meaning to a Barely. He or she prefers less precise terms like “over there,” “turn at the building,” “look at that!,” “Oh my God,” and the perennial favourite “Watch out!

Tights

Like all things in the universe, Barely has an opposite -- 'Tights.' Tights walks erect with a noble air, confident that his or her highly rational mind will resolve all problems. However, when rationality falls by the wayside, when Barely and Tights are completely lost – the roads have changed, Garmina takes a coffee break or a detour appears -- Tights does an odd thing: he or she loses it. Any artifact of rationality is tossed to the wind. Tights crazy glues his or her mind to the last failed option, argues that it is indeed correct, then proceeds, even in the face of evidence to the contrary.

As a psychology major, I studied Tights. More precisely, I studied rat behaviour, which we all know parallels human behaviour closely.

I recall one experiment in which four separated feeding stations were positioned in front of a rat. However, there was a tricky bit. There usually is in life. To get to a feeding station, the rat had to jump from a starting platform to one of the four platforms where the feeding stations were located. He could not access a subsequent feeding station without returning to the starting platform first. Thus, jumping to a given platform/feeding station represented a discrete choice. Initially, any station the rat chose to explore provided food (a reward).

When the rat 'got' the situation, the conditions were changed. Three of the four stations were randomly locked. Furthermore, when the rat chose a locked station the platform gave way and he fell into a pit (punishment). Eventually, he discovered the unlocked feeding station. Then, every time he jumped, he chose that station and successfully fed.

Again, the conditions were changed. All four stations were locked. What do you suppose the rat did next? He continued to jump to the last station that provided food, receiving punishment each time -- not five or ten times, but for hours on end. He appeared to have developed a fixed mind set which ignored his experience (locked station and punishment). When he jumped, he was operating from a 'wing and a prayer.'

This is Tights to a tee. When repeated attempts to find the correct route fail, Tights fixates on one option and insists it is the correct one. Further, Tights refuses to seek out untried sources of information such as asking the way from a local, a technique happily and effectively utilized by Barelies. For the record, none of this describes myself. Just ask my wife...ah, she just stepped out to make an inquiry.

The Roads

Thoroughfares, called carriageways in Britain, vary in nature, notably in width. The term 'carriageways,' of course, goes back to the days of horse and carriage. For me, it conjures up a scene of upper class Victorian England. Horse drawn carriages jiggle along a gravel road to the sound of clopping hooves. The occupants, dressed to the nines, are waving and greeting friends passing by. The man in one carriage stands and calls out "Good day, how aw you?", then gives a slight bow and a sweep of his hat. As the carriages move apart, he shouts a proposal: "High tea at the Blethering Place? Good show!" Ah, how times have changed….

At the other end of road choices and several notches below the carriageway is the 'Lane.' The lane is narrow – very narrow and remarkably common in England. It was originally designed for small people on foot. Passing another traveller required one to turn sideways. In Canada, we call them trails. Here's a curious fact: the waltz was invented on English lanes.

The lane is guaranteed to strike terror into the hearts of 'right-siders.' You see, all too often, lanes, with just enough room for little Perky, are two-way. Perky was our peppy bright blue Vauxhall. I'm certain that bright blue is the colour reserved for foreigners driving rental cars in the UK. To locals it says "Foreigner on the loose. Stand clear." That suited me. Perky, it turned out, is not considered a compact car in England, but a full sized sedan.

Moreover, these typically two-way lanes with room for one vehicle come complete and without exception with two constant companions -- the stiff and silent Prickly Hedge on one side and the equally reserved Stone Wall on the other – always there, never the first to engage, yet always at the ready to do so.

If one chooses to cast fate to the wind and use a lane, one had best have a neck that flexes like a giraffe and the nerve of a high steel worker -- for driving in reverse.

Tip 1:
Keep all body parts you hold near and dear inside the vehicle at all times.

Tip 2:
Should you meet an oncoming car and are obliged to back up through multiple blind corners, bear in mind that English drivers are fast. Very fast. As you shift into reverse (this is where being Catholic is a huge bonus), begin your

Hail Marys. Don't know them and didn't bring any? Ah, what a shame.

And so it went. We drove for twelve days. I must say it was brilliant. A handful of locals we… uh, bumped into along the highways and byways of England…all right, six or eight, but no more… might hold a different opinion, but really, I think they were just being picky.

The Lake District

The Yorkshire Dales

It was Day 5. We were off to our friend Liz's house on the other side of the Yorkshire Dales. Like Little Red Riding Hoods, wide-eyed and high-spirited, we stuffed our bags and bodies into Perky, our four-wheeled puppy, and off we went, lurching along to grandma's house as I got reacquainted with gears.

It was overcast, perfect weather to draw in the spirit of this special region of Yorkshire. We took the highway west to the edge of the dales, then turned north into the hills. This would be an outstanding day with plenty of time to soak up the dales' iconic landscapes and take pictures. I had savoured this day for a long time.

Ah, but you know what's coming, don't you? That did not happen. The sleepy days of James Herriot's Yorkshire Dales were long gone. The roads had not changed. They were still post-war narrow, flanked almost to the tarmac by Prickly Hedge and Stone Wall. There are no shoulders, no pullouts; we could make no stops and I took no pictures. And there were cars, plenty of them, piling up behind, streaking by in both directions. When they passed, some turned their head to the side to size up the under-performing driver of the offending vehicle. What they saw was a timid-looking man, wide-eyed man with a funny hat, leaning into the wheel and clutching it with a death grip. They surely cursed.

The drive was excruciating bar this: the landscapes: patchwork quilts of emerald green and ancient stone wall surrounds. Here and there, clusters of trees added mass and balance to the composition and more to the point, offered shelter to the sheep on cold winter days. On that day in early September, though, the sheep grazed carefree across the rolling hills, until on the far side of the valley, they were reduced to dots of white.

There, the ridge slipped in and out of the mist and beyond that ridge was another and then another, each a faded look alike of the one before it. Over it all was a soft, luminous light that left an edge on everything it touched. No, the day was not all that I'd

hoped, but it is etched in my memory, the land and its people bookmarked for another time.

Green Acres

Garmina found it with the help of directions from friend Liz, who lives there. Green Acres, the name given to Liz's cottage, is tucked in a corner of the little stone village of Natland near Kendal, Cumbria. Perhaps a few hundred people live there. Cumbria is the county to the west of Yorkshire and lies in the northwest corner of England. Liz is a retired fisheries biologist and planner. She and I attended the School of Planning at the University of British Columbia in the 1970s. Along with Randi and two other friends, we shared a house together. That was a long time ago, yet the three of us picked right up where we left off and spent a wonderful two days together.

Liz is full of life, Scots by upbringing, English by circumstance. She is lithe, an avid walker, prone to boisterous outbursts to make a point or laugh. Liz loves to laugh. And she loves to socialize, so she and Randi chatted at length at the kitchen table while I, in my usual fashion, headed solo to the garden with my camera.

Green Acres is a one-story 1950s white stucco cottage. It is thoroughly English. Rooms are small by our standard, filled with an eclectic assortment of furniture, books, photo albums, framed pictures of family and knick-knacks, all precious items with memories attached, each carefully chosen. Doors are everywhere, perhaps to restrict the heat to occupied rooms on cold days or perhaps because that's the way it's always done in England.

The small kitchen has a bright red enamel range, an AGA look-alike I was told, that is many times more efficient. The AGA is a traditional fixture in British homes since the blind Nobel Prize-winning Swedish Physicist Gustaf Dalén invented it in 1922 to make cooking easier for his wife. Made of cast iron, the smallest AGA has two gas-fired ovens and a gas hob (range-top). AGA owners are quick to extol (read defend) its virtues, pointing to its capacity to replace a clothes dryer, electric kettle, space heater and toaster. Critics call it an energy hog. A standard non-AGA gas range uses only 2.6% of the AGA's consumption. In other words, the AGA consumes 38 times the energy of the standard range. That's almost as much gas in a week as the standard

range uses in nine months.

AGAs are much like Donald Trump. You love them or you hate them; they fire up predictably and belch waste unreservedly; and regrettably, they rarely die. Many AGAs operate for over 50 years. In 2009, the Daily Telegraph ran a competition to find the oldest AGA still in use. There were thousands of entries but none older than the 1932 model owned by the Hett family of Sussex.

Imagine how many AGA ranges like the Hett's are still dutifully cooking away in tens of thousands of row houses across Britain, burning up vast and unnecessary quantities of natural gas and spewing untold thousands of tonnes of carbon into the atmosphere.

In fairness though, while Brits walk everywhere, this writer and all his North American compatriots are driving cars to any destination farther afield than 100 metres -- with the same result times 100,000.

In a thousand years time, the human species might have all but disappeared. Yet I can readily imagine the Hett family in their little Sussex cottage. I see them now – Hettie Hett, Pott Hett and their six little children. It's a cold winter's day. They're gathered in the kitchen, their hands raised to catch the heat from their 1932 AGA range. Hettie speaks... "I'm just so thankful our AGA burns anything."

"Yeah, like my year's pot supply."

"Well the wood shed is empty. What's a girl to do, honey bunny?"

"What's a bunny?"

"A Pott Hett who doesn't store wood for the winter."

Next to and above Liz's range is a clothes drying rack, common to North American homes until after World War II, but seen today in North America only in museum re-creations . If you're over seventy, you'll be familiar with this contrivance. The rack consists of five or so wood bars in a rectangular wood frame. Attached to its four corners is a cord harness that runs through a pulley on the ceiling, then ties off on a cleat mounted to the wall near the range. Wet clothes are hung over the bars and the entirety is hoisted to the ceiling close to the range where hot air works its magic at no additional cost.

However, some folks, I gather, have discovered a lamentable drawback to this drying method. Items have been known to fall off the rack onto the floor next to the range. This is precisely where the cat hangs out. Cats are experts at maximizing their comfort and life doesn't get any better than curling up next to the range. Well, that's not entirely true. When an item falls off the drying rack into the cat's bed, life instantly shifts from good to exquisite. The upshot is that things placed on the rack to dry can simply disappear. Or parts of an item can disappear. For some diabolical reason, the parts that do disappear are invariably the parts which one treasures the most – the crotches of undies and the breast pockets of bras.

The bathroom lights are operated with a pull-cord attached to the ceiling. The shower is 'on-demand.' You turn it on by pushing a button on a white control box near the showerhead, then stand in the tub that is raised up from the floor to accommodate the plumbing. In the winter, the bath towels are dried on a heated chrome rack mounted to the wall. In the summer, they dry on the line with the rest of the laundry. Tumble dryers, it seems, are only for the rich and foolish.

The garden is, not surprisingly, an English garden. It has numerous stone-edged flowerbeds, a small lawn with a proportional shade tree, a lounge chair and table, a fish pond with no fish, a greenhouse, a woodshed and just enough gravel drive to park four Mini-Minors or one Dodge Ram 1500 pickup (if you could find one).

English gardens are decidedly un-North American. They ramble, they have no particular symmetry (short of gardens attached to castles), they are stuffed with plants that wander this way and that. All of which, I believe, is by intention. English gardens are designed to appear like an accident of nature, and, in part, I'm certain they are. That is, the gardener creates a basic design and then invites nature to participate, allowing the whole to evolve as a partnership.

Staying at Liz's was a reminder that change is not compulsory. It is a choice. It is a reminder too, that all that is new is not always better. Brits and Europeans generally seem happy with that notion; they prefer the old to the new. For that I am exceedingly grateful, for had they been more like us, there would be nothing left to see – no ancient villages, no magnificent landscapes.

The English live their history. Every day they see it, move through it, feel it. Many can visit the house their ancestors lived in, loved

in, died in. History and roots, I'm thinking, are not abstract thoughts in this land, but part and parcel of one's very being. How fortunate is that?

Green Acres Cottage, near Kendal, Cumbria

Green Acres Cottage, near Kendal, Cumbria

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Green Acres Cottage, near Kendal, Cumbria

The Lake District

On the second day of our stay with Liz we climbed aboard a mini-bus with fifteen odd others to tour the Lake District. The Lake District is a region of the County of Cumbria. It is also a national park. Tourism has a long history here, beginning in the late 1700s. As early as 1724, Daniel Defoe described it as “the wildest, most barren and frightful of any that I have passed over in England.”

In 1774 Father Thomas West published “A Guide to the Lakes” which led to visits by Wordsworth, Southey and Coleridge. Wordsworth was so taken he moved there. Indeed, you can visit his house and as you gaze at his writing desk, ponder why he got all that talent and you didn’t. Once the poets had done their thing, the tourists did theirs. The wealthy arrived first.

My great grandfather William Spriggs, a clothier from Worcester, took walking holidays here in the mid 1800s, capturing the landscapes with pen and ink. Later came his children and their children, including my mother. Her parents honeymooned there, bringing with them an entourage of friends and family (see the images). Today, the tourists arrive, not in horse-drawn conveyances, six to a carriage; they come in buses, sixty at a time.

This was our second bus tour, possibly our last. Don’t get me wrong; they did a good job, taking us places we would not otherwise have seen and telling us much along the way. Yet it’s rushed and canned and according to their schedule, not ours. Taking pictures was almost a lost cause. The tour included a sedate boat ride on Derwentwater in a vintage 1920s varnished wood cruiser. The boat was beautiful; the ride was boring; the landscapes were stunning. It is a moody, magical, entirely unique land. And the light! We must return.

Honister Pass, Lake District

The Lake District, Cumbria

The Lake District, Cumbria

Lake District, Cumbria,

Hester

In 1803, two individuals lived but houses apart in London. Both were young. The woman had no knowledge of the man, yet the man was well aware of her. Indeed, he loved her. She though, was married and a Quaker. The situation was an agony for him but there was nothing to be done. That same year, aged 26, she died. Not a word had passed between them. The man's name was Charles Lamb, the poet and essayist of the Romantic Age. Her name was Hester Savory. She was my first cousin 4 times removed.

Charles was heartbroken when he heard the news of Hester's death, and wrote a poem about her. He called it 'Hester, published in 1818 in *'Works.'*

WHEN maidens such as Hester die
Their place ye may not well supply,
Though ye among a thousand try
With vain endeavour.

A month or more hath she been dead,
Yet cannot I by force be led
To think upon the wormy bed
And her together.

A springy motion in her gait,
A rising step, did indicate
Of pride and joy no common rate,
That flush'd her spirit:

I know not by what name beside
I shall it call: if 'twas not pride,
It was a joy to that allied,
She did inherit.

Her parents held the Quaker rule,
Which doth the human feeling cool;
But she was train'd in Nature's school;
Nature had blest her.

A waking eye, a prying mind;
A heart that stirs, is hard to bind;
A hawk's keen sight ye cannot blind;
Ye could not Hester.

My sprightly neighbour! gone before
To that unknown and silent shore,

Shall we not meet, as heretofore,
Some summer morning–

When from thy cheerful eyes a ray
Hath struck a bliss upon the day,
A bliss that would not go away,
A sweet forewarning?

Charles had a difficult life. He had a profound stutter which, despite his bright mind, prevented him from pursuing a university degree, where eloquence was a requirement. He left school at 14. His parents died early, leaving himself and his sister Mary to find work and care for the other children. His mother died at the hands of Mary, who, during an attack of insanity, stabbed her through the heart. For the rest of her life, Mary had yearly bouts of insanity requiring stays in a sanitarium. Charles worked as a clerk until his retirement.

His leisure hours were spent writing essays and poems along with Mary, with whom he did most everything. As well, he and Mary socialized with the great poets and essayists of the day, who were much drawn to the Lamb's affable natures. His close


Charles Lamb (1775-1834)

friend, with whom he went to school, was Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

The bunch of them, Wordsworth, Keats, Byron, Shelley, Coleridge and occasionally Charles spent a good deal of time in the Lake District, where Wordsworth and Coleridge had homes. Their poetry did much to bring the beauty of the Lake District to the public's attention, triggering the beginnings of tourism in the area.

Friends and family, Lake District, Cumbria, 1898

The Spriggs honeymoon entourage in the Lake District, Cumbria, 1898

Just kidding around, Lake District, Cumbria, 1898

Committee of the Whole, Lake District, Cumbria, 1898

Part 3: Midlands

Haddon Hall

The Industrial Revolution

Chocolate!

William Spriggs

St Bartholomew's Church

Ludlow Castle

Haddon Hall

Once again, our three night stay with Liz could easily have been three weeks, but we still had much ground to cover. Our next stop was the little midlands village of Bakewell, a two and a half hour drive to the southeast of Kendal.

Bakewell lies within the county of Derbyshire. it is also within the boundaries of the Peak District National Park. Both it and Lake District National Park, the first national parks in the UK, were created in 1951, late by Canadian standards. By comparison, our first national park, Banff National Park, was established in 1885.

Peak District National Park lies at the southern end of the Pennines, a range of high country running north-south that separates North West England from North East England. The first cotton mills of the Industrial Revolution were built on the streams rolling off these hills. Today, it is bikes that roll off the hills and hikers who walk them. Tourism is big here for a reason. The landscapes are stunning and access is easy. Walking holidays are popular in Britain and the Peak District is a popular place to do it. The epicentre for all this activity is the quaint little village of Bakewell.

On the edge of Bakewell lay our objective, Haddon Hall. We had come to visit the home of my great grandparents, the Vernons. Well, not just great grandparents — grandparents stretching back hundreds of years.

I am a fortunate man, for I am overflowing with grandparents. And so are you. I stopped to count once and quickly gave up. You see, all of us have two parents whether we like it or not. Each of our parents had two parents whether they liked it or not and so forth. Mathematically speaking, the number of grandparents we have increases by 2 to the power of n, where n = the number of generations we go back.

Haddon Hall first came into my family in 1170, when my 26th great grandfather, Sir Richard de Vernon, married Avice Avenell, the heiress of Haddon Hall. Back to the maths. When I apply the above formula to the 26 generations since Richard and Avice, I discover I have accumulated 2 to the power of 26 or 268,435,456 grandparents. They're not living downstairs, you

understand. Come to think of it, they're not living. Nor did I actually count them. Imagine the pain of doing so:

"Two hundred sixty-eight million, four hundred thirty-five thousand, four hundred fifty-five. Two hundred sixty-eight million four hundred thirty-five thousand four..." "Sweetie, I need a lemon. Would you mind running down to the ...." "NOT NOW...five hundred fort.... BLOODY HELL!"

No. The figure I gave is a statistical average. To give you an idea of just how many people that is, if you stuffed all of them (that's eight times the population of Canada) into a bowling alley, the bowling alley would be...nah, just kidding.

Some argue, my friends and family among them, that attempting to claim a relationship with someone who lived 900 years ago is a fatuous exercise, as staggering numbers of people may be related to any given individual who lived hundreds of years ago. As if to drive home the point, my cousin Bill tells me that David, his tablemate at the retirement residence where he lives, is also related to the Vernons of Haddon Hall. Frequently, I find myself putzing about in what I think is an obscure corner of my family tree. Then when I stop to check the connection to me, I am flabbergasted to discover they are my umpteenth great grandparents!

And judging by the number of claimants to my DNA and by the following facts derived from genetics research, I am hard-pressed to argue the point. The facts are these: the amount of DNA we possess from our ancestors diminishes rapidly with each additional generation. By as little as five generations, we may have only 3% of each ancestor's genes and by the seventh generation, less than one percent.

Yet despite the science, I still feel that sense of connection to my ancestors of centuries past, for good reason. If any one of those 268,435,456 individuals had made a different choice of spouse, I would not be here. I may not have much of their DNA, but each and every one of them allowed me to be on this planet. How can I not feel connected?

The Vernon family called Haddon Hall home from the late 1100s to the mid 1500s. The family came from Vernon, France, in Normandy at the time of William the Conqueror. As fellow Normans, they were granted extensive lands in the lush rolling hills of Derbyshire and neighbouring Cheshire – the Midlands of England.

My entrée to the Vernon family came in 1510 with the marriage of William Fisher to Mary Vernon. We know little about William but his Fisher family is prominent in my family tree from the 1500s onward. Both the Fishers and the Vernons had the knack of doing well from the people they called their friends and importantly, from the carefully chosen marriages of their children.

The Vernon family seemed never in a rush to part with their wealth or position. On multiple occasions through the centuries, cousins married each other in order to combine two estates into one grand estate, doubling the wealth of the family with a mere two words -- “I do”. Power, influence and more wealth came with their strategically arranged marriages and connections. Among them were three High Sheriffs, two Chief Justices, two Members of Parliament, a Speaker of the House, two Treasurers of Calais (a British possession for one hundred years up to 1558), and a governor and treasurer to Arthur, Prince of Wales. Some were earls, dukes, barons and knights. You might say they were ‘plugged in.’

