

## SABBATICAL LEAVE, SWITZERLAND, 1960

Six years after my first sabbatical leave from the University of Illinois, I applied for a second sabbatical leave to take place during the spring semester of 1960 at full pay. I also applied for and received a Guggenheim Fellowship, which helped pay the travel expenses of the entire family. It was my intention to try to change research areas during a quiet reading period away from teaching and Departmental duties, specifically, to move away from straight organic chemistry toward biochemistry. The actual result was that I became a pioneer in the field of bioorganic chemistry. I have not attached a copy of the Sabbatical Leave Report that shows how successful professionally the absence from Illinois really was. Basel, Switzerland, was chosen as the locus because of invitations from delightful friends who lived and worked there, and also because of the concentration of chemical industry and the centrality of Basel for travel within Europe.

What about family accommodations? We learned to our distress that pleasant living quarters for a family of six within a walk or tram ride to the University of Basel, where I would have an office and use of the library, were out of the question—either unavailable or exorbitant in price. After surveying, with Professor Plattner and his secretary and with Professor Grob and his wife, all of the options, Nell and I made a compromise decision. She and I would rent a two-room flat in an apartment-hotel on the Steinengraben in Basel, and the children would be lodged in Flims, above Chur in the Graubünden. Kenneth, who became twelve that spring, would attend the boys' school in Flims, Pro-gymnasium Witzig. Marcia, ten, would be allowed to attend the school because Dr. Witzig's daughter was about the same age and was in classes there, but she would board next door in the Kinderhaus Schlosser, where James, not yet eight, and David, not yet six, would be staying. James was to receive some instruction from the school books he had brought along. It all sounded good because of the change, challenge, immersion (to a point) in German, association with children of other cultures, fantastic scenery, and the opportunity of skiing during the season. We rationalized our decision because of these

considerations and possibly because Nell had endured (quite happily) numerous separations from her parents during her early years and because, as an only child, I was happiest when I was with other children in the absence of adults. That is the background for the Swiss living and schooling arrangements. Let us see what transpired.

The question of what to do about our much-loved dog, Taina, a Norwegian elkhound, was solved by the willingness of our good friends Harry and Mae Elizabeth Drickamer and their children to look after her. They had a fenced-in backyard where Taina, in true northern style, could spend most of her time, preferably sleeping or snuffling in the snow during the Illinois-predictable winter. Our house at 606 W. Indiana Avenue in Urbana would be rented to a visiting professor, his wife, and two children, who would be in residence for the spring semester. They were visiting from England. On the appointed day for our departure near the end of January, 1960, there was snow and ice on the ground, which a warming trend converted partially to a thick ground fog. I remember it well. We drove at a watchful, limited 50-miles-or-less per hour, and we were concerned—that is, mother, father, and James were concerned—that we would not make our intended goal that first day. We didn't, progressing through Indiana, where the fog finally lifted, and almost to the eastern border of Ohio, to stay in a not-so-elegant motel, where Nell experienced some food poisoning. We rose early on the second day, and, although disadvantaged by having only one healthy driver, we made it to Princeton, New Jersey, to stay with friends. We were not warned in time that the father in that family was suffering from a raging upper respiratory infection. Fortunately, I was the only one in our family who caught the disease, which was not manifested until we were safely in the Swiss mountains. Why do I describe all this? Simply to remind any reader that travel with a family in mid-winter has untold hazards. I am so naive that I am still surprised, although not as upset as I used to be, when the actuality of travel does not match the plans that I have carefully made.