Sir George Vernon was the last male of the Haddon Hall Vernons. He owned a vast acreage and was appropriately referred to as ‘King of the Peak,’ a reference to his domineering character, wealth and power, and the region in which Haddon Hall lay. King of the Poke, however, he was not, for he died without male heirs, a circumstance much dreaded in his day, for it meant that the family’s wealth and power would fall to the in-laws. When he died in 1565 Haddon Hall passed to his daughter Dorothy who married Sir John Manners. The couple’s descendants are the Dukes of Rutland, who own Haddon Hall today.

According to legend (never verified), Dorothy, a famously beautiful and kindly young woman, fell in love with John Manners. However, her father Sir George Vernon, forbade Dorothy to see Manners, perhaps because Manners was Protestant and the Vernons were Catholic or perhaps because John, as the second son, had uncertain financial prospects. The couple, however, had a plan. During a ball hosted by Sir George, Mary slipped away through the garden. On the far side of a footbridge (still there today) Manners was waiting for her and away they rode to be married.

This is hardly the script for a modern-day gripper but there is no denying love. Novels, short stories, plays including a Broadway play, a light opera and a film starring Mary Pickford in1924 have all retold the legend of Dorothy and John.

The brother of the current Duke of Rutland lives somewhere in

the back of Haddon Hall. I thought it only proper to introduce myself while we were on the premises – to let him and his folk know that they were not forgotten in the colonies and that if he ever felt the urge to visit, he must stay with us. The entire bedroom in the basement would be reserved for his exclusive use. Regrettably, I could not find the door to his apartment. It's likely a hidden panel in the armoury or a secret stairway from a bedroom to yesterday's maid's quarters. He will be so annoyed to learn he'd missed me.

For 200 years, starting in 1700, Haddon Hall lay vacant. The Manners still owned it; they just chose not to live there. They had other, more upscale castles at their disposal, with bigger fireplaces, fewer cracks and more doors. The hall must have fallen into dreadful disrepair but in the 1920s the challenge of bringing Haddon back to life was taken on by the 9th Duke and Duchess of Rutland. Today, Haddon Hall is touted to be "probably the finest example of a fortified medieval manor house in existence."

Haddon Hall is open to the public. We parked in the lot adjacent to the estate, walked through the arch of the designed-to-impress gatehouse and carried on up the road as it crossed an expanse of grass field, passed a pond large enough to float the British Navy and up a rise to an extensive castle-like manor. To our left were the stables, converted now to a cafe. Ahead, was the manor's entry, its ancient wood doors with iron fastenings cast wide. Randi made small talk with the attendant, a rough-hewn man who was likely more at ease patching plumbing than punching tickets. "My husband is related to the family," she offered. "What?," said he, his interest instantly peaked. "Hey Arnold," he yelled across the inner courtyard to what appeared to be his superior. "Two more of 'em has just walked in. Bloody hell, when does it end?" groaned Arnold. Should I review the maths with them, I pondered? Probably not.

Haddon Hall is brilliant. Randi absorbed the place, methodically, room by room, then sat on a bench in the sun and chatted with strangers while she waited for me; I ran about with my camera, clicking here, clicking there in no particular order.
"Did you see the kitchen? she queried on the way out. "Ah no, missed that I guess."
"The bathroom was grim."
"Bathroom...?"

Bakewell near Haddon Hall

Bakewell near Haddon Hall

Haddon Hall, Derbyshire

The Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution, or First Industrial Revolution, occurred roughly between 1760 and 1840. It was the shift from hand production methods to machines, the use of chemicals in manufacturing, new iron smelting processes, and the application of steam and improved water power technology. This period also saw the advent of machine tools and mechanized factory systems.

Textile production was the dominant industry in terms of the number of people employed, the profits to be made and the amount of capital invested. The textile industry was also the first to use modern production methods. The Industrial Revolution began in Great Britain and many of its advances were British in origin.

It was the Industrial Revolution which, in large part, powered the growth of the British Empire. In turn, it was the raw materials and cheap labour provided by the colonies along with Britain's restrictive, monopolistic trade agreements which fed the British engines of industry.

By the mid 18th century, Britain was a global trading empire and the world's largest economy, backed by the supremacy of the British Navy, the administrative and military might of the East India Company and Rule of Law.

Economic historians largely agree that the Industrial Revolution was the most important event in the history of humanity since the domestication of animals. Its effect on virtually every aspect of daily life was profound. Whether or not it improved the quality of life is up for debate. On the one hand, wages rose significantly and some, for the first time, had access to a wide range of goods unimaginable in years prior. As well, people had steady work which was not subject to the unpredictability of harvests. On the other hand, factory work was often mind-numbing and dangerous, the working day and week were insufferably long, air quality in cities was deplorable, health care and leisure activities for workers were nonexistent and child labour was common. Numerous poor, displaced from farms by the Enclosures Act, were drawn to the cities where they were subject to the whims of

self-interested employers and hard-nosed overseers. Generally, the owners got rich; the workers simply survived.

Although the First Industrial Revolution brought with it significant economic and social change during the 1840s and 1850s, the new technologies were not sufficient to drive high and sustained rates of growth. Rapid economic growth really began after 1870 as a second generation of innovations in steel making, mass production, assembly lines, machine tools and steam power were employed. This era became known as the Second Industrial Revolution.

Yet even by the 1830s, the impact of mechanization was massive. Cotton spinning machinery increased a worker's output by a factor of 500, the power loom by a factor of 40, the cotton gin which removed seed from cotton by a factor of 50. Efficiencies in steam engines reduced energy consumption by up to 90%, the use of coke instead of charcoal significantly reduced the fuel coasts of iron-making and the introduction of machine tools led to more precise, sophisticated production machines.

As the power of James Watt's steam engines improved, Manchester became the epicentre of cotton textile production, largely because of its existing, extensive canal system which could transport the finished product economically.

In 1772, 2000 tons of cotton were being imported per year. By 1816, that figure had risen to 45,000 tons. In 1816 there were 86 cotton mills in Manchester; by 1825 there were 110. Even in this early stage of the Industrial Revolution, the output capacity of these mills was staggering. Edward Baines wrote:

"We may see in a single building a 100 horse power steam engine [which] has the strength of 800 men, set in motion 50,000 spindles. The whole requires the service of but 750 workers [who]…produce as much yarn as former could have … spun [with] 200,000 men…."

Quakers, it seems, were quick to recognize the profit potential of mass production. And they had access to capital. When a good business idea materialized, Quakers could count on the financial backing of a Quaker bank, family or friends to turn idea into reality.

Once up and running, Quaker businesses held a significant advantage over their non-Quaker competition — they operated unfailingly from their religious principles. Customers and suppliers had complete confidence that doing business with a Quaker

guaranteed one honesty, fairness and quality. Persons working for a Quaker could expect fairness in wages, respect, gender equality and good working conditions. In short, Quaker businesses of the 18th and 19th centuries were lightyears ahead of the times.

Thus, Quakers, some of my family included, thrived in industrialized Britain. Many became wealthy and in return (and contrary to many wealthy non-Quakers), to a person, they gave back to their communities — to their Quaker community as well as the greater community. They provided relief to the poor and lobbied decades on end for abolition, women's rights, prison reform, worker reform, and the cessation of trade in opium.

By the early 1900s, cities of the midlands region of England — Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, and Birmingham — had collectively become a global manufacturing powerhouse which both contributed to and benefited from the rise of the British Empire.

Chocolate

Three families of Quakers, for reasons not known to me, began manufacturing chocolate — the Rowntrees of Yorkshire (1862), the Cadbury's of Birmingham (1824) and the Fry's of Bristol (1759). All did exceedingly well and all three families were heavily engaged in philanthropy and social action. As well, members of all three families intermarried with members of my family, the Spriggs and Haywards, who also lived in and operated businesses in Birmingham. I have chosen to tell the Cadbury's story here in order to relate an extraordinary act of philanthropy.

It was there in Birmingham, in 1824, that John Cadbury began selling tea, coffee and drinking chocolate. Early customers were limited to the wealthy because production costs were high.

In 1861 John's sons Richard and George assumed control of the business and by 1866 it had become evident to them that chocolate was the key to success. When they dropped tea and coffee to focus exclusively on chocolate, and upped the quality of the cocoa bean, the business took off. The rest of the Cadbury story, at least the business side of it, is largely about the ups and downs of the many products they brought to market and about the marketing efforts by which they did so.

However, there is another story here, the story of Bournville. Over time, the Cadbury business grew, requiring two moves to larger premises. By 1878, when a third move was required, George posed a question to brother Richard, which might have gone something like this:

"Would you not agree Richard, that the success of Cadbury's, apart from our own brilliance…" George grins, "is due almost wholly to the loyalty and dedication of our workers? Now you and I know too well the conditions under which our workers live. We have volunteered in their neighbourhoods, talked with their families, witnessed the rampant ill health and frankly, squalid conditions which they have no option but to tolerate. You and I leave the factory each night, retiring to our large, comfortable homes on the edge of the city where we enjoy every possible

luxury. We owe them more Richard. A great deal more.

“I’ve been thinking about this for a while and I’ve come up with with a rather grand idea — something which I don’t believe has ever been done. Still with me Richard? Excellent.

We must move to larger quarters and we must do it soon. However, we are not obliged to remain within Birmingham. Agreed? What if we were to take this once in a lifetime opportunity to do something outstanding for our workers, that is, build not just a new factory, but an entire village in the country to house our workers, provide them with health care, nice shops, good schools, fresh air, clean streets and places to walk about and socialize. Would that not be the perfect way to say “thank you” Richard?

“It would indeed brother. And that is precisely what we shall do. It is brilliant. You are brilliant. Come, Priscilla just rang the bell. Teas on. Let us celebrate the new and improved Cadbury’s and show the world how things ought to be done.”

That is precisely what they did do. In the countryside just beyond Birmingham’s outer limits, the Cadbury’s purchased land for the new factory and began construction. Later, in 1893, George Cadbury purchased 120 additional acres for workers’ housing. On that land, he built 143 cottages. The cottages were clustered in pods of 3 or 4 and the pods were set back from tree-lined streets. Each cottage had a front and back garden, fruit trees and space to grow vegetables.

A cottage had three bedrooms, a parlour, living room, kitchen and good sanitation. The rooms were large and airy with plenty of light. One tenth of the estate was put aside for parks, recreation grounds and open space. They called the village Bournville.

Housing reform became a passion for George Cadbury. He joined the Garden City Movement begun by housing reformer Sir Ebenezer Howard, and was instrumental in the movement’s success.


J.NICHOLL

St Bartholomew's Church

It was well into the afternoon when we left Haddon Hall. It took us two hours to drive to the village of Tong near Saint Bartholomew's Church, leaving no time to explore the church that day. But at 10am the next morning, refreshed with a sound sleep at the Ramada Inn, we arrived at the church as planned. Our guide, David Lewis, showed us about.

David was a good-looking, affable man in his 70s. He was dressed in a less than crisp sports jacket and casual shirt and had a manner that suggested he was equally comfortable in an office or the garden or just about anywhere. For an hour, David walked us through this medieval church of modest proportion, describing the life and the times of its parishioners.

In the middle ages, it was largely the wealthy who could afford to build churches. So often it was the wealthy who owned them. When the title of the estate changed hands, the church went with it. Such was the case at Haddon Hall. During the period the Vernons owned Haddon Hall, St Bartholomew's Church was part of the package. Effectively, they owned its parishioners too, for they were largely tenant farmers, employees and others dependent on the good graces of the Vernons for survival. Attendance at church was mandatory, explained David. Any tenant who missed a service without good cause (e.g. death or the black plague) was removed permanently from the congregation and from the estate.

In the church were a number of sarcophagi in which I had a particular interest. They were my Haddon Hall relatives. The Vernon family frequented the nearby church in Bakewell, but when they married into the Tong lordship, they chose to be buried at St Bartholomew's in the village of Tong. And there they were. Sir Richard Vernon (1394-1451) and his Benedicta de Ludlow (1392-1451), their son Sir William Vernon III (1421-1467) and his wife, Margaret Swynfen (1425-1471), and grandson Sir Henry Vernon (1441-1515) and his wife Anne Talbot (1445-1494). There lie my 16th, 15th and 14th great grandparents, who lived, loved and died near here over 500

years ago.

Their tombs are works of art, with elaborate stone carvings on the sides of each tomb depicting religious figures, events or family crests. On the top of each tomb lay effigies of the reclining couple, their hands placed as in prayer on their chests, the entirety magnificently carved in alabaster.
There is an unexpected resident in the churchyard – Little Nell, from Charles Dickens novel “The Old Curiosity Shop.” In the novel Little Nell and her grandfather fall on hard times and move to a small village to become beggars. There, Little Nell dies and her grandfather sinks into mental decay.

Little Nell’s burial plot is, of course, as fictitious as Little Nell. George Bowden, Vicar of the church in 1910, created the burial plot and entered Nell’s name in the church register as a ploy to bring more tourism to the village. People came. However, the village economy seems to have dropped off again, as Little Nell’s plot was recently moved to a more conspicuous location, right outside the church door.

St Bartholomew’s was looking her age. She was yellowed and gray. On her north wall was a cannonball hole and impressions from lead shot, left over from the English Civil War of 1642-1651. The maintenance fund, it seems, has not been particularly robust. In the same war, her lead roof was stripped for cannon balls and ammunition and in recent years, stripped six more times by salvage thieves. A door on that same north wall was bricked up. It was once used as the final exit for the excommunicated. The tombstones in the churchyard, tilted at odd angles, have been defaced by time. She is what she is, St Bartholomew’s -- an old lady from another time, a last vestige of a way of life owned and controlled by the very rich on the backs of the very poor. Yet even in her decrepitude, this old lady, still loved, still valued, continues to serve the people of Tong.

My 16th great grandparents Sir Richard Vernon VII & Lady Benedicta de Ludlow, St Bartholomew's Church, Tong

Son of Isabel de Lingen. His mother (L), my 17th great grandmother, died 1446; her third husband (R), Fulke de Pembrugge, died 1409

Sir Thomas Stanley, husband of my second cousin 13X removed , St Bartholomew's Church, Tong

Bournville near Birmingham, built for Cadbury's workers

David Lewis, our guide at St Bartholomew's Church, Tong

Ludlow Castle

An hour's drive to the southwest of St Bartholomew's Church near the border with Wales is Ludlow Castle. It peaked my interest because Benedicta de Ludlow is my 16th great grandmother and I assumed there was a connection between her family and the Castle. I have no doubt there is a connection. Oddly, I just can't find it. I know the Ludlows didn't build it, the Norman castle builder Walter de Lacey did around 1075. Yet all reference to the castle names it Ludlow. One must assume that de Lacey himself named the castle, perhaps during a conversation with his Second in Command which might have gone like this:

It finally arrived: Castle Completion Day, June 1, 1076, Shropshire, somewhere near the border with Wales. A day of feasting and celebration has been declared in the adjacent Village of Kumquat. Two VIPs are seated under the large, open-sided tent, pondering their massive accomplishment. On the left is veteran castle builder Walter de Lacy. On the right is his friend and long standing Second In Command, Two Eyes See or simply Two:

Two: Man, I thought this day would never come.

Walter: You always say that.

Two: I always feel that. I'm getting too old for this.

Walter: You weren't too old to disappear into the back room with that serving wench at the Swan last night.

Two: Never said I was. I said I was too old for THIS. By the way, what IS this?

Walter: Whaddaya mean?

Two: Well, what's the name of the castle?

Walter: Dunno. I've been a little busy lately. How about de Lacy Castle? Has a nice ring to it.

Two: A little self-serving, don't you think?

Walter: Suppose. Any ideas?

Two: Well, I've noticed that castles are often named after some big-wig or after the place they're built. So maybe something romantic for a change to soften up the locals, like "Big-Castle-Of-Nice-People-On-The-Hill-Overlooking-The-River-Dene."

Walter: Oh, good one. I can see it now. The mighty FitzOsbern says to me "Nice work on that castle Walt. By the way, what have you called it?" "Uh, Big-Castle-Of-Nice-People-On-The-Hill-

Overlooking-The-River-Teme sir."

Then he's going to say "A little lacking in chutzpa, don't you think? When's your contract up for renewal?"

Two: I see your point.

Walter: We could name it after you.

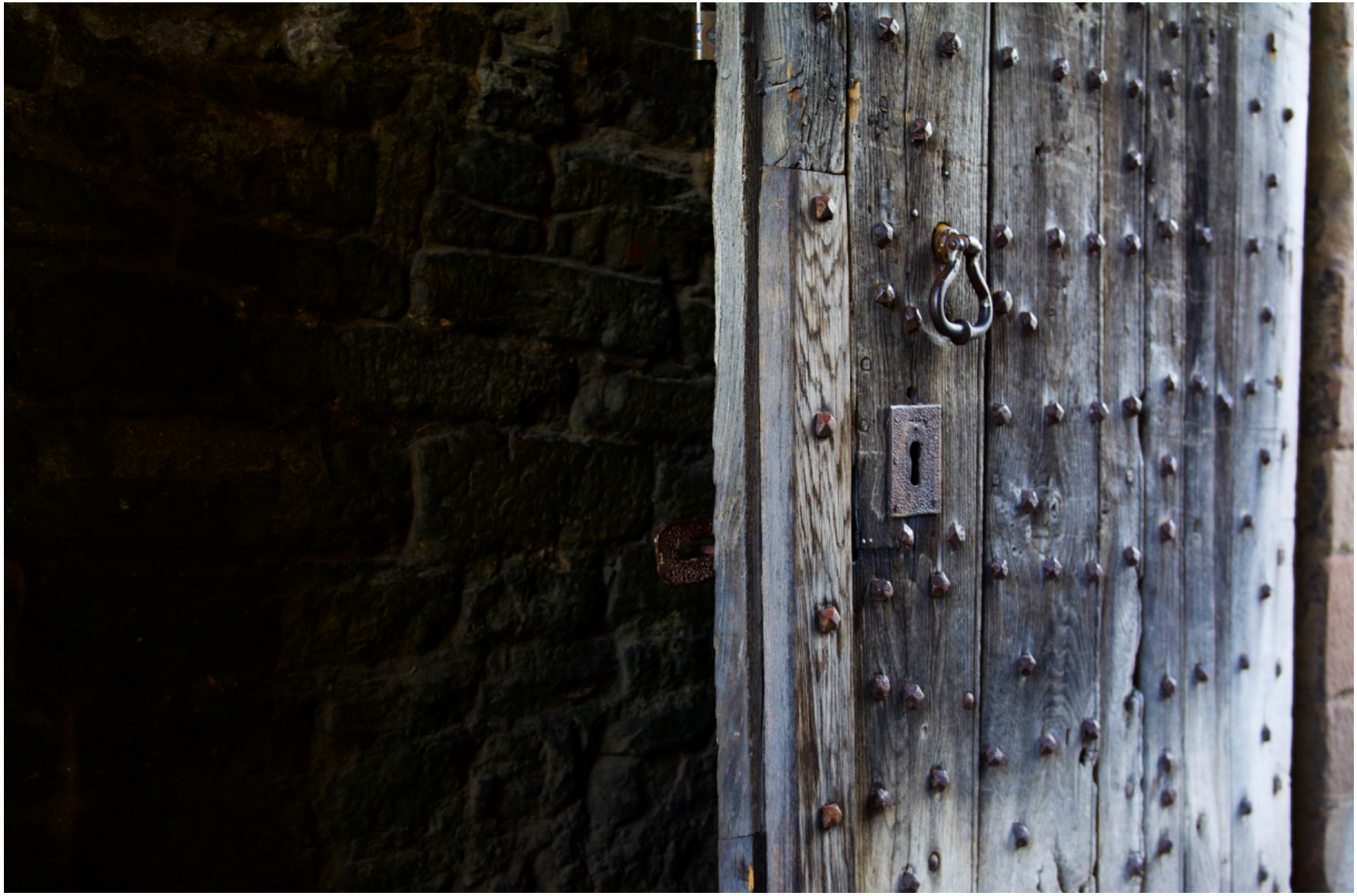
Two: After me Walt? Wow!

Walter: Yeah. Let's call it Ludlow. It's old English for 'bloody idiot.'

Two: Well, it's your castle....

Walter: Agghh!! I need a drink. Swan?

Two: Right. Let's do it. That young lady I met at the Swan...she has a sister....



Ludlow Castle, Shropshire

Ludlow Castle, Shropshire

Ludlow Castle, Shropshire

Ludlow Castle, Ludlow, Shropshire

Ludlow Castle, Shropshire

Ludlow Castle, Shropshire

Part 3: The South

Gloucester

The Cotswolds

Sugar

Slavery

The Rose Brothers

Bath

Steam

William Pengelly

George

Lost

Stone Circle

Clock House

Stonehenge

Gloucester

We covered a lot of ground on Days 10 and 11 – from Kendal to Lancaster (Ashton Hall) to Bakewell (Haddon Hall) to Tong (overnight) on Day 10; from Tong (St Bartholomew's Church) to Ludlow Castle to Gloucester on Day 11.

In Tong, as mentioned, we stayed at the Ramada Inn. The experience was predictable, hardly memorable. Perhaps I am unduly suspicious, but I seem to notice that rooms booked through Booking.com or its equivalent have characteristics different from those booked directly with the hotel. The former are typically located at the far end of the complex and/or directly opposite the gym and ice machine. They smell of smoke, sport rips in the wallpaper and display badly executed drywall patches carried out by a local 'dine and dasher' whose one beer too many reduced his Great Escape to running on the spot in slow mo'. Simply put, he didn't make it to the door and subbed as maintenance man for a month.

The Ramada Inn was on an island of sorts. It was surrounded by arterial roads and well removed from anything identifiable as quaint, village-like or walkable. We were marooned. Dinner was therefore in the Ramada pub, exact clones of which can be found in Missoula Montana, Prince George BC, St John's Newfoundland or for that matter, in my hometown of Victoria BC.

Were we hankering for a taste of Canada, we might have considered this experience as a welcome oasis. We were not. This was just another cattle pen of inebriated cows and bulls competing at top volume for airspace alongside multiple TV screens belching their own brand of indiscernible nonsense. It was insufferable. I looked around and found a back room for special events, nobody in it and a door. I placed our order at the bar and told the waitress where we were. I don't consider a beer and a hamburger to be a challenging order but apparently the Ramada does. It took 40 minutes to arrive. Perhaps we were being punished for anti-social behaviour. No matter. It was quiet and when the hamburgers did arrive, they were great.

Anyway, in that manner we dined, did not dash and fell asleep to the sound of crashing ice and the banging of the gym door. We

had booked through booking.com.

It was a two and a half hour drive from Ludlow to Gloucester (pronounced Gloster) and we were running late. So before we left Ludlow, we texted the rental agent to give an adjusted ETA for our meet. We arrived per the new ETA at the docks of Gloucester where we had rented a flat in a warehouse conversion. The agent was not there. We waited and before long she appeared wearing a troubled look. Something was up. A frustrated Greta blurted out that she had been looking for us for the last two hours. She hadn't received our text. We had texted the wrong number leaving Greta to conclude we were sticking to the original plan.

Greta quickly put the foul-up behind her and happily showed us the flat. The conversion was brilliant -- a tasteful, historically sensitive interior design both in the common areas and in the flat. In the latter, the small warehouse window openings had been retained; the replaced windows hinged outward like little French doors. Although the inside was modern, history remained. It was warm and cozy (not large) and along with the vintage sailing ships tied up just beyond the windows and five stories below, the entirety had a distinctly European air about it. It was as if we had made a wrong turn (read 'right' turn) and ended up in Amsterdam.

The Gloucester Docklands reach back to the 1840s when Gloucester was an important south coast seaport. It competed intensely with nearby Bristol that ultimately outshone it, possibly because Bristol had cornered the lucrative slave trade. Clustered around the edge of a finger of water sit perhaps 12 huge five-story brick warehouses through which metals, raw cotton, lumber, dyes, tea, coffee, spices and sugar from the colonies flowed in to Britain and manufactured goods from the furnaces and factories of Industrial Age Britain flowed back out to the colonies.

For the two hundred years of the 18th and 19th centuries, trade with its colonies was a good gig for British manufacturers, merchants and investors, and a good gig for the crown. All four became extremely rich. The national treasury filled to the brim with tax revenues which enabled Britain to build a formidable army and navy. Then, at the end of a gun barrel, it assembled the British Empire "upon which the sun never sets." The golden era for Gloucester occurred at the peak of Britain's wealth, power and influence.

The earlier 1600s, however, were a different story. For much of

that century, Britain was gripped by revolts, civil wars, religious conflicts, the growing pains of parliamentary democracy and the desperate acts of monarchs hanging onto power. It was a mess.

The second day of our visit to Gloucester fell on a Saturday and that weekend happened to be the Gloucester History Festival. That afternoon at a large playing field near our flat, two hundred or more re-enactors assembled to relive the Siege of Gloucester.

The troops of each side were dressed in period regalia, including helmets, body armour, 15 foot pikes (long thrusting spears good for whacking cavalry off their mounts for re-education sessions), and muskets. At one end of the field were the Royalists, forces loyal to King James II. At the other end were the Parliamentarians, those under the control of Parliament, specifically, under the command of Oliver Cromwell. Each side had field guns and a contingent of horsemen.

At intervals, one side attacked the other. First, there was a barrage from the artillery guns; clouds of blue smoke obscured the field (Archers were not employed. Perhaps there had been a bad experience in past years). Then out of the smoke came a hundred men from one side, running down field as best they could for their age and condition. The defending force was ready. A volley of muskets split the air and those who fired them disappeared in the smoke.

Then chaos reigned. The two sides clashed and battled it out in hand-to-hand combat that degenerated into a rugby scrum. Casualties dropped to the grass and were dragged off by comrades. Mounted soldiers with big grins on their faces appeared next, harrying those on foot and adding to the chaos. When energy levels ebbed to the point where combatants were engrossed in conversation and exchanging phone numbers, the retreat was sounded and both sides, in pub-like arm-on-shoulder clusters, laughing and jibing one another, sauntered back to their respective ends to re-load and await the command to do it all again.

All this was carried out to replay the events of 1643 when Royalist troops laid siege to the town of Gloucester. Gloucester had chosen to side with the Parliamentarians and Oliver Cromwell. King Charles I had brought in a Ship Tax in 1634 that seriously reduced trade throughout the local Severn Valley. Businesses were suffering. They saw no reason why they should have to pay a tax to fund the Royal Navy so Charles could advance his own political agenda.
And folks objected to the monarchy on religious grounds.

Although Charles I was Protestant, his queen, Henriette Maria, was a French Catholic. Many believed that the queen extended preferential treatment to fellow Catholics at their expense and worse, they worried that Henriette might convince Charles to re-introduce Catholicism to England.

It took ten years to subjugate the West Counties, but by 1643, Royalist forces had secured most of it, sentencing thousands of objectors to ten years of hard labour in the cane fields of Barbados and executing thousands more. Among the lists of those transported in 1634 and 1635 were sixteen boys and men with names common to my family tree: Fisher, Hayward, Williams, Webb, Knight, Bellamy, Adams, Mitchell, Lawrence, Cox and Hicks. On the lists of those executed, family names appear again: Knight, Evans, Cox and Hicks. These were perhaps the same families who, ten years after the Siege of Gloucester, listened to the ideas of George Fox, then rejected the status quo in favour of a new way of being in the world, Quakerism. Those that did, did so at great cost.

Gloucester was the last holdout. Royalists pounded the town with cannon balls for days but failed to breach the walls. What the Royalists thought would be a walk in the park turned out to be a fight to the last man, woman and child. Gloucester held out against the Royalists until Parliamentarian reinforcements arrived from London and routed the attackers. Word of the courageous defence of Gloucester spread, raising the hopes of people in the West Country and adding to the rising tide of anti-monarchists. In 1644 Cromwell and the Parliamentarians prevailed and the Commonwealth of England was born. It would last for eleven years, from 1649 to 1660.

The itinerary called for us to see a number of venues in Gloucester – museums, Roman ruins and Gloucester Cathedral. We opted to pare it back, giving us more time to just walk the streets, take photos and get a sense of the place. It worked.

Siege of Gloucester 1643

Siege of Gloucester 1643

Siege of Gloucester 1643

Siege of Gloucester 1643

Siege of Gloucester 1643

The Cotswolds

The Cotswolds lie in south central England. It comprises a range of rolling hills which rise from the meadows of the upper Thames River. Along its east side is an escarpment called the Cotswold Edge. The Cotswolds is large: 1280 square kilometres in area, 160 kilometres long and around 40 kilometres wide. Its perimeter falls within five counties. Scattered throughout the region are a dozen or so picturesque ancient villages dating back centuries. Cotswolds real estate today is owned strictly by the rich or lucky.

For walkers, the Cotswolds is an unimaginable treasure. In a week, on the Cotswolds Way, one can walk the entire east side of it, taking in views of the valley below and on a clear day, Westminster Abbey (just kidding). Each night, a village will appear where one can muster a well-earned pint, a good meal and a sound sleep.

The name Cotswolds derives from the Anglo-Saxon word ‘wold’ meaning ‘high land’ and Cod, the name of an Anglo-Saxon chieftain who owned the land in the 12th century. Hence: ‘Cod’s wolds’ which became ‘Cotswolds.’

We gave ourselves a day to explore the Cotswolds, not nearly enough but all we had. It was a one hour drive from Gloucester to the closest village Broadway, not the bustling centre the name implies but a lovely little village on the northwest edge of the Cotswolds. It was just 9am when we arrived so we picked out a cafe, already bustling with patrons, and enjoyed breakfast. By the time we had finished, an hour later, the village was alive with visitors.

The Cotswolds are an AONB – Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. AONBs were first proposed by John Dower in 1945 as a way to protect and enhance areas of countryside with exceptional qualities that are too small and lacking in wildness (read stuffed with villages) to qualify as national parks. There are 46 AONBs in Britain; 33 of them lie within England.

Of all the AONBs the Cotswolds is perhaps the best known and most visited, for good reason. You could not imagine a country setting more quintessentially English. Tucked here and there within the rolling hills of the Cotswolds are dozens of quaint little villages, their houses all built from honey-coloured Cotswold

stone, each village impeccably returned to its original 16th to 17th century state. There are no gas stations, no neon signs, no strip malls. It is almost a walk back in time.

I say almost because what the Cotswolds do have is thousands and thousands of cars, occupied by yet more thousands of tourists intent on experiencing the slow, measured pace of medieval England. It is possible to feel something of that earlier time, provided you're able to arrive at a village mid-week before 9am on a blustery November day. Otherwise, I suggest you fashion a set of blinders similar to those used by the cart horses of old, secure them to your head and walk about thusly. The effect will be to minimize what you see to what's dead ahead – shop windows, twelve assorted people and the pavement, but no cars.

The wherewithal to do that, of course, is predicated on finding and securing a parking space, so that you can walk about. We tried. Like octogenarian snails at a snail convention, we inched Perky through Chipping Camden end to end three times, placing our faith in a chance offering by a sympathetic and beneficent God – the possibility, however remote, of a car pulling out just as we happened along. Such things do happen but this day no cars pulled out; no spaces materialized. There would be no Chipping Camden. It was disappointing, but we were armed with enough memorable glimpses to place the Cotswolds on our 'Return List.' In the early afternoon we left for Gloucester.

On the way and still well into the country, we happened upon a line of bumper-to-bumper traffic, fortuitously in the oncoming lane. The cars were creeping along at two kilometres per hour and were backed up for what must have been 8 kilometres. An accident I suppose for it was too early for commuters.

For me, the question was not "Why are they backed up?" but "Where are they all going?" We were in the country. There was no significant town nearby. The possibility I am led to consider is this: England has judiciously zoned for small pockets of housing here and there throughout its rural areas with the effect of reducing population pressures on historic towns and villages that they wish to conserve. If true, then rural areas in England, despite their appearance of being sparsely populated, are not. But by spreading people out, a slower, saner lifestyle, devoid of the commercialism so rampant in North America, is achievable. Brilliant. Is it true?

Broadway, in the Cotswolds near Gloucester

Broadway, in the Cotswolds near Gloucester

Broadway, in the Cotswolds near Gloucester

Broadway, in the Cotswolds near Gloucester

Sugar

Introduction of Slavery

British Interest in growing sugar cane in the West Indies began a few years after her acquisition of Barbados in 1623 and the capture of Jamaica from the Spanish in 1655. Of several crops tested, sugar showed huge potential. It grew rapidly, did not spoil once processed and fetched an extremely high price. Sugar was a symbol of success. If you had sugar on your table, you most certainly had a mountain of money in the bank.

The shortcoming of sugar cane was that it was labour-intensive to cultivate, harvest and process. And the work was back-breaking to the point that few would apply. At first, Indentured servants were utilized, then African slaves were introduced. That event transformed the sugar economy and would come to devastate the lives of many million Africans.

Slavery Economics

Although slaves were not cheap to purchase, ownership existed for the lifetime of the slave from whom inhuman amounts of work could be extracted at minimal cost. As well, offspring of slave mothers became the property of slave owners, offsetting the depreciating value of their parents.

Slavery was viewed by owners as a form of animal management. They were bought, worked, bred and auctioned off like cattle. Their sole purpose was to make their owners rich and give them a life of comfort previously only available to the ultra wealthy. To maximize their profits and squeeze every last pound of value from their slaves, some owners purposely worked their human chattels to death, then simply bought a replacement.

Yes, some slaves, particularly house slaves such as nannies, became endeared to their owners, who treated them well, as a sort of special class of family member. However, for the most part, slaves were simply appliances. They were given names, just as we name our cars or pets or assign numbers to inmates. A slave's name might be the name of the ship the slave arrived on, its captain, a Greek god and so on. It was never the African's birth name. Naming was one more way to dehumanize the slave, quash any artifacts of his or her previous life and, like domesticating a horse, render the slave broken and subservient.

Growth From Sugar

Like the North American gold rushes of the 1800s, growing sugar was for the intrepid of the mid to late1600s, the path to quick riches and quite possibly, a short life, for the West Indies were rife with deadly diseases. From a small settlement on

Barbados in 1627, the population of the West Indies grew to 44,000 by 1650, more than the population of the Chesapeake and all of New England combined. Jamaica had similar rates of growth.

Slavery

The Triangular Trade

As the demand for slaves rose in the late 1600s, it did not take wily British slave traders and investors long to work out a system to maximize their profits. That system became known as the Triangular Slave Trade.

The Triangular Slave Trade operated largely out of London, Bristol and Liverpool. It was so named for the three-legs of the voyage and the three trades that made it so lucrative: English merchants shipped manufactured goods, particularly copper pots, utensils, cotton and gunpowder to African slave-traders on the Ivory and Gold Coasts in exchange for slaves; the slaves were shackled in the holds of the same ships and transported to the West Indies where they were sold for sugar; the sugar was shipped to London and sold for a massive profit. The entire voyage took 12 to 18 months.

Capture and Transport

The African traders made raids on coastal and interior villages capturing men, women and children whom they force marched with brutal efficiency to their white counterparts on the coast. Many died en route. There, the slaves were sold to British factors of the Royal African Company (RAC). The RAC held the terrified victims in holding prisons under deplorable conditions, awaiting ships which would transport most of them to the West Indies.

Those who survived the forced march, the prison and the voyage were, upon arrival in Barbados or Jamaica, kept in 'seasoning camps' where they adjusted to or died from tropical diseases. One academic estimates that 33% of Africans died within the first year at these seasoning camps. The most notorious of those camps was in Jamaica where most died of dysentery.

Sold At Auction

By royal charter, the Royal African Company held a monopoly on all trading into Africa, including the purchase and sale of slaves. In turn, a percentage of their revenues were paid to the monarchy. In the New World, the RAC sold their human cargo to established traders who sold the slaves at auction. As slaves were viewed as no more than a commodity, little to no consideration was given to keeping enslaved families together.

The Cost in Lives

Experts believe that 12 million to 12.8 million Africans were shipped across the Atlantic over 400 years. However the actual number of enslaved Africans was substantially higher as millions died during each stage of the process — the village raids, transport to the coast, the coastal prisons, the voyage and the seasoning camps. Indeed, more slaves may have died during the rigours of capture and transport than those who survived. Merchants of the City of Bristol alone traded about 500,000 Africans over the course of the slave trade.

Profits

Once the slaves had been debarked, traders would load their holds with sugar, then head for Britain and the ports of London, Bristol and Liverpool. Funds from the sale of the sugar flowed back to the individual investors or syndicates of investors who owned the plantations or funded the Triangular Trade. Many men and women got rich. As arms length investors, some may have had little idea of the horrors their actions had caused, or if they did, cared not.

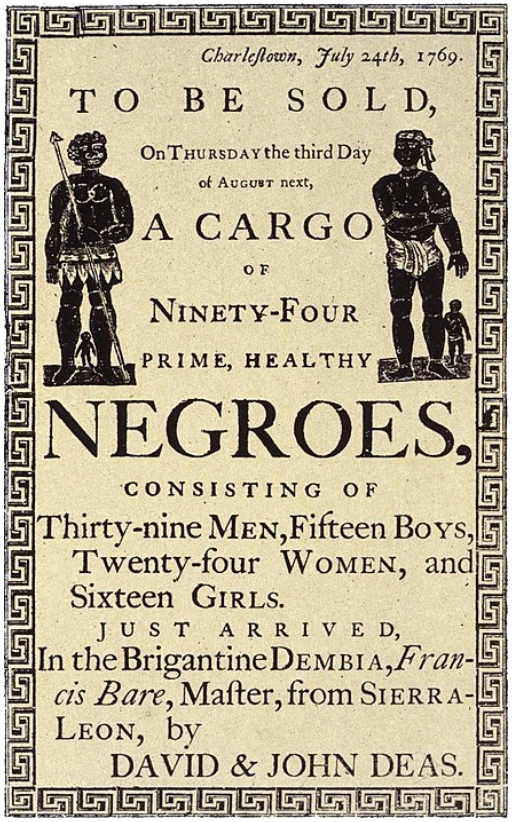
By far, Britain's West Indies colonies were the most profitable of any in the Caribbean. Planters made fortunes as did British slave merchants and investors. Between 1630 and 1807 the profit to British slave merchants and investors was approximately 12 million pounds. About 75% of raw goods exported from the American colonies was produced by slaves.

The profits of slavery were ploughed back into other investments, fuelling the expansion of the British Empire and its colonies, which by the mid 1800s, girdled the world. Textile manufacturing in the Midlands made cotton cloth from American raw cotton which traders used to buy slaves in West Africa. The slave system became an upward spiral, one element amplifying the capacity and value of its other elements and vice versa.