On the third, and to-be-final day, we drove to Bronxville, N.Y., and visited briefly with my aunts, Flora and Kate. I parked the car in their empty garage, raising it on blocks so that the tires would not be distorted on long storage, and we took a large limousine to the airport for departure on Swissair to Zürich via Madrid, where we made an early morning stop. The overnight flight was long but smooth, and we all managed to sleep a fair amount. We had two ranks of three seats. Marcia and Jim spent a good bit of time lying on the floor rolled in blankets, a feat made possible because there were no ridges or bars under the seats as there are on contemporary large aircraft, and because the seat-belt sign remained turned

off. David was stretched out with his head on Nell's lap, and Ken and I sprawled on the seats of the second rank, keeping our feet off the two below. After breakfast and a brief walk around the Madrid international airport area, we completed the flight to Zürich, flying close to the mighty Jungfrau and over our favorite Swiss lakes. Immigration formalities took a bit longer than usual because we were going to stay into June, but then we popped into taxis which took us to the Hotel Storchen, centrally situated and on the Limat. We roamed the parts of Zürich that Nell and I knew best, rested, and then came down for dinner in shifts. There was a parade of women that evening under torchlight. They were demanding the right to vote! In 1960! Our waiter made some disparaging remarks, and Nell proceeded to set him straight in her perfect German. In the second shift, Marcia came down to dinner, asked the waiter about the parade, and, although she was only 10 years old, proceeded to set the male chauvinist straight in her perfect English. Like mother, like daughter. I loved it! I must add, however, that we did not receive very good service from that waiter after those exchanges. As a footnote, Canton Zürich women did obtain the right to vote; in fact, all of the Swiss Cantons except Appenzell had given women equal voting rights by the end of 1960.

We saw more of Zürich on the following day. Professor Duilio Arigoni of the famous E.T.H. in Zürich remembers guiding the children into the fabulous toy store, Franz Karl Weber, and Professor Hans Schmid (University of Zürich) and his wife, Käthe, came to visit us in the Storchen. They had met the children when they were summer visitors at the University of Illinois and thus were old friends. The train ride to Chur and bus ride up to Flims-Waldhaus were fascinating—and have continued to be fascinating for each one of us whenever they were repeated during periodic visits to Switzerland. We stayed in the wonderfully hospitable Hotel Segnes Post, which served excellent meals. Herr Kleinguti was still serving excellent meals in 1980 and 1982, when Nell and I had dinner there with the Brossis and several other chemists and their wives. In the best hotel manager manner, he said he remembered our family of six from two decades earlier. Did we behave so well? Or so badly? In retrospect, it was probably a mistake to accustom the children to excellent restaurant fare when they would be moving to Kinderhaus Schlosser and Progymnasium Witzig after a week. We were trying to give them a treat. They were enrolled in ski school, and all except David prospered. He thought it was “too slippery.” After I got over my cold and sore throat, I skied, but what I remember best was sledding with James. We rode the lift to the halfway point and then slid down the snow-covered walking paths for the longest ride I have ever had on a sled. And the fastest.

There were occasional abrupt turns at the confluence of two paths. These we never did learn to negotiate properly, and we excursionsed off into the drifts along the sides, to the tune of "Are you all right, Dad?" Nell spent time at the Kinderhaus and at Witzig's making arrangements for the inevitable separation. We liked Frau Schlosser and her two assistants, but we had little appreciation for her staff and their strict adherence to the "rules" that would cause the three younger children such distress. There were many tears when it came time to troop down the road to the lesser abodes. James staunchly said, however, something like: "I don't know what you are making a fuss about. We were told at the beginning what would happen after the week together in the Segnes Post." He was not being unfeeling. He just always planned ahead.

Nell and I went to Basel and set up residence in the Apartment-Hotel Steinengraben. The pension included some meals. Nell fixed lunches for us because there was time for me to walk to and from the University during the two-hour lunch time observed in that city. We also discovered nearby reasonable restaurants that had atmosphere. We had promised Frau Schlosser that we would not visit during the first four weeks, which was the average period necessary, according to her experience, for children to pass through the feeling of homesickness. We received a few desperate cards from the younger three, while Kenneth was enthusiastic, probably because of his moving into residence at the Progymnasium Witzig, with never a look behind at the Kinderhaus. The real burden was on Marcia, who, at a mere ten, had to be motherly for Jim and Dave. Since woe feeds upon woe in a small circle, their mutual distress was probably reinforcing. That will have to be their part of this story. The end result was certainly a bonding together of the children, the effect of which is evident in all of their interactions during later years. Nell and I felt deprived of their presence, apprehensive of their treatment, and I had recurring dreams that they were being fed only some kind of gruel. In the grayness and wetness of Basel, we satisfied our concern by hearing daily of either sun or snow "in den Bergen," the right ingredients in the right place—Flims.

Nell lasted the four weeks, fortified by official telephone conversations with Frau Schlosser, then she traveled to Flims for the weekend. I lasted six weeks, the time period to which I had disciplined myself for a no-travel, only-study concentration. After those six weeks, Nell and I went together to Flims and had a marvelous time. We treated our children to dinner back in the Segnes Post, they took us on the walks they had become accustomed to and liked, and we promised to fetch them at Easter time and take them on a trip to Holland, where they could for a week reacquaint themselves with all their Dutch relatives. I cannot remember how many

times Nell went back and forth between Basel and Flims, but her sister Els made one trip with her, and I joined her in another trip before the Easter vacation. It was apparent that not all of our gifts, i.e., of peanut butter and various goodies, reached or stayed with those living in Kinderhaus Schlosser. The staff seemed to take control of such items. I must say, however, that our four looked very healthy on each of my visits to Flims, so that I had fewer “grueling” dreams.



The four children, Flims, Switzerland, 1960

After the first six weeks in Basel, I also made myself available for lectures elsewhere, but I started in Switzerland (February-June). These are mentioned in the Sabbatical Leave Report, should anyone care to read about them. The sequence of academic and industrial lectures is not important, but Nell and I also visited the University of Strasbourg in France (March), where we were handsomely entertained by Professor Guy Ourisson. We took a flying trip to England in May, where I lectured at the University of London (Professor Derek Barton), Oxford (Professor Tim Jones, with whom we stayed), and Cambridge (Professor Alexander Todd—we stayed with Dr. and Mrs. Sykes). A comparison of the manner in which visits to these three universities were managed is of personal interest. At the University of London, I gave two lectures, there were questions, our hotel expenses were prepaid, and I received an honorarium. At the University of Oxford, I gave one lecture attended, among others, by two faculty members who were there in my time (a bit daunting), and I received an honorarium to cover expenses. At the University of Cambridge, I also gave one lecture, following which, as was the custom, there was silence until Lord Todd asked the first question or made a pronouncement. In my case, it was the latter, to the effect that I had made good progress in my work on transannular interactions and reactions. I took unspoken umbrage at this judgment since I started this phase of my research in 1953, had proven or shown everything I wanted to during seven years, and I was at the point of abandoning the subject. I should point out that the late Lord Todd was about 6'8" tall and that, in his large office, his own desk area was raised about 7" to 8" above the rest of the room where any visitor would be seated. There was never a question about his ascendancy.

What about the tourist aspect of our trip? In Oxford, our visit had nostalgic overtones because I had entertained Nell and her father (chaperon) there in 1939. We toured Lincoln College and several other colleges, especially the gardens; the Christ Church Cathedral; my old laboratory, the Dyson-Perrins; Blackwell's Book Store; the walks along the Thames and Charwell. When we reached the Lincoln Boat House (it used to be a barge, but it sank), I was surprised to find Mr. Bossom there. He had been our boatman in my time, 1937-1939, and was then in charge of the boats and of poling (punting) us across the Thames. By 1960, he had been advanced to coach of the Lincoln shells and torpids as well. I introduced him to Nell, whom he asked in a charming manner whether she would like to see some photographs of her husband when he was on the Lincoln crew. Her seeing the carefully catalogued pictures elicited a very warm feeling on her part. Sir Ewart and Lady Frances Jones made us feel personally welcome, so the visit to Oxford was a great success.