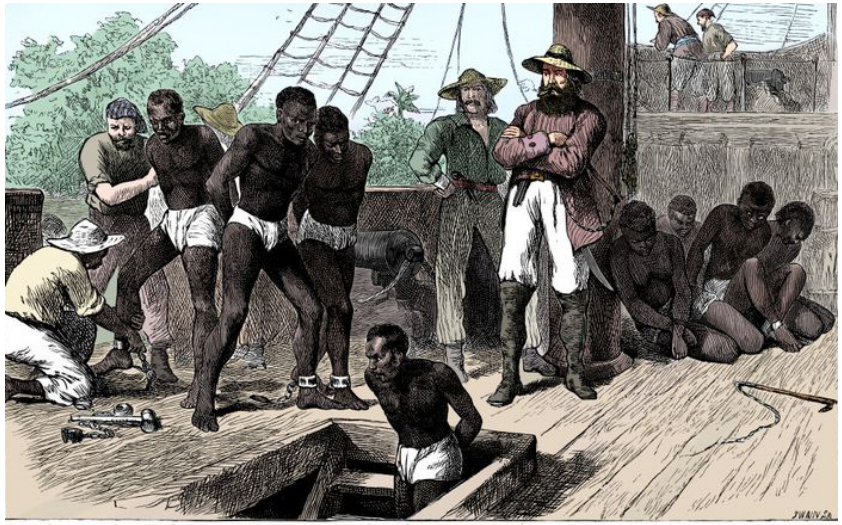
The Players

Although the costs of fitting out a slave trading ship and supporting a year-long voyage were high, big players were at the ready to finance and underwrite slaving ventures. The Bank of England made funds available for slaving endeavours, as did Lloyds of London Insurance and many private banks and businesses. Surprisingly, Quaker owned Barclays Bank made a fortune by buying up banks which financed the slave trade, including the extremely profitable Heywood's Bank which served Liverpool merchants and traders. In modern times, Barclay's defence has been 'we cannot be held responsible for the sins of

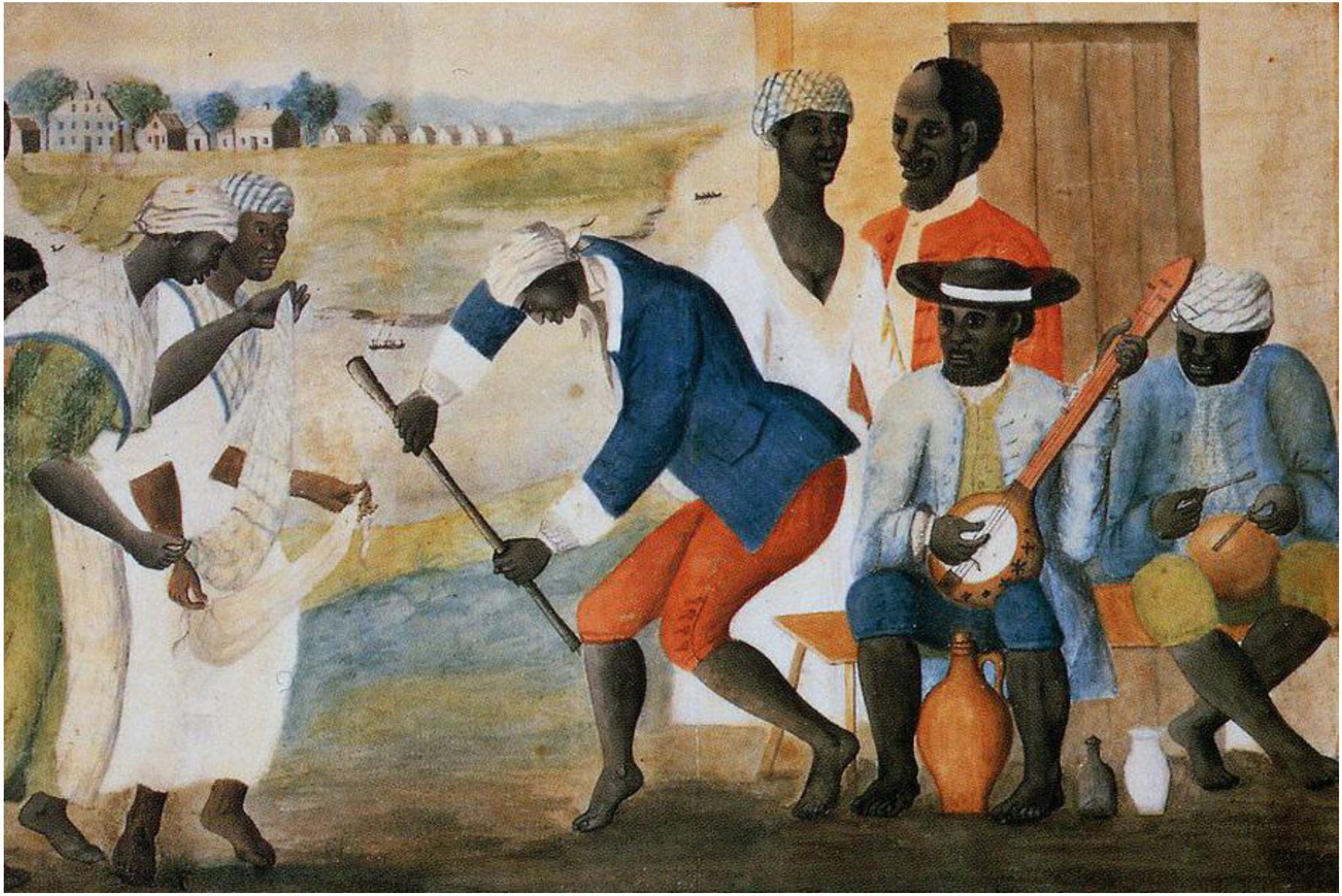
those whose banks we purchased. We hold true to our Quaker values.' A questionable assertion at best.




EXTERIOR OF A DISTILLERY,
on Weatherells Estate Antigua.



ON BOARD A SLAVE-SHIP.



The Rose Brothers

Jamaica

In the 1600s, home for the Rose family was the little village of Mickleton on the northeast edge of the Cotswolds. Reverend Thomas Rose (1619-1692) and his wife Francesse Fisher (1619-1661) had 10 children. At about age 24, the eldest son, Dr. Fulke Rose (1644-1695), decided to make his fortune in Jamaica, by doctoring to wealthy plantation owners. He must have quickly landed on his feet, for in 1670, he is listed as owner of a sugar plantation. Fulke's brothers, Francis (1654-1720) and Thomas (1649-1679), joined Fulke to help manage the plantation. A fourth brother John (1651-1703) was a sea captain and London merchant and owned three ships. And a fifth brother, William (1640-1711), was an apothecary in London.

When Fulke arrived in Jamaica in the late 1660s, the colony had only been a British possession for a dozen years. Over that period, its capital, Port Royal, had effectively been controlled by pirates and privateers. It was a wild and lawless place, where the streets were filled with drunken brawling seamen and prostitutes plying their trade. Life among many of the plantation owners, report Quaker missionaries, was little better and Quaker efforts at conversion were a dismal failure.

The Monmouth Rebellion

Three significant events were going on in Britain or under the control of Britain at the time, events which presented opportunities to the Rose brothers. The first was the immensely lucrative sugar trade and the second was the advent of slavery as previously described and of which Fluke Rose had taken full advantage.

The third opportunity for the Rose Brothers arose from political events. The Monmouth Rebellion broke out in1685. Upon the Restoration (the return of the monarchy after eleven plus years of Oliver Cromwell's republic), Charles II, a Protestant assumed the throne. All went well until his death, when his brother James II

took over. James was a Catholic. That did not go down well with the Protestants of the west counties. Then the Protestant Duke of Monmouth, a popular figure in that neck of the woods and an illegitimate son of Charles II, laid claim to the throne. He began recruiting troops in the south and west counties with plans to march on London.

Things did not go as planned. His brigade of farmers and artisans were ill equipped to deal with the regular army. The rebellion collapsed. Monmouth was executed for treason on 15 July 1685. Many of his supporters were tried and condemned to death.

To make a point, some were drawn and quartered while others were boiled alive in tar. It's unclear whether the organizers of the event gave their hapless victims a choice (an early expression of democracy), whether they alternated tar and quartering (a decidedly German approach) or whether they looked to the assembled crowd of eager revellers for guidance and counted their up-raised hands (another expression of early democracy): "Right, how many for tarring?

Transportation

Although Africans constituted the vast majority of slaves, there was another source of labour — criminals and rebels who received seven to ten year sentences in the colonies. As serious offenders in those days were often executed, those who received the sentence of 'transportation' were frequently very minor offenders. A desperate mother of young children, who steals a loaf of bread, could spend ten years in far away Australia. Minor participants in rebellions received the same. Often they were just boys and young men, game for excitement and aiding a good cause. Members of my family were among both those who were executed and those who were transported.

Eight hundred and ninety rebels, the more fortunate, received a sentence of 'transportation' -- ten years of servitude in the colonies, unless they died en route, packed 'tween decks' like cattle.

Those transported largely went to the West Indies where they laboured as slaves on the sugar plantations. Criminals of the day fortunate enough to avoid the executioner's block were also shipped en mass to the West Indies and the British American colonies. 'Transportation' had become a masterful solution to a costly problem for whomever was in power: what to do with the thousands of folks who don't 'tow the line' (Definition: to haul barges along a canal with long lines; an 'oft-used expression of

English-born Hester (Spriggs) Bruce to bring to the attention of her errant son Peter that he was not ‘up to snuff’ or had not ‘cut the mustard’ or if the situation demanded, God forbid, “I’m getting the brush” — code for ‘you are about to be transported to the colonies.’ “Uh, mum, we’re there already”).

The Syndicate

It seems that one of the Rose brothers, probably Fulke, came up with an idea to make a lot of money by employing their various skills to capitalize on the three opportunities: sugar, slavery and transportation, that is, to operate a truncated version of the Triangular Slave Trade.

And so, the brothers worked together as a syndicate: Fulke, Thomas and Francis ran the plantation, John contracted with England to transport criminals and rebels to Jamaica (as well as Barbados) where he conveyed his human cargo to Fulke (unconfirmed). Fulke was thus assured a steady supply of free labour for his plantation. John, once free of his human cargo, filled his ships with Rose sugar and returned to England where the payload was sold for a good deal of money. William served as the family banker.

In some form, much of that appears to have happened. Fulke made almost as much money from his medical practice as he did from the plantation, enough in fact to purchase several more plantations and houses and land in both Jamaica and England.

Fulke appears to have discovered that the buying and selling of African slaves was also a highly lucrative endeavour for he became one of the four largest slave traders in Jamaica. He purchased slaves from the Royal African Company which, by charter, held a monopoly on the transport and sale of slaves (and allotter goods) acquired in West Africa. About 5000 slaves per year made the treacherous voyage, prostrate and chained cheek by jowl for three months below decks. As much as 20% of the slaves died en route, some of them by suicide. The Rose plantation clearly used African slaves, as they were by far, the most cost-efficient form of labour and as a slave trader, his access to slaves was unlimited. In a nutshell, Fulke Rose got rich. Very rich.

The Economics of Slavery

Sugar plantations were the most labour intensive of any crop in the day and were considered the ‘worst of the worst’ in terms of the nature of the work. Cotton plantations in New England could get by with one slave per ten acres; sugar plantations required as many as one slave per acre. A three hundred fifty acre plantation

was viewed as sizable and required a sizeable capital investment. So even if the estimate of one slave per acre is off by 50%, such a plantation would have 175 adult slaves. The average lifespan of a slave was said to be a scant nine years. Thus, regular slave purchases were required to replace those who died.

Abolition

In 1833, after almost 200 years of lobbying by Quakers, including my family and many others, the Slavery Abolition Act was passed, and slavery was abolished in Britain and its colonies. However, the corporate world, as we know, is quick to adapt to change. Immediately following 1833, the plantations switched to indentured servants -- slavery by another name.

William Rose: Apothecary

Apothecaries no longer exist. In good measure, it's because of a court case involving our William Rose. In the 17th and 18th centuries, there were three providers of medical services, not counting midwives (midwives were not considered part of the medical community): surgeons, physicians and apothecaries. Surgeons carried out basic surgery. They amputated crushed limbs, set broken bones and effected other duties related to the mechanics of the body.

Physicians were the highest order of medical practitioner. They were sometimes university trained, as was Dr Fulke Rose's grandson, Dr Rose Fuller. They diagnosed a wide range of ailments, illnesses and other conditions, carried out medical procedures of the day with hit and miss results and prescribed medicines.

The apothecary made up those medicines and unlike the pharmacists of today, apothecaries also provided medical advice and treatments, blurring the roles of apothecary and physician.

Apothecaries had moved into the physician's territory in order to service people who did not have the means to pay the physicians' high fees. Naturally, physicians were not pleased with this state of affairs and at every opportunity, they jealously guarded their right to diagnose and prescribe.

In 1701, a butcher from Hungerford Market whose name was John Seale consulted William Rose about what was probably a sexually transmitted disease. William tried various treatments over several months without success. He finally called it quits and presented Mr. Seale with a bill for 50 pounds, a considerable sum.

Mr. Seale complained to the College of Physicians who brought the matter before the court arguing that William was practicing illegally as a physician. The case was extensively debated and ultimately, a decision was made in favour of the physicians. Next, the Society of Apothecaries appealed, arguing that physicians' high fees excluded the poor from their services and thus, the apothecaries were providing an essential service. William won the case on appeal in 1704.

Not to be outdone, physicians set up free dispensaries for the poor, designed, no doubt, to undercut (unsuccessfully) the apothecaries' business. There were no hard feelings, you understand. It was just that the apothecaries, with their questionable formal education and class roots were hardly candidates for the medical profession, traditionally and properly the precinct of the privileged.

Both sides of this issue were entrenched in the family, for it was Hans Sloane (1660-1753), the second husband of Dr Fulke Rose's wife, Elizabeth Langley, (1662-1724) who formulated the plan for the free dispensaries and largely financed the project. Sloane was an eminent English physician, naturalist, philanthropist and originator of the British Museum.

The ruling in favour of the apothecaries is still considered to be the beginning of General Practice in England. That is to say that apothecaries later became our general practice medical doctors. Today, the Rose Prize of the Royal College of General Practitioners is named in William's honour. It is awarded 'For original work in the history of medical practice in the British Isles.'

It is one of those curious ironies of history, I suppose, that William (unwittingly) contributed so significantly to the practice of medicine on the one hand and with the other, deposited to the bank large sums of cash which he and his brothers acquired on the backs of slaves and for which many slaves gave their lives.

Bath

Bath is named for the famous Roman baths in the centre of this small town of 88000 people. It is 80 kilometres and an hour's drive southeast of Gloucester, at the southern end of the Cotswolds, in the County of Somerset.

It was Day 14. We had the day to drive to Bath but we chose to get there directly and poke about. Faithful Garmina was on board with the plan and we found our next digs without having to perform HCS (Headless Chicken Shuffle). We were too early to check in but we claimed a parking space on the narrow road outside the flat and walked for twenty minutes into town. The town centre is very compact. Like the Shambles of York, one can walk its breadth in twenty minutes. So in the space of that afternoon we were able to get our bearings, visit Bath Abbey and the Roman Bath and return to the flat in time to check in.

The building that housed our flat was likely Georgian, early eighteen hundreds. Characteristic of the era, our building stretched an entire block and comprised a series of conjoined townhouses. Once homes for the wealthy, these old girls had long ago been sliced and diced into multiple self-owned flats. At the appointed hour, our lovely host, Sue, 40s something, unlocked the front door of 32 Grosvenor Place, then led us down a long, steep staircase to the lower floor. It did not bode well. As we descended into the abyss, a vision of 3 nights in a windowless cave left me gritting my teeth. Accommodation is always a craps shoot. Sometimes you win; sometimes you do not. At the bottom of the stairs there was one door — ours. What greeted us was beyond imagining.

The flat faced a small garden enclosed by a stone wall which provided complete privacy. Large multi-paned windows and a French door flooded the flat with light. There was a comfy sofa and chair and tasteful, homey furnishings that said 'You're still in England.' Behind the small living room was a glass dining table and behind that again was a bedroom and bathroom. The flat

was modern, painted in quiet designer colours and clean. Brick arches were everywhere apparent, revealing the building's foundations and the flats original use as a cellar. We were tickled…and relieved. This would be a good stay.

The following day, we walked into town to rendez-vous with a pre-arranged tour. It would begin with a boat ride on the River Avon (no, a different River Avon) and end with a walking tour of the town. Suffice it to say, finding the rendezvous was like an Easter egg hunt hosted by a sadistic adult. Randi found it (she usually does) at the last minute, after I finally abandoned my own ideas that had come to naught (Say, you wouldn't be a Tight, would you Peter? Just asking). It was not up the highway after all, but on the canal, where boats like to be — floating. Still, we should have walked up the highway. It would have been vastly more interesting than the boat ride.

The subsequent walking tour was fine, not inspiring. I spent the time shooting, mostly. In the afternoon, we joined the masses at the Roman Bath. There was a queue of course, but it was painless. This venue was worth every penny. Wonderfully done. I was astonished at how much of the bath is intact: the structure, the massive columns, the pool and surround, and on the upper balcony, numerous statues of ruggedly handsome Roman potentates. Duty and determination were etched on their faces; they cast glances to the pool below, a firm reminder to its occupants that there was still much to be done.

There were multiple levels to the bath — the upper balcony, the pool below and two or was it three levels below the pool which displayed artifacts of the Roman period and the inner workings of the bath. Around the pool, cadres of fresh-looking uniformed students spoke volumes. They lounged, listened to audio pods or chatted in low tones. Some slouched against columns, their vacant stares suggesting they had long since left the bath for more interesting places.

And there too were the Selfies, posing against strategic backdrops designed to impress back home. One young woman approached me on the upper balcony to take her selfie. I did. She checked the result. "No, no. Over here," pointing to a spot where both the Roman Baths and Bath Abbey could be seen behind. I took the shot; she checked the result. Not good enough. "Again please," her voice firm with no hint of apology. It took about eight shots before Selfie was either satisfied or had deemed myself and the project hopeless. She offered a perfunctory thank you and moved on to the next photo op and her next assistant.

Heritage Day: Royalist Camp at Bath, Somerset

When I got home from the trip I related this incident to my middle-aged friend Maria who had recently been in Venice with her husband. She wanted to take a picture from the Rialto Bridge, but it was packed with people. A young Selfie was at the rail, her boyfriend taking the requisite dozen shots. Maria waited patiently, then waited some more…and some more. Maria is Italian. Finally, she broke, screaming back to her husband at the end of the bridge, "I CAN'T TAKE A PICTURE BECAUSE THIS BLOODY BITCH WON'T STOP POSING! Revolution nears. Settlement in the area of Bath predates the Romans, but I am hesitant to convey the entirety. Should I do so, I fear the worst. Already you are slouched in that armchair I suggested at the outset (well done), bottle of Bordeaux clasped loosely at the end of your dangling left arm. I fear the slightest reference to Celts of the pre-Christian era may see the bottle slip from your grasp as you slip from consciousness. Such a mess to clean up and oh, look what it's done to the Turkish rug!

Let us not forget the wise words oft repeated by our mothers, those of John Wesley, theologian and minister who moved to Bath in 1851: "Cleanliness is next to Godliness." Here then is the executive summary, for those of you who are on the verge of changing your mind -- deciding that waxing the car etcetera holds more allure after all than reading this tome.

Ten years after the Romans invaded Britain in 54BC, times were quiet. Peace reigned, except for the Scots, of course. But that little problem would be fixed with a wall soon enough. Ring any bells? The Roman elite was bored, homesick and dirty. They hadn't had a good bath since they arrived and the smell was making it difficult for them to hook up with the locals.

Enter Cleanius, man servant to Aulus Plautius, the Roman Governor of the day. Cleanius arrived back on the job in Londinium after extended time off (the Romans offered a good benefits package):

Aulus: Ahh, wine. Thank you Cleanius [pause]. There is something different about you Cleanius. I can't quite put my finger on it...you look... well, fresh, invigorated...[sniffing]...you smell nice. What have you been up to?

Cleanius: I was visiting family Sire, a hundred mille passum to the west of here. There are hot springs there, which I frequent daily to cleanse the body and raise the spirit.

Aulus: Christ (Aulus was a man ahead of his time), let's go.

Cleanius: I'm sorry Sire?

Aulus: Let's go. I could surely use a good bath and a spirit-raising. Some days this job really sucks. I'd rather sell sandals in the market. Mind if I invite a few friends along?

Cleanius: I'd be honoured Sire. Shall I pack the usual for the trip – wine, grapes and cheese?

Aulus: Yes Cleanius. And toss in a goat, would you? Enough for all of us. Did you catch that?

Cleanius: Catch what Sire?

Entry Hall, Roman Bath at Bath, Somerset

Aulus: That's a play on words, Cleanius. Aulus...all-of-us.

Cleanius: Brilliant Sire. Very catchy.

Aulus: I'm losing it, aren't I? A spa, that's what I need. Somewhere to get in a little R and R. Just hang out, read a few scrolls.

The rest is history. The baths were built as part of a larger spa the Romans named Aquae Sulis or 'waters of Sulis.' During the Middle Ages, Bath was an important centre for trading wool. Queen Elizabeth declared Bath a city in 1585. Regrettably, a pundit of the day described her ankles as "ugly." The queen never revisited Bath and when her coach was obliged to pass through, the blinds of her carriage were firmly down. The queen was pissed.

"Damn the press. Insufferable blackards. Fake news, that's what it is. A witch hunt. Strike that. 'Gerald, how much room do we have in the tower these days? I see. Well, bloody well build another one. Make it two for God's sake. Get on with it man. It's time to clean house…again.'"

Bath Abbey, Bath, Somerset

Georgian period re-enactors at Bath

Roman Bath at Bath, Somerset

Roman Bath at Bath, Somerset

William Pengelly

William Pengelly FRS FGS (1812-1894) was a geologist and amateur palaeontologist. He was one of the first to contribute proof that the Biblical version of the creation of the earth calculated by Archbishop James Ussher was incorrect. Phrased differently, Pengelly's findings irrefutably supported Charles Darwin's theory of evolution which until then, was still being hotly debated.

Early Life

William was born in the picturesque seaside village of East Looe, Cornwall. His father was a sea captain who operated a local coastal freighting service. From a very early age it was apparent to William's mother that the boy was extraordinarily bright. When William was still a toddler, she appealed to the local headmistress to allow him to enter school. The headmistress promptly denied the request, arguing that William was far too young. A few days later she was walking past the Pengelly residence and noticed little William sitting on the stoop entirely engrossed in a book. She stopped and watched. William was reading the bible out loud page after page, perfectly. He was forthwith enrolled. At age 12, however, William left school to join his father's crew. He never returned to school.

At Sea

The next 4 years he spent at sea with his father. William had a small, well-thumbed collection of books on board, the contents of which he could likely recite by heart. But he made the best of the situation, becoming a crew favourite with his off-watch readings and posing mathematical conundrums to his shipmates which lead to heated debates and much good fun.

Pengelly's School

At age 16, William returned to Looe where he began his life-long devotion to self-education. He read widely and taught himself advanced mathematics, then in 1836, aged 24, William started a day school in Torquay. He operated the school for 10 years, during which time it developed a reputation for exceptional content and instruction.

Educator and Tudor

William found, however, that he needed more personal time to pursue his academic interests and from then on, made his living as a private tutor and public lecturer on various scientific subjects. His reputation as an inspiring teacher spanned not only Britain but all of Europe. Legend has it that prestigious people including members of royal families would literally come knocking on his Torquay cottage door, imploring William to take their son or daughter under his wing.