In Cambridge, we were also made to feel welcome by Peter Sykes and his wife. Earlier, he had spent a sabbatical year at the University of Illinois and had audited my course in organic chemistry for undergraduates, given from an almost logical, physical-organic point of view. In the first edition of his textbook in the UK, Peter gave me credit for inspiring his similar approach to the subject. In later editions, possibly up to five at this time of writing, it wasn't necessary to refer back to the origin of his tremendously successful writing enterprise. Peter later became a spokesman on science-for-the-public on the BBC. Nell and I were impressed by the Sykes boys, and I trust they have done well in life. Cambridge is beautiful, certainly more rural than Oxford, and it was essentially unknown to both of us. I had made only one foray to Cambridge during 1937-1939. Peter was a dedicated guide on this 1960 occasion, imparting his knowledge and love of the place as well as its importance in the history of science. One of the famous Cambridge physicists of the time was Nevill Mott, who was well aware of his own ability. There was a student couplet that became popular at both Oxford and Cambridge, among both physicists and chemists, that went, "Todd thinks he's God, and Mott knows he's not."

In London, we paused for a day or two to review our earlier visit of 1939, during which we had affirmed that we intended to marry. We toured that city in three levels in personal time: 1939, when Nell and her father, Henri Jacques, and I were on tour and he discretely gave us some free time together; 1945, when I had been stationed there briefly in the bombed-out city; and 1960, by which time there was great resurgence and much new construction to see. We returned to Switzerland fulfilled and renewed and with an intended itinerary for a family return tour later in June.

First, back to the family visit to Holland during the Easter vacation. Nell and I went to Flims-Waldhaus one day ahead of vacation, stayed in a delightful pension on the square (that is still there), and Nell, particularly, did some sorting and packing of children's clothing so that we could travel light to Holland, which we did by train to Zürich and by Swissair to Amsterdam, where we were met by Nell's mother. It was a short ride from Schipol Airport to 's Graveland, where we shoehorned ourselves into Oma's little house at #203 Noorderinde. The gardens, the footpaths along the canals and slotjes, the hide-and-seek among the bamboo, the climbing of the friendly trees that dipped their limbs to the ground, the exploration of the beech woods, the visits and games with the Dutch cousins, and eating, lots of eating—all these were combined in one of the best weeks of our lives. We returned by TEE (Trans-Europe Express) train to Zürich and then on to Flims.

Then, back to Switzerland. It is my impression that the situation at the Kinderhaus improved somewhat. Nell sought to convince the "authorities" that American children liked to drink a lot of water and should be allowed to do so, and that the peanut butter and other goodies were for the children alone. I believe she gave the help some separate, small gifts to encourage them. The weather improved, allowing walks down to the two small lakes, Caumasee and Crestasee, and in the grounds of the Hotel Waldhaus, where the progress of the marmot colony could be observed. Life in Flims was simple, and regulated, but in beautiful surroundings. That is still part of the children's story to tell. Life in Basel became more active with the advance of spring: concerts, opera (limited), soccer matches, Sunday walks, visits to the museum and the zoo, indoor golf lessons in the Mustermesse, rides on the trolley system that went out to the suburbs, and—for Nell—church services in St. Leonhard Kirche. St. Leonhard was a celibate monk of some celebrity in the Middle Ages—no relation! We also developed lasting friendships during the short time we were there, which may seem surprising because the Swiss in general have the reputation of keeping to themselves. We found them most friendly.

We took a trip to Germany in May that started out in München, where we were guests of Professor Rolf Huisgen and his wife, Trudl. I gave two lectures, toured the facilities and talked with staff and students at the University of München while Nell was shown the architecture and museums of that fabled city. After München, we parted ways. Nell traveled to Holland to revisit family and I went on a lecture circuit that Rolf had arranged for me which included Göttingen, Marburg, Darmstadt, Heidelberg, and Karlsruhe and is described in the Sabbatical Leave Report. From Holland, Nell was taken by Oma and Tante Lien to Lugano, Switzerland, and

Rapallo and Pisa in Italy as a treat, and they stayed in hotels that had been earlier favorites of Tante Lien. When Nell returned to Basel shortly after I completed my German lecture tour, she was very fashionably dressed and coiffed and was thoroughly appreciative of what the females in the family had done for her. She had spent some carefree days during which she had no responsibility for her husband or children or even herself. That is a gift to remember and perhaps imitate. Oh, yes. She said there was an Italian naval officer who also tried to look after her.

Toward the end of our stay in Switzerland, there were two industrial visits that were very special. One was to Ciba, with the surprise gift of a commemorative medal, and the other was to Sandoz A.G. in Basel, where I lectured and where we were entertained in the evening by one of the Directors. Normally, after any lecture in Switzerland, cash money is given to the speaker "in lieu of expenses." In the case of Sandoz, the reward was even more useful. The Director asked where we were going next. "England," I answered. "We are going to take the children on a car trip, sightseeing and visiting friends." "Fine," he said. "Then I must recommend a car-rental agency in London that I find to be most accommodating. I will make the arrangements for you." He did, in fact, and there was no bill to pay! Nell and I went to Flims to gather up the children and their belongings. We had one full day of seeing all the sights and taking all the walks that the four had delighted in. We spent some time with Dr. Witzig, who came across as a charming schoolmaster, and with Frau Schlosser, paid the bills, and had a fine dinner in the Segnes Post for old-time's sake, that is, January/February of the same year. We sent the heavy luggage to Holland, and the next day we were taken to the train at Ilanz by Dr. Witzig. We boarded the narrow-gauge Glacier Express (St. Moritz-Matterhorn), which we rode as far as Andermatt. It is one of the most dramatic train rides in the world and includes several sections of cogwheel drive. In Andermatt, we climbed up to a little church and then up a path alongside a brook that was rushing down the mountain full of the spring thaw. From the railway station in Andermatt, we took a train down to Lucerne on the lake of that name. We rode the ferries that ply all parts of that lake, and we walked along the Lucerne quay and through the covered wooden bridges in the harbor. Hans and Käthe Schmidt drove from Zürich to have dinner with us and to see the children. Good friends. I wish they were still with us. After the train ride to Basel via Berne, it was our turn to "show": the apartment where we had been staying; our favorite haunts in Basel—the zoo, the walks along the Rhine, the bridges, and the old town, plus some trolley rides. We all stayed in a hotel by the station that night and flew from Basel to London the next

day. I must say that all members of the family were marvelous travelers and put up with Father's herding without major complaint. I learned to tell all beforehand what would be happening, how we would be moving from place to place, and why we were going to visit this person and that.

London. We stayed in Brown's Hotel. We were given a magical tour of the center of London by Sir Keith Murray. Keith had been the Bursar of Lincoln College, Oxford, when I was there on my scholarship, 1937-1939. He had studied at Cornell at one stage and was fond of Americans. He had taught me to play squash, he had been tolerant of my complaints about the billing practices of Lincoln, we had played bridge occasionally with Leslie Falk and Dr. Hanbury, one of the Dons, and he was a great supporter of music. In the latter connection, Keith offered his sitting room with its grand piano so that Leigh Gerdine and I could give a recital. That occurred in the spring of 1939, when Henri J. and Nell visited me in Oxford. They were our audience. Keith was thus a helper in the entertaining and courting process. Keith was the Rector, i.e., President, of Lincoln when I returned in 1945. By 1960, he had established himself as a leading agricultural economist, was directing foundations, and had been called upon by the Queen for advice on various commissions. It was upon his advice that the first British colony in Africa was freed. Keith has always been one of my heroes. He visited Nell and me in Urbana when we were just recently married, during the summer of 1947. Thus, he seemed anxious to match our hospitality and to show us his London. This included the Horse Guards, the Parliament, St. Paul's Cathedral, the Tower of London, and the Annex to his Gentlemen's Club, where he took us to lunch. Only the Annex at that time was available for female and underage guests. We thought he was being brave because, as a bachelor, he had little notion as to the behavior of children in general. Nell and I had no particular worry, because we knew that our four could be depended upon to perform well in the presence of a Knight of the Realm. Lunch went well with only one hitch. None of the children had ever been confronted with jellied consommé in wobbly cubes before, so they met the first course with consternation and some uneasiness. When Keith saw the distress and the lack of any movement toward consumption of the consommé, he discretely asked the waiter to remove their bowls and replace their servings with warm soup. The rest of the meal went beautifully. One of my fondest recollections of that day was seeing each one of our four, at some time during the day, take Keith's hand, whether crossing a street, standing beside him while he pointed out something, or edging closer when we were near to the huge horses in the courtyard. Keith also remembers that day with pleasure, as he told me many times thereafter. We have some great movies