Devotion to Learning

Over the course of his career, William published some 120 scientific papers on geology, palaeontology and human prehistory. In 1862 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. Williams passion to teach and make education available to others did not stop there. He founded the Torquay Mechanic's Institute, the Torquay Natural History Society and the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Literature, Science and Art.

Family

William had three children by Mary Ann Mudge before she died in 1851. Two years later he married Lydia Spriggs, a Quaker, with whom he had two daughters. The younger daughter Hester became his biographer and secretary. She married Forbes Julian, a mining engineer who founded the Royal Automobile Club.

The Hunt For Evidence

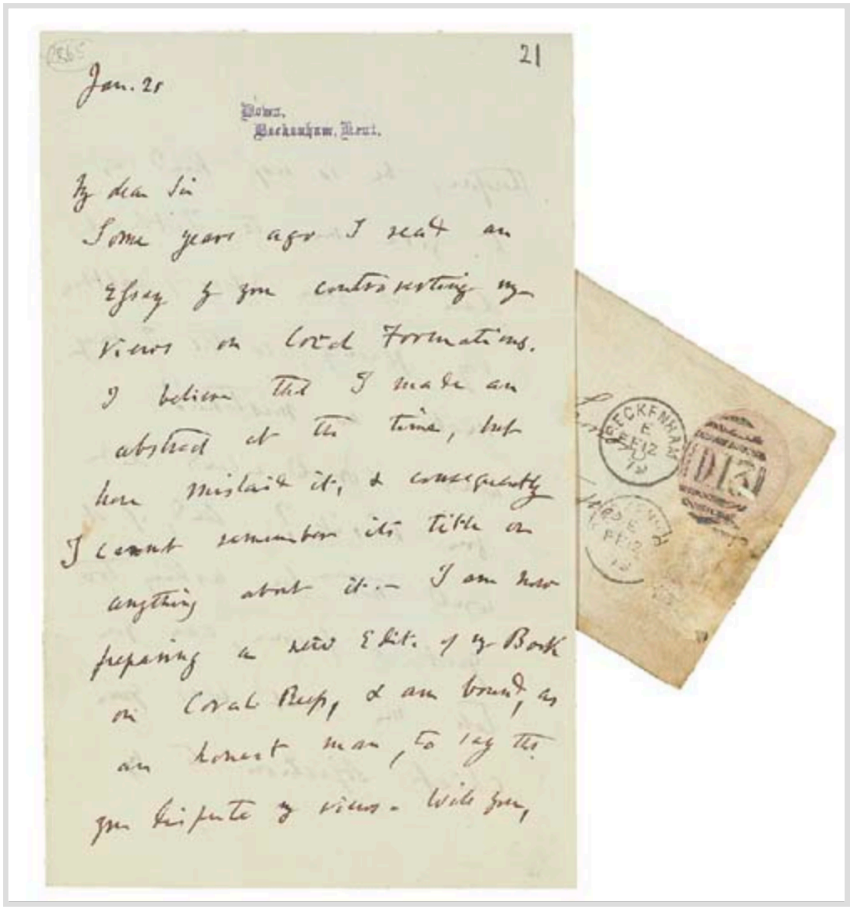
The southern edge of England is old seafloor, layer upon layer of limestone. Seepage into the porous limestone has over millenia, created numerous caves. William extensively excavated one of those caves, Kent's Cavern, adding to previous work done by Father John MacEnery. Both found evidence of human beings (Palaeolithic flint tools) and the bones of extinct mammals in the same strata. MacEnery's work was carried out years earlier when any challenges to the Bibles 'truth' would have generated outrage and outright rejection of his findings. William, however, was able to publish both his and MacEnery's findings and convey them to the scientific community. Sceptics, however, handily dismissed the findings because the frequent excavations of Kent's Cavern raised the possibility that evidence in one layer had migrated to another.

Proof

Then in 1858, a new cave dubbed Windmill Hill Cavern was discovered, the floor of which was sealed by an unbroken stalagmite sheet. This was the defining moment for those

arguing that human beings had been around far longer than the Bible asserted.

For the evidence which came out of this cave to be unassailable, strict procedures and oversight were put in place. Under the auspices and supervision of the Royal Society and the Geological Society, William and John Evans methodically removed the stalagmite sheet and below it, found the evidence they were looking for — cave lion and wooly rhinoceros bones together with human-crafted flints. In this way, in 1859, William along with John Evans and other's, were able to forcefully demonstrate a case for the existence of Stone Age man .



Jan. 25 21

Down,
Beckenham, Kent.

My dear Sir

Some years ago I read an
Essay by you controverting my
views on Coral Formations.
I believe that I made an
abstract at the time, but
have mislaid it, & consequently
I cannot remember its title or
anything about it.— I am now
preparing a new Edit. of my Book
on Coral Reefs, & am bound, as
an honest man, to lay the
pros & cons of views before my

On various occasions, William exchanged letters with Charles Darwin discussing the results gathered.

William Pengelly (1812-1894) FRS FGS

George

When William Pengelly reached twelve years of age, despite his obvious native genius, he left school to crew on his father's small coastal freighter. During the four years he spent 'before the mast' working the Cornwall coast, he developed a deep affection for the rough-hewn characters he crewed with and they for him. Leisure moments were often passed telling stories which William later recalled.

Here's one about his shipmate George. George loved to drink but after an argument with the local Innkeeper, he swore never to drink in his establishment again. When a celebratory dinner at the Inn arises with grog galore, he finds himself severely conflicted.

"I once witnessed an amusing conflict between[George's] respect for his 'promise' and his love of drink. One of our crew [Pengelly himself] had been rescued from drowning by an innkeeper, at whose house our skipper, by way of showing his gratitude, gave a supper to the crew, the landlord and a few friends.

George, on being invited, stated that he would gladly be of the party but that on account of a quarrel with the innkeeper, he had made a 'promise' never to drink again in his house. This was met by the remark that the promise did not extend to eating, and that he should be left at perfect liberty to drink or not as he pleased. On this understanding he came.

As may be supposed, he was a good deal chaffed, but this he managed to bear with good firmness and good temper. At length, however, it was unluckily suggested by some one, that there was nothing in his 'promise' to prevent taking a glass of beer outside the house and drinking it there. At this compromise he caught eagerly, and marched gravely to the door every few minutes, drank his beer and then resumed his seat.

At length the captain had argued that if he had put his head out

of the window of the room and took his draught, his ‘promise’ would be by no means broken, as he certainly would not be ‘drinking in the house.’

George, aided by the potations he had already taken, was convinced by this logic and at once acted on the suggestion. At length, the innkeeper, desirous of reconciliation, thus addressed him: ‘George, my boy, I am very sorry that there was ever any misunderstanding between us. There’s my hand and here’s my heart and I love you like a brother, don’t take the trouble to put your head out of the window any longer. If you must do something of the kind, here’s a large corner cupboard with nothing in it. Put your head into that and drink….’ George seized the proffered hand…and then proceeded to go through the farce of keeping his ‘promise’ in the manner just described.”

William Pengelly had a keen sense of humour, a lively spirit and a great love of fun. For this he earned the enduring affection of his shipmates and later, of his students and scientific colleagues

Lost

Henry Forbes Julian (1861-1912) was a man's man. You could just tell by the way he carried himself that he was used to operating in the man's world of the Victorian Age— the world of board rooms and big cities, and the world where men get dirty and rent their brawn by the shift.

He was a metallurgist and mining engineer who consulted on mining projects all over the world, in particular gold and silver mines for which he had invented and patented a highly successful cyanide extraction method still used today.

Forbes' work required him to travel extensively. He had consulted throughout Eastern and Western Europe and crossed the Atlantic 13 times to projects in Mexico, the USA, Canada and the West Indies.

The unmarried Forbes made good money. Perhaps it was the constant travel that prompted him to seek a quieter lifestyle in 1895. He rented Ness House in the little coastal village of Sheldon near Torquay. He also had a residence in London. A natural student, Forbes had followed the discoveries of geologist William Pengelly and decided to settle in Torquay so he could take in Pengelly's public speeches and join his Torquay Natural History Society and Devonshire Association. This he did and there he met and married Pengelly's daughter, Hester.

Forbes continued his work from Torquay. When an important meeting came up in San Francisco, he booked passage on the Olympic, departing Southampton 3 April, 1912. However, disruptions caused by the national coal strike obliged him to change his booking to first class passage on the Titanic, departing 10 April.

Forbes sister-in-law, Lydia Maxwell asked him how he felt about sailing on the Titanic. He replied "

> 'I do not care at all for palm-court and gymnasium and such extra attractions, and never visited them

Interior, Ness House B&B today

on Mauretania. I shall keep to the smoking-room and library, and only just look over the vessel before starting.' On 9 April he caught the 1:35pm train from Torquay and arrived in Southampton at 8:25pm, then made his way to the South Western Hotel. Before bed, he wrote a letter to his wife, relating the train journey, cold, windy weather and his conviction that it was best that she stayed home. Hester had a bout of the flu.

The next morning Forbes walked the 10 minutes to the docks, boarded the Titanic and found his first class stateroom, E90, near the stern of the ship.

During the crossing to Cherbourg, Forbes wrote again to Hester,

Ness House, Sheldon, Devon

conveying his delight at the comfortable accommodation, the on-board Parisian Cafe and the gymnasium which he said was "full of the most wonderful machines." More than half the officers and stewards, Forbes wrote, were familiar to him from previous passages.

April 14

5:50pm Captain Edward Smith receives iceberg warnings throughout the day, changes course slightly south and maintains speed

9:40pm Ship Messaba reports a nearby ice field with "heavy pack ice and [a] great number [of] large icebergs." Wireless operator Jack Phillips—who works for the Marconi Company—is handling passengers' messages and never passes the warning on to the Titanic's bridge.

10:55pm

The nearby Californian radios the Titanic: "Say, old man, we are stopped and surrounded by ice." An annoyed Phillips responds: "Shut up! Shut up! I am busy."

11:35pm

The wireless operator on the Californian turns off his radio. The Titanic's lookout sees an iceberg in the ship's path, rings the warning bell three times, then calls the bridge. The officer-of-the-watch orders "hard-a-starboard" (to the left), "full speed astern" and closes the doors to the 'watertight' compartments.

11:40pm

The starboard side of the Titanic scrapes along the iceberg. Captain Smith arrives on deck and is told ”we’ve struck an iceberg sir.” One after another, reports advise the bridge of rooms filling with water across at least five of the ship’s compartments. The Titanic’s designer Thomas Andrews surveys the damage. The Titanic was built to remain afloat with up to four compartments flooded. Andrews predicts that the ship will sink in one to two hours.

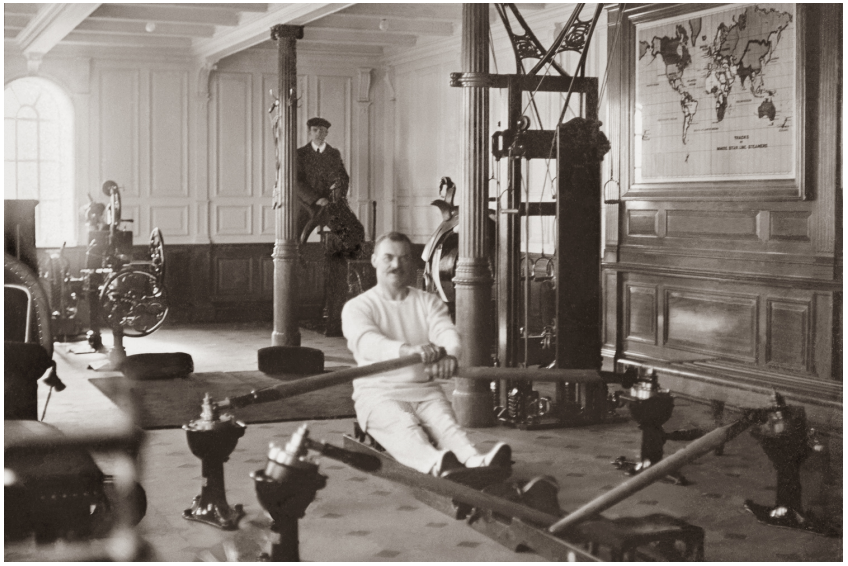
Over the next two hours, lifeboats are loaded amid a frenzy of panic and inefficiency with the strict order “women and children first”. Almost all the lifeboats are only partially filled. Of the 2200 passengers aboard, there are but 20 lifeboats with room for 1178 people.

Every stripe of humanity came forth in those last hours — heroes, cowards, the terrified and the resigned. Their station in life gave no inkling of which one of those each was. The ship’s musicians famously played on to the very end, calming passengers as they boarded the lifeboats. The Titanic’s designer, Thomas Andrews, urged passengers to get into heavy clothing and prepare to leave the ship. Many, although skeptical that the ‘unsinkable’ ship had been seriously damaged, were nevertheless convinced by Thomas to do so. A final telegram from the Titanic confirmed Thomas’s heroism: “When last seen, officers say was throwing deck chairs, other objects to people in the water. His chief concern safety of everyone but himself.”

Thomas had argued for enough lifeboats for all passengers and for other safety measures. The President of White Star Line Bruce Ismay denied the request, protesting that “they already had more than the legally required number of lifeboats (16) and the extra boats simply would clutter up the beautiful open expanse of the upper deck, where first-class passengers would want to stroll." Neither the musicians nor Thomas survived the sinking.

2:18am

The lights on the Titanic went out. The bow sunk, raising the stern and its massive propellors clear of the water. The hull broke cleanly into two pieces whereby the forward half of the ship plunged vertically into the depths at an estimated 50 kilometres per hour. It took six minutes for it to reach the ocean floor. The stern section lingered, but as water drew the broken end



beneath the surface, the remainder lifted briefly and the entirety disappeared.

Three agonizing hours after the first distress signal was sent, a rescue ship arrived. It was the Cunard liner Carpathia. There was no sign of the Titanic. Only 710 of the Titanic's 2200 passengers survived. Henry Forbes Julian was not among them.

Last moments of the Titanic

Steam

Thomas Savery (1650-1712)

Most of us were taught in school that James Watt invented the steam engine.The truth is, he didn't. What he and others did do was add improvements to a steam engine (which admittedly made it wonderfully more powerful and practical) invented much earlier by Thomas Savery.

Thomas was born to a wealthy, long established Devon family whose base for centuries, was Totnes Castle, about a 20 minute drive today inland from Torquay.

Thomas was well-educated. He was keenly interested in natural philosophy, mathematics and things mechanical. He became a military engineer rising to captain in 1702. In his off-time, Thomas invented and tinkered. He made a machine for polishing glass or marble, a paddle-wheeler and an exquisite clock.

Then Thomas applied himself to a chronic problem faced by Cornish mine owners and workers — water in the tunnels.

He theorized that the expansive nature of steam might be utilized to pump water out of the mines. Numerous experiments followed. It was a case of 'successive approximations' requiring a large measure of patience and worse, a large measure of money which became very difficult to bear.

Despite the challenges, in 1698, Thomas exhibited a model of his then-called 'Fire Engine' to King William III and his court at Hampton Court. He promptly received a patent.

Thomas's steam pump worked well, although it was limited in its lifting capacity to 60 feet. Larger lifts required multiple pumps. As well, the steam pump did not adapt well to other applications. Further, because of the high cost of the pump, it was not

practical to use for smaller steam pump applications.

Nevertheless, Thomas's work was instrumental in demonstrating that it was possible to use steam to perform useful work. From that epiphany followed the steam engine advancements of Thomas Newcomen (1664-1729), James Watt (1736-1812) and others. Indeed, it might be said that Thomas was the 'father of the Industrial Revolution,' when everything, including the success of the British Empire itself, depended on the power of steam.

Thomas Savery (1650-1712)

Avebury Stone Circle

After two nights in Bath, we were on the road again by 8:30am of Day 16. It was an hour's drive to the first of two Neolithic sites on our itinerary -- Avebury Stone Circle and the iconic Stonehenge.

Standing stones, stone circles and megaliths have been found all over the world. We know that they were built by Neolithic peoples five thousand or so years ago. We don't know how and we don't know why. They may have been astronomical calculators or places of ritual and worship. They differ in nature. Carnac in Brittany, France consists of over 3000 stones, some more than 20 feet high. Lined up in rows, they go on for six kilometres.

In the 1930s, labourers clearing land for the United Fruit Company in Costa Rica discovered spherical stone balls that vary in size from a few inches to six feet across. Korea has a massive ancient burial site containing hundreds of ancient dolmens – tombs built from large stone slabs that resemble the mathematical symbol pi.

Avebury Stone Circle is not surprisingly located in the village of Avebury, not far from Stonehenge. More accurately, the village is located in the stone circle: the stone circle is so big it incorporates a portion of Avebury. Indeed, it is the largest stone circle in the world. To my delight, I found I could walk up to and around the stones, unlike Stonehenge where visitors must stand hundreds of feet back. Avebury is more than a stone circle. Surrounding the stone circle is a broad, deep ditch. The distance between the top of one side of the ditch and the other must be in the neighbourhood of 200 feet. On the outside of the ditch is a high berm. This extensive ditch and berm structure was all dug by hand with stone and bone tools. The sheer amount of work and the degree of collaborative effort that was required is stunning. Just the task of quarrying and transporting the stones leaves one in awe.

Avebury, Wilshire: largest stone circle in the world

Avebury, Wilshire: largest stone circle in the world

Georgian period mansion, Avebury, Wilshire:

Stonehenge

The following day we arrived at Stonehenge at 9am, the start of our appointed two-hour time slot. We would not be alone.

We almost didn't go. It was a push to see Stonehenge in the morning, drop the rental car off in Salisbury early afternoon, catch a train to London, find the flat in a new-to-us city of 18 million people and meet with the landlord. Yet that's what we did.

I was hesitant to go too because it felt like I'd been there and done that. I had been there, in pictures: glorious pictures of Stonehenge at dawn, Stonehenge at dusk and Stonehenge on the solstice. Yet all doubts vaporized when I stood before it, shoulder to shoulder with a throng of human beings from across the planet who had come to witness the miracle. There is something deeply, viscerally spiritual about Stonehenge, something akin to hands reaching across the millennia, quiet voices whispering "You, us, all things living and not living upon this earth, we are one."

The creators of Stonehenge were hardly 'primitives.' Nor were the constructors of the pyramids, the masons of Machu Picchu, the architects of Angkor Wat or the cave painters of Laseaux. They were all masters of their trade. It's humbling.

How good were these folks? Consider this. Test 1: If you were given a basket of torches, asked to hike two kilometres inside a pitch black cave with pouches of red and white ochre and ash 'crayons', and were then asked to draw something in 3D that you were intimately familiar with – your spouse, for instance – how well would you do? Uh, remember to start out of the cave before you've used up your last three torches. Experience as a Buddhist monk is helpful for this exercise. Life insurance would be prudent.

You got back out before the last torch whimpered and died? Good work. Many don't. Rest assured your stick person depiction of love-butt will remain there for millennia. Love-butt is still there? Well, I'm sure, in time, he'll find his way.

Test 2: Build a pyramid. Gather all the friends you know...and their friends. You'll need a chisel, a measuring tape, a GPS and a wack of free time...and pack a lunch.

There was a mixed reaction from onlookers. Some observers appeared to retreat to a spiritual place. They stood silently at the rope barrier just staring, wordless for minutes. Others chatted in small groups, about what I don't know – the enormity of it, the mystery of it or lunch plans. Still others seemed to view Stonehenge as an opportunity to impress friends and family, not with Stonehenge, with themselves, that they had been there. I speak again of the Selfie, who cuts a swathe through the crowd to allow a friend's camera to capture their theatrical poses.

Stonehenge has become a people-moving machine. In an admirable attempt to preserve the spirituality of Stonehenge, the Visitor's Centre was built some distance away and out of sight of it. One can walk the distance in 20 minutes or ride a bus there in three. Visitor numbers are now so large that a steady stream of buses moves people to and from the site all day, every day. It was a crazy, busy place but I am ever so glad I went.

Stonehenge, Wiltshire

Stonehenge, Wiltshire

Neolithic Habitations at Stonehenge

Clock House

Forty-five minutes to the southeast of Avebury is the little village of Shrewton, a ‘stone’s throw’ from Stonehenge. It is semi-rural with lots large enough to satisfy the most serious of hobby farmers. It was there, tucked up a long gravel drive, that we found Clock House, precisely where the detailed instructions of our friend Gill Wallis said it would be. Clock House is the home of Gill and her husband Peter Wallis. The term ‘house’ does not do it justice; it is more a commodious cottage. It didn’t start out as a house; it was the stables. That was hard to believe. It is lovely -- unpretentious, warm and inviting.