of the London visit, including the children being practically covered with hungry pigeons in Trafalgar Square.

Time to move on. We picked up our rental car in the center of London, and I drove bravely west in the direction of Staines. Rather, I drove and the passengers were brave. We stopped to see Kitty and Leslie Strang and their children, David and Judy, in Walton on Thames. I had known the Strangs since 1937, before they were married, and had visited them several times in the 1950s. I wanted to introduce them to my family, about whom they had heard on each of my visits. It was a short stop, with coffee and soft drinks, and there was a good climbing tree in the front garden for diversion, also a lovely back garden. The next stop for establishing family acquaintances was down in Kent. We took the southern circular route around London to arrive in Elmsstead Woods, which was the home of Mrs. Parsons, mother of Tony, Rodney and Rosemary. I had been a frequent visitor in the Parsons' home when I was at Oxford, and they had always shown interest in my "Dutch girl," our eventual marriage, and the birth and development of the children. Rosemary, the youngest of their family, now married, and her mother fixed us lunch in the back garden. That stop was very successful because at the end of the garden there was a deep railroad cut. Trains came by frequently, and the children found it necessary to run down to look at each one. I did some of that myself. We drove on a bit further to Sevenoaks, where Tony and Rosemund Parsons had their house, surrounded by adequate enough grounds to take care of their large collection of enterprising sons. Tony was one of two Tonys, great friends of mine from 1937-1939 and 1945-1946, who are remembered in David's middle name. An overnight stop was made north of London where Jean Harris, brother of David, now married to John Orme, had a house, Broom House, that was big enough for all of us. The garden was also big enough to host organized games, thoughtfully arranged by Jean. By these, I mean croquet, darts, and bowling, for example. She referred jovially to our coming as "the American invasion." There may be some uncertainty about the sequence of these family visits, but I do recall that we kept moving so that there would be a minimum of boredom and so that we would not overstay our welcome. In retrospect, it is amazing that the whole plan worked. It never would have worked if any of the four children had complained, been unappreciative, impolite, or just difficult. Bless them!

On to Oxford, the most important stop, as far as I was concerned. We were given a suite in the Randolph Hotel. Four beds had been moved into the long sitting room and arranged in a row, and there was still plenty of room to move about. Nell and I had the connecting double bedroom,

and there was a bath to share, plus a tiny kitchenette. On one of the nights we spent there, Nell beckoned me to come look at the quadruple array after the children had fallen asleep. She said, "I just wanted to remind you of how wealthy we are." We stood there a long time, hand in hand, looking at our sleeping children. They were sleeping deeply because we nearly exhausted them each day. We covered everything of interest in Oxford that we had planned on the earlier trip that Nell and I had made. In the front quadrangle of old Lincoln College, as we stood there and I described my time in the college, David looked about and said, "I don't know this place." It was really a philosophical statement. We ate well during our time there, and we also took time out for refreshment now and then. In particular, David, only six, tired from all the walking, and we would have to give him a Coca-Cola to keep him going. We rented punts and explored the Thames and the Charwell. I think everyone took a turn at punting, i.e., poling the craft along the shallow waters, and no one fell in.