To anyone who knew the Wallis’s it would be obvious that it was they who built Clock House, for the qualities apparent in the house were precisely those of its owners. This was the first time we had met Gill and Peter, yet we were greeted like family.

Gill is a youthful 60s something, of average height with the healthy, slender build of one who stays physically active. She is animated when she speaks, oozing life and good humour, and has a gentle, easy way about her that belies her capacity to think deeply and speak her mind. She is retired now; she taught school for a living – a perfect match.

Peter is also 60s something. He is tall and lanky and wore glasses that hinted of his intelligence. He has an open, kindly face and a becoming shock of tousled white hair. His voice is clear and loud, almost decisive, yet his words tumble out in such an easy, relaxed manner that one cannot help but be drawn to him. He was, I suspect, a leader of men and a good one. He had a career in the Royal Air Force that took this couple to Hong Kong, Singapore and Penang for extensive periods.

Peter’s Aunt Sheila was there too. She is a handsome woman, short, large-boned and slightly stooped. Sheila has the slow and careful movements of a person intent on not falling. Like her nephew, her voice is clear and strong. When she speaks, her words are measured, her thoughts are well considered and her memory and intellect are fully intact. There is strength to this woman; she was likely a formidable force in her day, a person you would be well advised to have on your team.

These folks are a rare find -- friends we could happily share a winter’s fire with, chatting and laughing until the wee hours. As it

turned out, we did just that for that entire afternoon, starting with a sumptuous lunch. Mid-afternoon, Aunt Sheila's son Bob joined us, a well-built, affable, straight-talking man, who for a living, sets up training courses for lorry (truck) drivers. He kept us in stitches with his brilliant renditions of English accents.

The story of my friendship with Gill began several years ago online. I had placed a notice on a Hong Kong website seeking information about my great great grandfather on my father's side, Daniel Caldwell. Daniel was a well known, controversial figure in Hong Kong's early days. Gill got in touch and explained that she had a robe that was originally his. Peter's Aunt Sheila had been a fast friend of Leslie Caldwell, a great nephew of my great great grandfather. Leslie had passed the robe to her upon his death. Over the months that followed Gill worked with me to uncover more of the Caldwell Story.

One day a box arrived at our front door – from Shrewton, England. In the box was Daniel's 150 year old robe. I was stunned. This was an unimaginable gift. It is a magnificent piece, festooned with brocade dragons in heavy gold thread. Once a year, at Christmas time, I pull the robe from its box and wear it briefly at Tai Chi. It is a nod of respect to my colourful ancestor, Daniel Caldwell – opium smuggler, court interpreter, Assistant Chief of Police, Registrar of Brothels, inmate, entrepreneur, 'Protector of the Chinese', pirate hunter and father and provider to 32 children. It is a nod of respect too to Chan Ayow, my great, great grandmother, who raised all those children and managed their huge household. That is another story.

Friends Gill, Peter and Aunt Sheila at Clock House

The lovely Aunt Sheila at Clock House

Part 4: London

To London

Day 17: Within a block of dropping off Perky at the Hertz lot in Salisbury I did a curious thing. I switched to the right side of the road. Perhaps I was anxious to be back on home turf. Whatever the reason, there was a scream from the woman to my left which brought to my attention the error of my ways and I cranked the wheel hard to the left, in time to avoid the lorry who had a split second earlier was approaching fast in my lane.

A minute later, we drove triumphantly into the Hertz lot to drop off Perky. It was early afternoon on a Wednesday. We were there at the appointed time but the compound was oddly quiet. Perky seemed relieved. Quiet was good. I tried the door of the office. Locked. There was no one there. We had a train to catch.

I called the woman who apologized profusely. There was an emergency and she was obliged to rush off. “Just put the key on the top of the front tire and you’re good to go.” I did and we did – go, this time by cab. Remember York? I did. Randi did.

Our cabbie, an older man, dropped us at the train station in good time. I tipped him well for the short ride. He seemed surprised and pleased and with gusto helped us with our bags. Tipping does not seem common in England. Of the 30 odd folks we joined on two mini-bus tours, I believe we were the only ones who tipped. We are visitors in their land and representatives of ours. We owe them something, at the least, a good impression. What if the cabbie had gone home that night and said to his wife, “ Picked up some Canadians today, Lovie. Bloody nice folk.” That would make my day.

Train stations can be tricky places. For example, it’s important to know which way you’re headed. If you know that, you’ll also know which side of the tracks to stand on. And that’s a pretty good start to getting on the right train. If you’re not on the correct side of the tracks, serendipity will prevail and you will find yourself on a new and unexpected adventure in God only knows where. That may well be a good thing. We got on the right train, which depending on your approach to travel, might have been the wrong train, for it was the train we planned to be on. The next stop would be tricky indeed – Waterloo Station in London. It was. Waterloo is big -- bigger and busier than any other train station in the UK. Combined with the adjacent Underground and

Waterloo East stations, Waterloo is the busiest station complex in all of Europe. When it opened in 1848, it hosted 14 trains a day. Today, 274,000 trains a day come and go. That's almost 100 million trains a year. That's *million*.

At Waterloo Station, we carried out the usual comedic pantomime. Run about, one way, then the other, look for helpful signs, ask a person in uniform. No go. Ask a commuter. Got it. Line up for the escalator, down into the vortex to the underground: Waterloo Station to Green Park Station to Victoria Station to Brixton Station – at rush hour. We made it to Brixton. It remained to find the flat.

Our London Flat (nah, just kiddin'. This was way over our budget. Brick Lane East

Brick Lane East London

Brick Lane, East London

The Flat

The up escalator belched us from the tube onto Brixton Road. Almost. There were the inevitable stairs, then daylight. Now what? Which way do we walk? We were late for our meet, so I called Will, the owner. He offered to pick us up. Relief.

London is one of the most expensive cities in the world. Two hundred dollars Canadian per night is standard fare for a very standard room. For that money you are spared the run down a darkened hall to a shared bathroom but I assure you, you will not be overlooking the Thames and popping grapes.

I found our London retreat online. What else can one do?. "Forty-nine pounds per night," it read. London for 49 pounds a night? The headline promised "A Lovely Bright Place, Perfect For Exploring London." I signed up. Silly boy. It was not 49 pounds a night. There was a cleaning fee of 25 pounds, an additional guest fee of 70 pounds and a service fee of 43 pounds. Still, for London, it seemed a reasonable deal. The flat was in Brixton -- not exactly Kensington. But we're flexible people.

Will arrived on foot. Do you remember me saying only idiots drive in Britain? Will is no idiot. He is fifties, tall, affable and physically fit. "Just this way," he announced briskly, and off we went, walking... well, perhaps something closer to waddling. There was a pack on our back, another on our neck and a suitcase dragging behind. Did I mention how Brits love to walk? "This is the long way," crooned the optimistic Will ten minutes into the trek, "but it gives you a chance to get acquainted with the neighbourhood." Swell.

In three agonies past the hour we came to the house. These are brick row houses, conjoined for blocks on end, likely built in the1890s. They were all very much the same, nicely kept, with gleaming white trim around the windows and doors. Stacked up in front of our house, however, was a pile of construction materials. Hmm. Once single family dwellings, the houses are narrow, two stories high with an attic. Now, they are mostly converted to three suites: main floor, second floor and attic. We were in the attic.

Will stuck the key in the lock but it would not turn. "You just have to fiddle with this lock. It's a bit temperamental. There we go." The door opened to reveal the hall floor, covered in filthy

plastic. “Pardon the mess, they’re renovating the first floor.” I chose not to check the expression on Randi’s face and we moved forward to the stairs.

The stairs were narrow and steep, with a small landing on the second floor, wide enough for one person. Here, Will unlocked the door to our suite and swung it open to reveal another long, steep, narrow staircase leading up to the unit. The roller bags bashed up the stairs behind us and with our last ounce of energy, we achieved the summit. The back half of the attic housed two starkly furnished bedrooms and a bathroom; the front half, separated by three stairs down, consisted of one large room with the ‘dining’ and ‘living’ areas. Will directed us to the latter half. “Mind the stairs.”

The upper half of each side of the dining-living room sloped inward, as attic ceilings do. At the far end of the room, there was one small window two feet by three, a love seat on life support and a television. That was the living room. At the end closest to us was a metal folding table and four metal folding chairs. That was the dining room. Across from the dining room was a rudimentary kitchen complete with two side plates and three glasses. Fortuitously, I brought two bowls from home (I should have been a scout in my youth but being a delinquent, I found, was a full time job). “As you can see,” states Will, “the skylights bring in lots of light but the rain comes in if they’re not closed in a timely way.” Like the middle of the night, I mused.

The bedroom revealed a bed. A pleasant surprise, for our flat in Paris two years prior did not. That was it for the tour. Will left wishing us a grand stay and disappeared with a flourish “If there’s anything you need, just call.”

As it turned out, there were a few things we needed. A bathroom sink that let the water run out, an oven bottom element to bake chicken on the other side, a mattress without ribs to allow sleep, a carpet that bare feet did not stick to, an elevator to give one the courage to leave and the strength to return and a picture on the wall to raise the spirits. Ah yes, and a new front door lock to let us back in, once out.

“Suck it up Peter,” I whispered out loud to self, “this is London. What do you expect for $100 a night?” “More than this,” growled Randi.

Brixton, London

Brixton, London, near our flat

Westminster

There it was, right in front of us — the venerable (once formidable) Westminster, on the banks of the ancient Thames. The river flowed serenely past, indifferent to the curious goings-on of humans. It had seen it all before, many times.

Westminster, the seat of the British Parliament, which by 1920 at the peak of the British Empire, controlled the fates of 412 million people, 23% of the world's population spread over 24% of the Earth's land mass.

For 300 years the British Empire grew from the innovations of the Industrial Revolution while industry grew from its spoils. The latter produced ships, armaments, textiles, tools, railways, systems, administrative efficiency and much more. Its products and byproducts were everything required to grow the empire at the expense of those it subjugated, the native peoples of its colonies.

Colonials, in turn, were obliged to labour making luxury goods for the wealthy of Britain — silk, porcelain, tea, coffee, sugar, exotic woods, gold, silver, precious gems — or labour harvesting the commodities demanded by British mills — cotton, coal, iron, timber, fish, meat, salt. They were then obliged to buy the resulting manufactured goods to line the pockets of the factory owners and investors.

Who were these people who worked in Britain's factories, manned its navy and merchant ships, served in its armies, picked cotton for its mills and cut sugar cane for its tea? They were assuredly not the educated, the connected, the wealthy. No, they were the poor and disenfranchised — women, children, people of colour, indentured servants, political activists, the convicted and slaves. They were people without a voice and without a choice. Most lived and worked under inhuman conditions; millions died at their posts.

The tragic truth is that the success of the British Empire rested largely on the backs of slaves. Not all of them were people formally designated as slaves, but effectively, that's what they were. That fact is not news. Every great empire in history owed much of its accomplishments to the toils of slaves.

Yet there is another truth. When human beings egregiously violate fundamental human rights, there have always been a few courageous souls who will defy the powers that be, speak in defence of the voiceless and lead the charge for change.

From the efforts of many people over the course of the British Empire, came dramatic social change. It came in the form of small, local resistance and acts of kindness. It came from enlightened people with the influence and means to effect change within their realms. It came from religious groups such as the Quakers, who were committed to a person to building a just, egalitarian society.

Ultimately, widespread social change occurred right over there in the halls of Westminster. Laws were enacted to enable and protect the rights of all citizens. Legislated change did not come quickly. It required endless persistence on the part of many who dedicated their lives to a cause.

In this section I touch on several of the social issues of the era in which advances were made with the passage and enforcement of new laws, laws enacted at Westminster. In the process, I relate the work of family members who helped to bring about reforms in the abolition of slavery, women's rights, workers rights, prison reform, prohibition on the sale of opium, and Indian Independence.

- Abolition
- Women's rights
- Child labour
- Workers rights
- Opium Joseph Alexander fights to prohibit opium
- Indian Independence Horace Alexander mediator, friend of Mahatma Gandhi

Hyde Park

It was a late start. We were dragging our heels. Too late to catch the walking tour of the Jewish Quarter. It was raining but we opted for a saunter in Hyde Park anyway, followed by a wander through the British Museum. Despite the rain, the park was alive with people. On the lake, a major swimming marathon was in full swing.

From one end of the lake to the other, hundreds of swimmers in wet suits were thrashing the crawl. It was the London equivalent of a killer whale feeding frenzy. Hundreds more of their friends and loved ones huddled under umbrellas and urged them on from the shore. Coffee drinkers crowded the concessions, chatting in groups or thumbing devices. Joggers loped by in twos and threes. Occasionally, a few horses cantered past, their riders decked out in helmets and haute couture. Here and there lovers dawdled. This is London. The rain went unnoticed.

We walked, expecting at any moment to see Kensington Palace through the trees. It never appeared. Randi was tired; so was I. Our pace slowed; the rain did not. The sooner we found shelter and food the better – for me. Change in plan. We headed for the nearest underground station. The nearest station was not near. This is a large park, equal in size to Massachusetts or the Canadian national debt. Our pace shifted from slow to glacial. The water weighed us down.

In time, (everything takes time here) we found the gaping maw of the underground and offered ourselves up as belligerent sacrifices. The hunt for the British Museum had begun, now more an act of self-preservation than a desire for cultural enlightenment. Snake was obnoxious, of course, but we were desperate. In a state of uncaring semi-consciousness, we ignored the crowds, the noise and confusion and at the other end, we ventured again into the rain.

The museum is not a small place. Trump Tower could comfortably fit inside where Trump would dearly like to see it. The trick though is to get it through the doors:

Donald: Ya know Theresa, I think there's an opportunity here for us to do a little business together. That museum of yours pulls in a lot of folks. If I was ta put the Trump Tower inside, we could make a lot of money, you and me. I don't mean us personally, you understand -- for our countries. We'd split the profits, ya see — 20 % for you, the rest for me, well, you know, for the United States. There'd be enough to float your navy.

Theresa: How do your propose to get it in there Donald?

Donald: Ah, that's just detail. I'm the idea guy. My team will figure out the rest. Maybe we'll fold it up. Yeah, I like that.

Theresa: Ah. Like the way you folded your trade cards with the world?

Donald: Hey, you're one to talk, Ms. Brexit.

Theresa: Or folded your border with Mexico leaving families divided and the poor and beleaguered of Central America without hope?

Donald: Say, if the Trump Tower could use the museum's washrooms, that would sure help us with the costs of getting it in there. And maybe my hotel patrons could get a free museum pass. Whataya say? I got a couple more ideas. Could save your ass in the next election...Theresa? Say, Theresa....Where ya goin'? I'm just gettin' warmed up. Women!

Hyde Park, London

Hyde Park, London

The British Museum

You would think that a large building like the British Museum would be a slam-dunk to find. No, it is not. Trump Tower is not in there yet. It takes time. Have I mentioned that everything in London takes time? We knew the general direction, thanks to the helpful advice of a pizza delivery chap who kindly checked Google Maps, then waved his hand in a sweeping movement to indicate 'over there.' So sweep we did. We walked -- left, then right, then left again, then forward and back....

Eventually, we arrived at the museum gates. There was a queue -- a snake of another sort. London invented the queue. They were everywhere. People are not troubled by them. I rather think they are viewed by the natives as opportunities for meditation, a form of stationary Tai Chi. This queue was outside... in the rain.

At the head of the queue, an official was splitting visitors into two lines according to some criteria known only to him, the security team and God. We lucked in. He put us in the fast track for V.I.P.s, it seemed, along with a family fairly reeking of money and privilege. We walked past a hundred soggy souls to the head of the line.

I'm guessing that, in our case, the sorter's decision was not based on appearance. No, I believe the fellow spotted the twisted expression on my good wife's face and decided that the threat posed by asking her to open her bag was greater than the likelihood that she had a bomb inside it. At security, I placed my backpack on the table and began to unzip it. "No, no", barked the checker keeping a wary eye on Randi, and waved us through. We had arrived at the massive, incomparable bastion of world culture and pillage.

Fittingly, the entire world was there -- every language spoken, every colour of skin, pushing, jockeying, gesticulating and bellowing. It was chaos. I was momentarily confused. Had the United Nations moved to London? The vehemence with which they crashed about suggested it was so, for they were not happy campers and had come to claim their goods. And why not? No, it was not so. They were just people having fun, including, of

course, the Selfies from Stonehenge, who were there en force. For them, the British Museum was a rather expensive fun house, a photo-op. Full stop.

Were there really that many Selfies in the world? Was it possible that the BBC was filming a follow-up to Fawlty Towers. Perhaps it was a version of Candid Camera that was tracking my every

move around England, planting a steady stream of pretend Selfies in front of me to capture my bent expressions for the entertainment of the masses?

First priority: washroom, second: food. The Pizzeria was a no go, all tables taken. We headed for the restaurant, 78 steps above the floor of the massive central rotunda. Seating seemed a shoe-in. Who in their right mind would climb to such a height just to eat? We joined the queue.

Lunch was a casual affair. We lingered there into the afternoon, worrying our shared fish and chips with our forks, desperate to hang onto the last remaining seat in London. When we could linger no more, we left. I cast a final glance back to our table, as if to secure the memory forever.

Our time in the galleries was half-hearted for we were bone-weary. There was little to see anyway; one could not get close to a display case for the crowds. The Selfies were there naturally, insisting that whole exhibits be cleared for their modeling sessions and obliging those moving past, by English custom, to squeeze behind the picture taker.

After 90 minutes we called it quits, having seen but a tiny fraction of this treasure trove. Perhaps we would return – on a stormy, cold winter's day when snow lays thick on the ground; we'd have the place to ourselves, wouldn't we?

British Museum London

British Museum London

British Museum London

British Museum London

Hans Sloane

Hans Sloane (1660-1753) was born into an Ulster-Scots family in 1660, in the village of Killyleagh. As a boy he developed a keen interest in natural history and collecting specimens, which he pursued for his entire life. He studied medicine in London, then spent considerable time furthering his studies in Paris and Montpellier, France where he obtained his MD in 1683. At age 24 he was elected to the Royal Society, an astonishing accomplishment for such a young man. Two years later, in 1687, he became a Fellow of the College of Physicians.

Hans was well regarded, so much so, that in that same year, he agreed to accompany Christopher Monck (35), the 2nd Duke of Albermarle to Jamaica as the Duke's personal physician. Monck was assuming the governorship of the island.

Hans spent 15 months in Jamaica, at which time the hard-drinking, party-going Governor Monck dropped dead and Hans returned to London. During his time in Jamaica, Hans collected a massive number of natural history specimens and curiosities which he later bequeathed to the British government on condition that they use the collection to start a national museum. That was the start of the British Museum which opened its doors to the public in 1759.

While in Jamaica, Hans connected socially and professionally with Dr. Fulke Rose, my first cousin 9 times removed. Together, they ministered to Captain Henry Morgan, pirate, privateer and Governor of Jamaica until his death from alcoholism.

Hans had another family connection. Fulke Rose was married to Elizabeth Langley, daughter of a London Alderman. When Fulke died in 1695, Elizabeth returned to London to live, a wealthy heiress of Fulke's slave-operated sugar plantations and considerable real estate holdings. It seems she and Hans got reacquainted following her return to London, for they married and had three daughters.

In his lifetime, Hans was credited with having exceptional medical skills and was sought out by London high society including the royal family. However, Hans greater contribution may have been his capacity to bring people together, connect people and to share his considerable knowledge in multiple fields. As well, Hans used his substantial wealth to support hospitals and other good causes.

Although Hans is widely credited with inventing chocolate milk, he did not. However, he did promote it as a healthful drink. One hundred and fifty years later, the Cadbury's used Hans medical prestige to promote their chocolate milk product formulated from his recipe.

His indifference to slavery, however, must dull our admiration for the man. Slaves were to Hans, it seems, a mere curiosity, specimens of natural history to examine, catalogue and forget. Hans died in 1753, aged 93.

Hans Sloane, 1660-1753)
PRS, FRS, FCP

Samuel Pepys

London: Mid 1600s

London in the mid 1600s bore not an iota of resemblance to its meticulously planned Roman predecessor Londinium. Gone were the forum, bathhouses, temples, the governor's palace and amphitheatre. Gone also were the sewers, the fresh water supply, public toilets and open spaces. Twelve hundred and fifty years after the last Roman left in 410AD, London had devolved into a medieval chaos of windy, narrow lanes.

The poor lived in overcrowded tenements and garrets — airless, dark and filthy. Slops were thrown from windows, animal dung and debris littered the slippery cobbled streets, in the centres of which ran open drains. In the summer London was beset with flies and mud, and in the winter, it was awash in sewer.