The final stop in Britain was Henley, where we watched the famous regatta. We were able to avoid the crowds and to park by the Thames because Kitty Strang knew a farmer whose land abutted the river. She had arranged to meet us there and to show us where to park. All of that went surprisingly smoothly. She had brought along blankets and picnic refreshments, so we could spread ourselves out on the bank of the river. There was also an old farm wagon nearby that offered a better vantage point for viewing the races. However, there seemed to be some balance between sitting or standing on the wagon to watch the races and just climbing on and jumping off the wagon. The parents did not interfere. We did, however, discourage the children from riding on a merry-go-round and some other carnival rides that were arrayed further down the river. My thesis was, "You can always ride on a merry-go-round, but you will not see the Henley boat races again for some time." Several years later, they understood my point of view. I tried to make up for their disappointment by describing each race in detail—eights, fours, and single and double sculls—and infusing as much differential excitement as I could. After all, they were not "just a bunch of rowboats." Kitty and Nell had the opportunity of becoming friends while I kept trying to keep the children enthused. It was a good experience. We flew back to Amsterdam, were met by family, and stayed again with Nell's mother.

The final period before we left for the United States was filled with visits among cousins, with Opa and Jacqueline, and with old friends of Nell. The large garden in 's Graveland claimed many hours. Bicycle riding was perfected in the alley next to the garden. We went aboard a whaling ship, about to be dismantled, of which one of Nell's cousins had been the

captain, and inspected the small castle in which he lived. Croquet in Oma's garden kept us busy outside, and mah-jongg was but one of the amusements inside. We prepared for our journey home by purchases and discards. We were to travel by ship from Rotterdam to New York. I felt that one such experience was highly desirable because the opportunity might not arise again, given the demise of passenger shipping with the growth of aircraft transport. Moreover, I thought we should travel first class because we might never have the opportunity again as a complete family. We were to sail on the S.S. Nieu Amsterdam. On the appointed departure day, the children were still playing outside along the slotje (small canal) in front of Oma's house. I had a vision of one of them falling in the water, which was covered with green slime algae and was certainly unhealthy. I am generally regarded as having a pessimistic view of eventualities, but what I seem to do is think of the best and/or worst scenario when confronting a new situation. My "be careful" was not taken seriously enough, and David fell in the slotje. He clambered out quickly enough, and a "team" gave him a bath, threw away the soiled clothes, unpacked and put on new, and we had the contrite lad ready—still in time.

Many family members accompanied us to Rotterdam and the docks of the Holland America Line. It was quite a send-off. We had two staterooms in first class, near the bow of the ship. The story on the children's adjoining stateroom was that it was "compact but comfortable." Being in the bow meant that we were subjected to more up-and-down motion than we liked, but the rolling motion was suppressed. Whenever one or more of the four felt nausea, I walked them around the outside deck. This method was not restorative for Nell, however. She preferred to remain prone even though she had taken seasick pills. The rough seas lasted only two days out of the seven-day trip, which included initial stops at Cherbourg, France, and Southampton, England. Crossing the Atlantic in a luxurious and relaxed state is a wonderful experience. The children ate at the early seating each night. After some coaching with the menu options on the first night, we left the choices almost entirely in their hands, with some misguidance by the German waiter as to what they selected. Nell and I dressed each night for dinner (black tie, long dress) and joined the children at about the time they were finishing desert. People at the adjacent tables thought we were with the State Department because the Leonard four were so independent and well behaved. During the days at sea, there were the usual games and walks and refreshments at frequent intervals. The children had the "run" of the ship, except that we asked them not to run. They managed to see much more of the ship than Nell and I did, all at a walk, we were told. We received no complaints so we did not have to counsel

anything else but safety. They attended more movies than we might have advised, but they were certainly intrigued with the novelty and the freedom they could enjoy. David turned out to have more wisdom and greater observational powers than the other three had granted him. He saw sharks astern, devouring the edibles thrown overboard from the galley; then the Captain announced their presence over the loud speaker. He saw whales spouting off the port side, to which observation his siblings said, "Oh, David," in remonstrance. Then the Captain made the whale announcement, and David had earned respect for future observations, such as when dolphins were playing in the bow waves. Swimming in the indoor pool was possible only when the water was not sloshing about too much with the motion of the ship.