The city hired rakers who cleared the detritus from the streets and piled it outside the city walls. The stench was insufferable. The air was choked with the smoke of soap factories, breweries, iron smelters and 15,000 coal-burning fireplaces. Rats, fleas and haggard dogs were everywhere. Wagons, horses and pedestrians filled the streets, congesting at the city gates and queuing to cross London Bridge. It was a medieval version of rush hour today. Those who could afford it travelled in hackney carriages and sedan chairs to avoid the filth. Those who could not afford carriages suffered the splashes of their passing. Just beyond the Roman-built city walls lived those poorer than poor in a shanty town of a quarter million souls. All told, the population of London had grown to 460,000 people. London was ripe for something terrible.

The Admiralty

Living and working in London at the time of the Great Plague was Samuel Pepys (1633-1703), pronounced peeps. Samuel came from an upper middle class family of notable politicians. He was well-educated, a quick study, articulate, politically astute and

highly social. Through his extensive connections, hard work and his skill at administration he rose through the civil service to become Chief Secretary to the Admiralty under King Charles II and his successor King James II. Samuel's job was complex and demanding. He was to keep the Royal Navy supplied with men, ships, materials, food and finances, and advise and report to the Admiralty, Parliament and the king.

Samuel's acumen brought a number of important modernizations to the Royal Navy. Yet he is notable in history not for those but for the diary he kept from 1660 to 1669. The diary provides a unique and entirely candid account of his personal and work life and of everyday life in London in the 1660s. Much happened during those years. Oliver Cromwell died and the republic collapsed, King Charles II was returned from exile, and the Second Dutch War, the Great Plague and the Great Fire of London occurred in quick succession.

The Black Plague

In June of 1664 a seaman arrived at the port of Weymouth in South England. With him came the Black Plague (bubonic plague). The Black Plague was nothing new. Western Europe including Britain had been devastated by it on several occasions, the most deadly in 1348 when up to 60% of Europe's population was killed. Experts peg England's death toll in that year to two to four million of its six million people.

The Black Plague was a horrid disease. The skin turned black in patches. The glands of the groin inflamed into 'buboes' and victims suffered vomiting, a swollen tongue and severe headaches. Death followed within several days.

Once infected, the victim's symptoms appeared in 4 to 6 days whereupon, the house was sealed, condemning the entire family to death. A red cross was painted on the door with the words "Lord have mercy on us." At night, carters hired by the city called through the streets "Bring out your dead," loaded the corpses on their carts and took them to the plague pits.

Within eighteen months of the seaman's arrival, the plague had engulfed all of England. In the fall of 1664 a bright comet appeared in the sky over London. It proved a portent of what was to come. By June of the following year the plague was deeply entrenched in London, infecting the poor in the crowded boroughs with vengeance. There, wretched living conditions and plague infected rats and their fleas rapidly spread the disease.

Seven months later, 100,000 Londoners, almost one quarter of its population, were dead. The wealthy including King Charles II and his court escaped the onslaught by retreating to their country estates. For the poor, there was no escape.

As a small child, I gathered in a circle with friends. We held hands and sung this song, versions of which children have sung for hundreds of years since those horrifying days of 1665:

"Ring around the Rosies,

A pocket full of posies,

Husha, husha, we all fall down"

The ring of rosies is a reference to the red rashes, the pocket of posies refer to posies of herbs carried to lessen the smell of the disease and as protection from the disease, and husha, husha were the coughing fits, a final symptom before the victim fell down, dead.

The City of York also suffered terribly from the plague. When we visited York our B&B was several blocks beyond the old city wall. Each day, we walked down a street, on one side of which was a steep, grassy embankment. On the top of that embankment was the old city wall. What I now know is that the depression at the bottom of the embankment is an enormous plague pit filled with the bones of countless victims.

From Pepys Diary

The Great Plague in London peaked in August 1665. Samuel's diary entries during that terrifying month reveal his horror and fear as he walked the eerily empty streets of London. Shops are closed, friends and acquaintances are dead and the few passersby are but shattered shells of souls:

Tuesday 8 Aug 1665

The streets mighty empty all the way, now even in London, which is a sad sight. And to Westminster Hall, where talking, hearing very sad stories from Mrs. Mumford; among others, of Mrs. Michell's son's family. And poor Will, that used to sell us ale at the Hall-door, his wife and three children died, all, I think, in a day. So home through the City again, wishing I may have taken no ill in going; but I will go, I think, no more thither.

Wednesday, 16 Aug 1665

… how sad a sight it is to see the streets empty of people, and very few upon the 'Change. Jealous of every door that one sees shut up, lest it should be the plague;

and about us two shops in three, if not more, generally shut up.

Wednesday 30 Aug 1665

…Lord! how every body's looks, and discourse in the street is of death, and nothing else, and few people going up and down, that the towne is like a place distressed and forsaken.

By the end of August Samuel could risk living in the city no longer. He and his wife Elizabeth join family in Woolwich, now Greenwich, beyond the city walls:

Thursday 31 Aug 1665

Up and, after putting several things in order to my removal, to Woolwich; the plague having a great encrease this week, beyond all expectation of almost 2,000, making the general Bill 7,000, odd 100; and the plague above 6,000… Thus this month ends with great sadness upon the publick, through the greatness of the plague every where through the kingdom almost. Every day sadder and sadder news of its encrease. In the City died this week 7,496 and of them 6,102 of the plague. But it is feared that the true number of the dead, this week is near 10,000; partly from the poor that cannot be taken notice of, through the greatness of the number, and partly from the Quakers and others that will not have any bell ring for them.

Finally, in November of that year, plague deaths declined and a semblance of city life began to return:

Thursday 30 Nov 1665
Great joy we have this week in the weekly Bill, it being come to 544 in all, and but 333 of the plague; so that we are encouraged to get to London soon as we can.
And my father writes as great news of joy to them, that he saw Yorke's waggon go again this week to London, and was full of passengers…

The Great Fire of London

Shortly after midnight on Sunday 2 September 1665, a fire broke out in the bakery of Thomas Farriner of Pudding Lane, central London. Wind spread the flames rapidly from house to house. Normally, firebreaks were created by demolishing streets of houses, but doing so, required the Lord Mayor of London, Sir

Thomas Bloodworth, to obtain the authority of the king or risk reconstructing the houses later at his own expense.

By the time large scale demolitions were ordered, it was too late. The fire had become a conflagration. It pushed north on Monday into the heart of the city. Rumours spread that foreigners were responsible; Many French and Dutch were lynched and assaulted. By Tuesday, the fire had spread across the entire medieval City of London inside the Roman wall. destroying St Paul's Cathedral. Destroyed were 13,200 houses, 87 parish churches, St Paul's Cathedral and most of the city's administrative buildings. Seventy to eighty thousand inhabitants were left homeless. The social and economic challenges which followed were enormous. The death toll, officially reported as minor, has been debated by historians, some arguing that many of the poor who died were unaccounted for. From Pepys Diary

Sunday 2 September 1666

"I was called for, and did tell the King and Duke of Yorke what I saw, and that unless his Majesty did command houses to be pulled down nothing could stop the fire. They seemed much troubled, and the King commanded me to go to my Lord Mayor —[Sir Thomas Bludworth. See June 30th, 1666.]— from him, and command him to spare no houses, but to pull down before the fire every way.

At last met my Lord Mayor in Canningstreet, like a man spent, with a handkercher about his neck. To the King's message he cried, like a fainting woman, "Lord! what can I do? I am spent: people will not obey me. I have been pulling down houses; but the fire overtakes us faster than we can do it." That he needed no more soldiers; and that, for himself, he must go and refresh himself, having been up all night. So he left me, and I him, and walked home.

[Of Thomas Bloodworth Pepys found him "a mean man of understanding and despatch of any public business," an opinion widely held in the day. I am directly related to Bloodworths. Could it be…?]

[I] walked to my boat; and there upon the water again, and to the fire up and down, it still encreasing, and the wind great. So near the fire as we could for smoke; and all over the Thames, with one's face in the wind, you were almost burned with a shower of firedrops. This is very true; so as houses were burned by these drops and flakes of fire, three or four, nay, five or six

houses, one from another.

[We] staid till it was dark almost, and saw the fire grow; and, as it grew darker, appeared more and more, and in corners and upon steeples, and between churches and houses, as far as we could see up the hill of the City, in a most horrid malicious bloody flame, not like the fine flame of an ordinary fire."

Summary

Samuel's womanizing would hardly 'cut the mustard' today. Yet despite that, he did care deeply for his wife, always ensuring her well-being. Although his claim to fame today is his diary and the light it has shed on the period it referenced, 1660-1669, there was much more to Samuel's accomplishments. He was a hard-working, highly competent naval administrator who brought much-needed modernizations to the British Navy at a critical time. What made Samuel so effective at his job was his capacity as a connector and influencer of people and ideas.

The glue which made those attributes so effective was his nature. He was straight forward yet tactful, intellectual, politically astute, an incomparable conversationalist, affable, fun-loving and caring. Samuel had the ear, it seems, of every important person in his day, including the king, the Duke of York and the

Samuel Pepys (1633-1703)

aforementioned Hans Sloane. His friends and associates stretched from intellectuals, politicians, merchants and government officials to humble servants and pedlars. He was

truly a man of the people who earned the love and admiration of all those he touched.

Great Fire of London 2 September 1665

Brick Lane Market

Rain. It was pouring. That worked for us. We needed a morning off to collect ourselves. By 11:30am the weather had lifted. The high overcast was just the ticket for the camera and me. We dug ourselves out of the flat and headed for the Sunday Brick Lane Market, East London. The 156 took us down Brixton Hill Road where we hopped the Snake to Green Park, changed to the District Line, got off at Aldgate East, then walked up Brick Lane to the market.

Oh my. It was photographer's nirvana. Already it was noon and the sun was threatening to poke through. Shots were everywhere. I began bashing them off, moving quickly to cover as much ground as possible while the light held. Throngs of people of all colours and ethnic attire crowded the streets and sidewalks. A multitude of languages pocked the air. For culture addicts like me, this was a bonanza. While I worked on capturing the scene, Randi slipped out of sight. I wasn't worried; we'd bump into each other, but I couldn't stop to look.

Minutes counted. Check the light. Shoot from the shadow side. MOVE. Cover that alley. Look up, look back. Wait for that one. Good. Try another angle. Chase that guy. Wow, there's a shot. Ask permission. No go. Nuts. I passed a 40s something man with a crutch, begging. A hundred feet beyond, I stopped, returned and placed a coin in his hand, then, with permission, took his picture and chatted. I shot the street until the sun popped out. As if planned, Randi appeared and we went for a bite at the food market.

Ohhh, the food market. It's an old warehouse off Brick Lane. Against it's four walls are food stalls offering street food from the breadth of the planet -- Pakistan, India, China, Indonesia, Singapore, Korea, Malaysia, Vietnam. Ahh, the smells, the colours, the textures. Vendors urged us to taste. We chose the Singaporean stall, shared the 'something of everything' offering and found a seat outside.

An American couple joined us. We told them we are Canadian

and the woman promptly apologized for their president. "I am so ashamed," she confessed. “He has treated your country terribly. We do not share his politics." These are thoughtful, intelligent people. There is a sensible, ethical America – waiting, hoping. I tipped my hat to my father's family who once called Singapore home and we left for the next adventure -- the Columbia Road Flower Market.

Brick Lane, East London

Brick Lane, East London


CINNAMON
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MASTERCHEF 2017
AWARDED BY RESTAURANT GUIDES
BEST IN BRICK LANE
FOOD HYGIENE RATING
OPEN
Brick Lane East London


FEAR OF A BLONDE PLA
LAGERTH
FOODBANK SOUP
WAIT FOR THE MESSIAH
RED


IS THE
EASY
WAY


GOURMET
SUSHI
THAI
MASSAGE
TATTOO
payzone

Thames to Greenwich

We were near spent. I could not muster the energy to write a note to family and friends yesterday, but rose early today to get it done. Memories are short-lived these days. It's write or flight.

6am. First light suggested another mixed weather day. More rain perhaps; no doubt more howling wind. Very unusual, said Londoners. These weather shifts do not bode well.

Today was designed as a casual affair: a cruise on the Thames and two museums close by. I thought we had mastered the tube, that magical conveyance which, according to the guide books, makes all rapid movement in London possible and thus all outings effortlessly achieved. Nay. It was not so.

Snake remained a formidable foe ('tube' is a term far too innocuous for this creature). Just when you think it's yours, you are lost in a maze of tunnels, pummeled by throngs of silent, terrifyingly fast-moving people, entertained by tone deaf Jamaican steel drummers, whisked down escalators so steep they take the breath away (one left Randi dizzy).

Snake has a daughter, Sincerity, who works in the trade. Nepotism thrives still in some quarters. A pleasant yet business-like young woman, Sincerity takes to the loud speaker to ensure all conform to the protocol:

"Please keep to the right to let others move by; as you depart, mind the gap between the train and the platform."

A score of souls, it seems, did not mind the gap and never arrived home that night. Now their children, raised in poverty by a single mum in the tenements of East London, take their father's place on the Snake. When they board and depart, they stand out from the crowd, bridging the gap between train and platform

with a careful, exaggerated stride born of fear.

"Please be sure to take all your personal belongings [arms, legs and dangly things] when you leave the train."

This one, at least, presented no problem, as upon departure, all our personal belongings were embedded in our chest, back and legs.

We arrived at Westminster Pier and queued to present our London Pass to City Cruises. A man at the teller on the right insisted on exploring every nuance of the offering. The man at the teller on the left did not bring the critical document but argued at length that he had paid. Minutes remain to cast off.

Finally, an opening. We were on; our boat pulled away from the dock and slipped down the Thames. The guide, it appeared, worked a second job as stand-up comedian. We chuckled all the way to Greenwich. Behind us sat a young couple from Mumbai. They would soon apply as immigrants to Canada. We exchanged addresses and mutual invitations to visit.

Greenwich. First venue, the Cutty Sark, famous tea clipper of the mid-1800s that set the record for a passage from China to England of 70 days. Then hunger drew us to the Greenwich Village Market for a memorable pulled pork sandwich. A block away, we took in the Maritime Museum. Back on Snake we leaped, and headed for the Museum of London -- Docklands for the history of British Trade. Superb. It was a wrap. 4:30pm. Snake was waiting patiently for its next meal.

Rush hour, Friday afternoon. This is Snake's big meal of the week. Londoners leave town. Confusion. The signs for Snake took us to an upper platform. Wrong side of the tracks. Down again, up again. Back we went one station to change lines but our next station was elsewhere and where was elsewhere? Signs directed us to a mall where a helpful soul suggested we try Canada Square. Even this massive plaza is dwarfed by the office towers which envelope it. We were lost in the enormity of it all. Yet this is but one facet of Canary Wharf, the massive financial district built and lost by Canadian property developer, Paul Reichmann.

By accident, I spotted in the distance the symbol for the underground. Again we submitted. The platform was stuffed with

humanity. Trains came and went; we inched forward until we stood on the edge of the platform, the tracks five feet below. This was no place to trip. The next train arrived; the horde shifted in anticipation. The train doors in front of us slid apart revealing room for perhaps seven people, no more. A hundred would wait for the next train.

Kindly veteran commuters pressed us to the front as the next train arrived minutes later. Randi was on -- just. My turn. It did not seem possible for me too to squeeze in. “Come on,” yelled Randi, panic in her voice. "Go now," commanded the man behind me. I crushed my way in.

Pressed cheek to jowl, we were human anchovies. "Doors are closing. Please ensure you are fully inside the car." It was Sincerity with sage advice but little on-the-ground experience. Yes, I was in! The doors closed behind me. BAM. My backpack was not in. I pressed forward again; the doors closed. This was a memorable ride. The heat and humidity made breathing a labour. There was no room for social niceties here. The anchovies are silent.

We did get home, eventually. Once free of Snake, there was still the bus to catch from Brixton Station. "Get the 133," cried Randi, pushing through the horde. What a girl. For a moment, I lost sight of her and when I arrived only metres away at the door of the 133, she was nowhere to be seen. She caught the 33!

She'll find her way home, I reasoned, but what if she’s not back by dinner? I hopped the 133. It was stuffed. Should be there in a ...jiff. Traffic. Heavy traffic. The bus moved centimetres at a go. Twenty minutes later, we had advanced one stop.

A veteran rider next to me at the exit snapped open the overhead emergency button console and sprung the door. Gone he was, mid stop. I was tempted to follow, but Canadian propriety held me back. I waited another 15 minutes for the next stop, then fled. Walking felt great. Fresh air, lots to see. Uhh, where am I? Damn, I’m freaking lost again. Don't tell Randi. I wandered, inquiring with passersby where Helix Road was. "Sorry, I'm just here visiting a friend. "Sorry, don't know that one. Try Google."

I did and found my way home. As I staggered up the steep stairs to the attic flat, Randi called out " Peter, is that you? I was so worried. What happened?"

"Just connecting with the neighbourhood."

"Ahh, you got lost." Bloody hell.

Cutty Sark, Greenwich, London

Thames River Cruise

Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

Life On Ice

It seems fitting that while in Greenwich, the home of all things nautical in the British Empire, that I should tell the tale of Sir Ernest Shackleton's ill-fated voyage to the Antarctic.

Sir Ernest Henry Shackleton, CVO, OBE, FRGS (1874-1922) was born into an Anglo-Irish Quaker family. Ernest was a polar explorer at the beginning of the 20th century, an era known as the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration. For his first polar experience, he joined Robert Scott's Discovery Expedition (1901-1904) as third officer. Much to his dismay, Ernest was sent home early with heart problems.

Not to be thwarted by this perceived assault on his character, Ernest returned to the Antarctic in 1907 as leader of the Nimrod Expedition. In 1909, expedition members marched south to within 190 km of the pole, a new record. On his return home, Shackleton was knighted by King Edward VII for his achievement.

The race to the pole ended in 1912 when Roald Amundsen reached the South Pole using dogs, sleds and skis.

Shackleton's pressing need for glory led him to propose the penultimate Antarctic journey — crossing Antarctica from sea to sea via the pole. The Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition of 1914-1917 began.

The expedition's ship, the Endurance, powered by sail and steam, was extensively refitted to withstand the rigours of Antarctica. Shackleton had chosen a deep narrow hull for Endurance which would break through the ice rather than a rounded hull which would rise up onto the ice when squeezed. Once in the Antarctic, Shackleton likely wished that he had chosen the latter, for the Endurance became trapped in insurmountable pack ice and was slowly crushed and sunk.

The crew salvaged whatever they could take with them, then began an arduous trek in search of land, dragging the ship's 20 foot lifeboats over endless high ridges of uplifted ice. As the ice

floe disintegrated that spring, the crew were forced to sail for five horrendous days to reach a tiny pinnacle of rock called Elephant Island, their first solid ground in 497 days.

Elephant Island was an exposed, inhospitable place, well off the shipping lanes. There was no hope of rescue from there. Shackleton decided to risk a dangerous open-boat journey to South Georgia Island where a whaling station could effect rescue. Preparations were made for the trip.

To South Georgia

The chosen lifeboat, the James Caird, was refitted with raised sides, a strengthened keel and a wood and canvas deck. Then on 24 April, 1916, the James Caird was launched with six men aboard — Shackleton, Endurance's captain Frank Worsley, Tom Crean, two strong sailors John Vincent and Timothy McCarthy, and the ship's carpenter Harry McNish.

Navigating across 1200 km of horrendous Southern Ocean seas, Worsley brought the Caird abeam of the south side of South Georgia Island. Hurricane force winds kept them offshore through the night but the next day they landed safely and set up a base camp where they rested for several days.

Then Shackleton, Worsley and Crean, with 16 metres of rope and an ice adze scaled the mountains, covering 51 km over 36 hours to reach Stromness, a whaling station on the north coast of South Georgia Island. Forty years later, in October,1955, the British explorer Duncan Carse traveled much the same route as Shackleton's party. He wrote "I do not know how they did it, except that they had to…."

Rescue

At the whaling station, Shackleton forthwith arranged for his three crew on the south side the island to be picked up, then organized a rescue of the remaining men on Elephant Island. Three attempts to reach them were foiled by pack ice. Shackleton appealed to the Chilean Navy who sent the navy tug Yelcho with Shackleton aboard, to rescue his crew who had been on Elephant Island for four and a half months.

Shackleton and his entire crew returned safely to England. It was a feat of leadership and collaboration which placed Ernest Shackleton firmly among the ranks of great British heroes, the place he had always dreamed of being — for entirely different reasons.

The crew
huddles around the ship's stove

The crew
wave goodbye to the James Caird

Captain Frank Wild
surveys the remains of the Endurance

Shackleton
and 5 others sail 1200 km to South Georgia Island

Tea With Sir Ernest

If you were granted an hour with the ancestor of your choice, who would you choose? For me, it would be a tough call, but Ernest would be right up there in the top three. I'm speaking of Sir Ernest Shackleton, Antarctic explorer of the early 1900s. He was a legendary figure, famous for his courage and leadership in rescuing his crew from shipwreck and certain death.

Yes, I'm proud to say that Ernie and I are close relatives. He is my grand nephew of the husband of my 2nd cousin four times removed. He often speaks of me (I'm certain). I'm expecting a letter from him any day. Still lost in the post, I suppose.

No matter. I arranged to meet him in the flesh in the reading room of the Royal Geographic Society, London at twelve noon sharp, August 4, 2013. Sir Ernest is a stickler for punctuality. I get there early. The reading room's grandfather clock chimes out the hour. I've got goose bumps....ah, here he is now....

"Sir Ernest. Peter Bruce, your grand uncle and so on. What a great honour this is. Thank you for seeing me."

"Well, quite honestly, I had nothing better to do. This 'being dead' business gets frightfully boring, I'm afraid."

"I see. Remind me, then, not to rush into it."

"Shall I arrange for tea, Mr. Bruce?"

"Please, call me Peter. And yes, thank you. Just black."

"Right. Back in a moment."

Fifty-five minutes pass before Sir Ernest returns empty-handed.

"I'm awfully sorry for the wait, old chap. I've had a dreadful time. When I reached what used to be the dining hall, it was gone. Sealed up as though it had never existed.

I enquired with the maitre d' as to its new location and was informed there was no dining hall, that it had been leased to the Salvation Army as a meal station for the homeless. Cost-cutting measure, he said. Tea could be obtained at the...what did he call them?...dispensing machines in the basement. Dispensing

machines? What the devil are those?"

"Its a different world, Sir Ernest."

"At any rate, in the manner of explorers I persevered and started to make my way to the basement. On the way I inquired with a young lady as to the location of these machines and she offered to take me to them.

"Very kind."

"Yes, but I wish she hadn't. Because it was then that I noticed a most extraordinary thing. Her legs were completely exposed from her ...well, you know...right here. I

was, to put it mildly, non-plussed. There she was, in full view of anybody who cared to look her way, half naked! Just a bit of cloth about her middle, the rest, well, exposed flesh as it were."

"Sir Ernest. That's how women dress these days." I don't think he heard me.

"The curious thing was she seemed to have no inkling of her predicament, poor soul. Of course I promptly removed my jacket and attempted to wrap it about her mid-section, believing I was doing the gentlemanly thing and that she had somehow lost her bottom half without knowing it. She pushed me away, called me a "bloody pervert" and ran off yelling SECURITY, SECURITY. A minute later two large men looking for all the world like bobbies, grab me, yell "AGAINST THE WALL NOW", then run their hands all over my body. I briefly considered yelling 'pervert' myself, then thought the better of it.

Naturally I remonstrated, and told them my name and member number, thinking they would quickly come to their senses, feel stupid and apologize. Not so, I'm afraid. One of them replied that he was King Ferdinand of Spain and that henceforth, I was to address him as 'Your Highness.' The impudence."
"Furthermore," said he, "our members have 5 digit numbers, not 3." "What happened to your other 5 digits, said I. Stuck up your bottom, I suppose." He was not amused.

"Oh gosh. What happened next?" I didn't really want to know, but I felt compelled to ask. Sir Ernest needed to vent.

"Well, they strong-armed me to a back room. The maitre d' joined us and there, they proceeded to grill me as to my identity and purpose here. I repeatedly told them who I was but they simply did not believe me. I told them my cousin of sorts was waiting in the reading room and that he would vouch for me. So here we are."

Standing before me were the maitre d', the two security men and a rather confused, distraught Sir Ernest in the firm grasp of his captors. Being marooned on Elephant Island must have looked rather appealing to Sir Ernest about then.

I, of course, provided the required vouchsafe. When I picked myself up off the sidewalk and turned to check on Sir Ernest, he was gone. I looked at my watch. One minute past one. The hour was up.

Bon voyage, Sir Ernest. The tea was a trifle weak but your company was grand.

Note to self:

It doesn't work to go back. Enjoy the present to the full Peter. It is all you have.

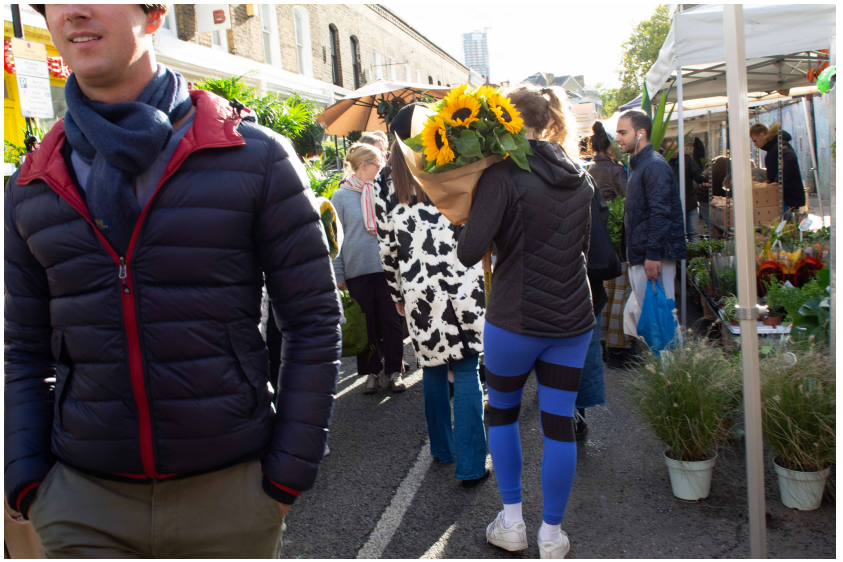
Sir Ernest Shackleton

About 28 years old

Columbia Road Flower Market

“It's 3:30, I said to Randi, “the vendors will be wrapping up. Probably not worth the effort." *"Oh come on, we're here,” she countered. “Let's try."* But which way? *"Let's go that way,"* says Randi. *"Follow the flowers."* We could, for a stream of people -- human bread crumbs with flowers in hand -- were coming down Brick Lane. In ten minutes, we were there. Flower stalls with bellowing vendors on both sides of the street, and a crush of people between. Nirvana revisited. *"Meet you here in 30 minutes,"* I call out to Randi. *"No. You're not leaving my sight."* *"Okay. Let's get to it. I'm going to the far end, then shooting my way back against the sun. Okay?"* *"Okay, Go."*

I moved through the crowd, taking pot shots when I could, then worked my way back as planned. It was cramped, to say the least, and shots were hard to get. When it seemed that the crush of people could get no worse, a man appeared, walking his bicycle, patiently inching it through the crowd. On the back carrier was a wooden crate and in the crate were seven little pups. In seconds, the pups were spotted by one person, then another and another. A knot of people, men and women, with outstretched hands were fondling the little beings, then picking them up and pressing them gently to their chests. The owner, an older man, stopped, smiled, chatted amiably and happily let it happen. Getting past this knot within the knot was possible but difficult. Nobody seemed to mind. In the midst of this, a young flower vendor pulling a six foot high multi-shelved trolley of plants appeared. How she and her trolley got to that point is a mystery. She was an animal lover. All movement came to a halt. In an instant, she had picked up one of the furry balls and tucked it under her chin. She was going nowhere, nor was her trolley, nor was anybody else. But no one cared; there were puppies to cosset. In time, the man and his puppies moved on. The rest slipped away. I got my shots of puppies and people; they got their shots of puppies and love and all of us were smiling. Randi and I called it a day.



Columbia Road Flower Market

Columbia Road Flower Market

Columbia Road Flower Market

Columbia Road Flower Market

Regent’s Canal & Camden Market

Sun. Not short for Sunday. It was Monday. The sun had returned. A normal person would rejoice. I did not. Photography is more challenging when it's sunny. Sun causes lens flare, bleaches out colours and creates high contrast which blocks up shadows and burns out highlights. The human eye has vastly more capacity to see detail in high contrast conditions than our cameras have, which is why we're often surprised and disappointed when the wonderful picture we saw through the viewer turns out to be a throw-away.

High overcast, that's my favourite -- soft, diffused light which still gives shadows and thus dimension to people and objects, assures detail throughout the image and bestows rich colours and dramatic reflections, especially after a rain. But you get what you get and that day it was sun. I would work mostly in the shadows shooting towards the light to capture dramatic effects.

Once again, we sallied forth on the Great Hunt. This time the objective was Jason's Little Venice Boat Trip.' If we managed to locate Jason, he would take us up Regent’s Canal to Camden Road Market, where, the theory goes, we would arrive in plenty of time to explore the market, have lunch and be off to other venues.

Finding Jason was indeed a big ‘if’ which I found very odd. Jason makes a living from this. He might well have a wife and nine young children to feed, children whimpering with hunger in a small holiday trailer tucked under an overpass. Why on earth would he make it so difficult to be found? There are 18 million people in this town. If you want customers, would you not wish to stand out in some way, tell people where you are, for example?

I'm not an idiot. I don't think. I’ve said that before, haven’t I? I’m beginning to sound defensive. All right, I admit that matters of navigation do not come naturally. But really, it's as if Jason chose

his dock site something like this:

> "Now let's see, we don't want hammers for customers. They might do something stupid like lean overboard with their cameras and knock a body part off going through the tunnel. How would that play out on Trip Advisor? Not well I can tell you. So I suggest we tuck our Jason well away from the other trip boats and forget about signs. That way, only intelligent people will find their way here. And thus, we avoid the insufferable wailing of distraught customers and the dreadfully messy business of
>
> scooping parts out of the water. It's brilliant, what?"

It was 11:30am when we found the dock for 'Jason's Little Venice Boat Trip.' The hunt began at 9:30. Next departure, stated the sign: 12:30. Swell. I killed time shooting the boats tied up along the canal. Randi sat on a bench and chatted with a local -- an older lady who lived on one of the 'narrow boats' with her husband. They came by canal from Birmingham 26 years ago and never left -- their boat or London.

Jason arrived on time, with his boat. Once we were seated, Sarah, our guide, was quick to make clear who was boss on this expedition -- and it wasn't us.

> "As we carry on down the waterway, I will be giving a commentary on the history of the canals and of the boatmen and their families who worked them. I ask that you do not talk, for doing so will spoil the trip for those around you."

Not stated but implied:

> "Should you see fit to ignore my advice, you shall be placed on Browning Island over there, so named for Robert Browning, famous English poet, where you shall wither and die a painful, lingering 'death by peck,' compliments of a thousand irate ducks, hand picked by me for the task."

Okay fine.

We arrived at Camden Town Market, body parts in tact, and explored the myriad alleys chock-a-block with stalls -- belts and purses, tops, suits and ties, shoes, ethnic food, baubles,

scarves, used books..... The light was good in the narrow alleys. I was off. “Must go, Rand, see you back here in half an hour.”

Three thirty arrived and we rendezvoused at the dock. It was too late to fondle the wares in Harrod's or terrify the horses with my camera at the Royal Mews. Randi had been a Trojan all week, stoically enduring significant knee pain. It was time to head home to Brixton for a little R and R.

Regent's Canal, London

Camden Market

Camden Market

Final Day: Kew Gardens

London. What a girl. A wonder of contradictions --hard working yet playful, rough hewn yet cultured, ancient yet modern, brash yet polite, rich and poor. There is no pinning her down. She is just... London. We've been here a scant six days, yet already I feel her pull.

Okay, we struggled to get our feet on the ground. But that was no fault of hers. That was us, two analog seniors staggering through a fast-paced world. We got your message London, not whispered exactly. More like 'tough love.' "Better get on board folks, or stay home and watch the paint peel."

What's travel without lumps. If it's a lumpless experience we're looking for, we'd best take a tour. Or watch a travelogue in the den. It's less work and cheap. And if we really want to experience the essence of a place, why not throw on a backpack or climb on a bike, stay in hostels, hitchhike, drive a beater that breaks down, live on the edge. I did it once for a year as a young man. It was phenomenal, mind-bending, life-altering. Could I do it now? I like to think so...maybe.

Don't get me wrong. I am not saying my life is dull and wanting. I cherish the life I share with Randi. Like many in the Western World, our lives are chock full of routine and comforts. Too much of that can dull life's edge. Perhaps it has for me. I'm hardly un-engaged with life, but I sometimes feel I'm not as en-gaged with the real stuff of life as I could be.

Yes, the 'real stuff of life' -- getting out there in the world, rubbing shoulders with, sharing life's moments with, listening to the stories of people – people of different cultures, persuasions and life experiences. I'm talking about exploring the human condition. Now that intrigues me.

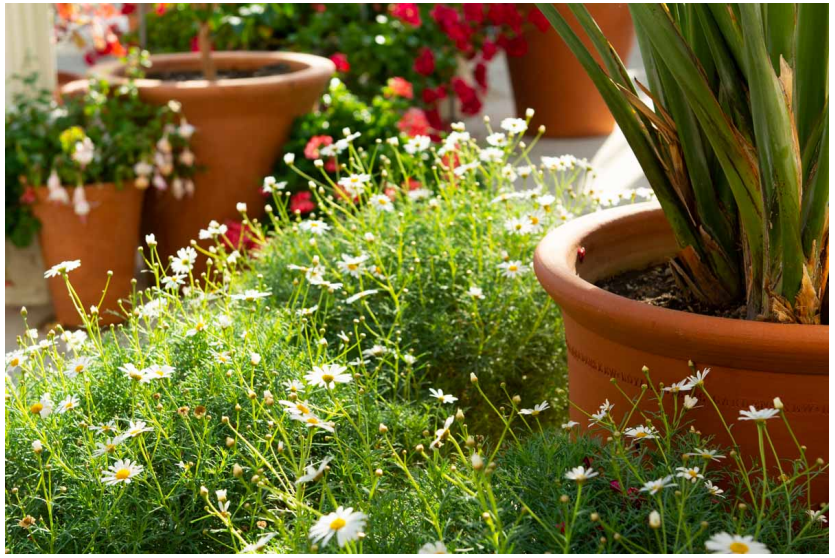
Have you noticed that as our wealth increases and with it our comforts, we put more between ourselves and the 'real stuff of life'? Take, for example, the difference between walking and

riding a bike. Then consider the difference between riding a bike and driving a car. The more affluent we become, the more we insulate ourselves from life around us, and the less of life we experience. It is the tragic irony of our modern North American world. In our (misguided) attempts to find lives of substance -- opportunities to connect -- we frequent dating services, build gated communities, create theme parks and ‘friend’ on Facebook. We are dehumanizing at an alarming rate.

helped with directions, made way for us in tight quarters and

Kew Gardens, London

Kew Gardens, London



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Journey Home

Day 24 and homeward bound. We were in the air, settled and snug in seats 34 H and K. Ahhh. No more hassles, nothing to do but sit back and relax and let the Big Bird fly us home. The four course macaroni au fromage arrived. The assiduous planner, I ordered our meals ahead of time online. It was a five star sum but this was the last hurrah. What the hell. Randi ordered the buttered chicken. On the tray in front of me sat a preliminary to stimulate the taste buds (a bread roll in a sealed bag with a wee pat of butter in a sealed plastic cup). There too was the entree (macaroni au fromage, in a Little Blue Box), fruit to cleanse the palate (six slices of apple in a sealed bag) to be followed by desert -- a KitKat in a red sealed wrapper, not to be confused with the Red Seal Certification for chefs. I took the presence of the KitKat as a kindly adieu from the Rowntrees, my Quaker relatives who created the KitKat in 1911.

Regrettably, I found myself lacking in appetite, perhaps because I had just stuffed myself with granola. I carry a bag of granola everywhere to stave off death in the event of a famine. Although a more plausible reason for downing the granola was my earlier acquaintance with the macaroni au fromage on the flight out. I was fully apprised of its nature, you see. And there I was again, face to face with the Little Blue Box. How odd. I suppose I could have asked the pleasant attendant to suck it down the terrifying tornado toilet but my Scots blood got the better of me. I had prepaid. I was in.

The Blue Box has two ends, of course, but attempts to open either end proved fruitless. They were firmly glued shut. This is ridiculous, I thought. Why would WestJet go to the effort of creating macaroni au fromage for their valued customers, then cram it into a tiny unassailable fortress? Well, I was obliged to persevere. Not that I was salivating down my front, but, as mentioned, I had paid good money for the pleasure.

On closer inspection, I noted that each end of the Little Blue Box had a hole. Surely it was a finger-hole for pulling the end up and open. No go, but when at the same time, I pulled at the same end with my other hand, I managed to rip enough of the box end open to allow me to grasp the plastic tray inside. Ah ha. Progress. It remained to pull…to pull the tray out of the remnant

of the Little Blue…. It's stuck. What the hell, come out! Beyond polite, I ripped off the remainder of the box's top, then grasped the tray with the vehemence of a Trump supporter at a West Virginia rally. With gritted teeth, I wrenched it from its comfy quarters, rendering the Little Blue Box unrecognizable. I dared not look up in case I should come eye to eye with six people who might spread the word to their listless neighbours about the on-board entertainment in 34K.

Just as I finished liberating my lunch-to-be from its mini-prison, and feeling a tad righteous, I happened to glance to my left. Randi had found a tab on the top of her Little Blue Box of buttered chicken and the clever little bitch (forgive me, I love her dearly) was peeling it back to reveal her lunch. I hate that.

Lunch was, to be blunt, a sordid affair. My guess was that WestJet's secret recipe for macaroni au fromage was invented by WestJet CEO Tommy West's mother's mother to stave off hunger pangs in the Great Depression. Macaroni is macaroni. The fromage is the key ingredient.

Fromage, of course, is French for cheese, but cheese this was categorically not. Yes, it was yellow and when a fully grown adult, might have leaned toward the orange of good old Canadian cheddar. But that is really as far as it went. I concluded from prior WestJet experience that, in the bad old days, Mrs. West could not afford real cheese, so substituted something else. God knows what. And that something else was handed down through the West family and landed firmly on the fold-down tray in front of me.

More accurately, the plastic tray of macaroni au fromage inside the Little Blue Box landed firmly, not the faux-fromage, for the latter, you see, was closer to the consistency of thin soup. That, in itself, would not have been an insurmountable problem, if the faux-cheese had actually been cheese. I've had cheese soup and it's not bad. In this case, this unidentifiable medium proffered as cheese serves only as a lubricant, causing the macaroni on your plastic fork to slide off onto your shirt and lap, smearing as it sallies forth on the way to the cabin floor.

Randi, as I mentioned, chose the buttered chicken. It seemed an astute choice at first taste, but with the passage of time her impressions changed. She began to complain of stomach cramps and threatened to pass more than time. And I, poor soul, was in the aisle seat.

I am prone to speculating on the why of things and on this, a nine-hour flight, I had the luxury of time. Here then, is the theory I arrived at on the origins of WestJet's buttered chicken. I return again to the recipe book of the now famous Mrs. West. She was, I believe, a shrewd manager of money, a necessity in the dirty thirties. To make her nickel go further, Mrs. West came upon a cheap, indeed, free source of meat to nourish her growing family — road kill. I share your feelings, the thought is abhorrent, yet there is no need to dwell on this. Those days are long past, thank goodness, and the West family have prospered, in large measure by carrying on the family tradition of frugality.

Now please, I am not suggesting for a moment that WestJet serves road kill to its patrons. Preposterous. However, could it be that WestJet marketers took a page from Mrs. West's playbook, that is, that they stumbled on using vastly cheaper Grade B chickens. 'B' stands for 'battered.' Battered chickens are those unfortunate feathered creatures who are pecked to death by pissed-off co-habitants.

The quick-minded among you might now see the ruse. To the prospective diner, 'battered' chicken means floured and deep-fried; to WestJet it means profit. Thus the theory goes that WestJet initially offered 'battered chicken' (an entirely honest statement) which became, due to a typo not yet corrected by WestJet staff, 'buttered' chicken or alternatively, 'battered' chicken spoken with a London accent.

I confess this is all a titch speculative but I encourage you, dear reader, to find your own truth — fly WestJet.

Lunch done, Randi attempted to connect to the internet.

"I've followed the instructions to a tee" she complained, "and nothing happens."

I scanned the instruction sheet. "It says 'Open the WestJet Connect app. You don't have the app."

"Well, how do I get the app?"

"Go to Apple Store and download it."

"I tried, nothing happened."

"That's because you're not connected to the internet." Randi said naught and pulled her book from the seat-back. She was overwhelmed, I suppose, by the complexities of the digital age. My nemesis: Little Blue Boxes.

September 26, 2018. Victoria Airport: 4:47pm. We were home.

“Hey, there’s Chuck.” How are you bro’? Thanks for the pick up.
The trip? Oh man, it was awesome....”

Randi aboard the Cutty Sark

London: Ever the same, ever changing, ever fascinating