There is always reluctance to terminate a pleasant sea voyage, and we experienced the usual sadness, but we also felt elation as the Statue of Liberty appeared out of the fog, and we sailed up the Hudson River with the incoming tide. We were met by my Uncle Louis, and then we crammed ourselves and our luggage into two taxis for the ride up to Bronxville, where we were greeted by my aunts, Flora and Kate. Jim and I stayed in a hotel, while there was room for the others in the house on Brookside Circle. We took time for a trip to Playland at Rye, New York, which had been a favorite amusement park for me when I was growing up. David and I found a new ride called "The Mouse" especially exciting. We were wedged into a little car that scooted about on a huge raised inclined plane on a single track that meandered all over the surface, coming close to the edge quite frequently and suddenly. The sudden, jerky movements and quick turns were truly representative of the path a mouse will take. The aunts treated us to food the children liked and they listened patiently to the stories of the European experiences, adding some of their own and some about me. The aunts were in their eighties at the time and were very good at "embroidering" stories, as my mother always used to say. I would have written down their stories if I had had a stronger feeling that they were not exaggerating or adding a particular slant to the stories. Am I avoiding such pitfalls in telling my stories? My father was devoid of guile. To him, the Revolutionary War officer's sword that was used to cut wedding cakes in family ceremonies was actually a sword he and his father found in an empty barn after the Civil War. He told me that the French tutor the aunts had was really the French Canadian maid who worked for them part-time when they lived in upstate New York. Oh, well. The aunts' stories were amusing and served a purpose in improving the limited breadth of experience they had had. Moreover, they were always very good to me, and I had the opportunity of being good to them in their declining nineties.

Back to the Leonard family story of 1960. With the old Pontiac down off the blocks and its battery charged, we jammed it full of luggage that we didn't send directly, and we drove to Manistee, Michigan, in two days. Everyone but I settled happily into Dunewood. I was dispatched to Urbana to pick up Taina in order to make the family summer scene complete. The Drickamers had maintained her well and happy, perhaps too happy since she was overweight. It was lucky that I returned to the University because I learned that my secretary had been fired in my absence, and no one had notified me. No wonder so many deadlines had slipped by without response! However, I could not dally. I had to return our elkhound to her real family, who reformed her at least partially with diet and exercise, but we were unsuccessful in breeding her. The Gerzons of Indianapolis came to Dunewood while we were there and enhanced the beach scene of swimming, sailing, playing, eating and much discussion. Koert and I drew lots of chemical formulas in the sand. Nell and I tried to put into practice the golf lessons we had had in Basel. The rest of the summer passed well for the family, and I went off to Australia and New Guinea.

### **Sabbatical Leave, 1960 (continued)**

There was one more trip for me in August of 1960—to Australia and New Guinea. The purpose was to attend a meeting on the Chemistry of Natural Products, sponsored by the Organic Chemistry Division of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry. The air route was from Chicago to San Francisco to Honolulu, where I stayed two nights as chemists gathered from many parts of the United States. It was a journey full of “firsts.” I had my first surfing lesson on one of the very large boards that were used at that time. Oahu was beautiful, hospitable, and not crowded, but building plans were escalating. Derek Barton and I explored the island by rented car and I paid the rental fee; he paid for the gas, and we saw more of the island than the other chemical beachcombers. In flying from Honolulu to Sydney, Australia, we made two stops. The first, unscheduled, was at Christmas Island to pick up some high-ranking U.S. military personnel. They had probably been involved in nuclear testing of some sort. The island is now called Kiritimati since it was restored to the native population as part of the Caroline Islands (Kribati) under the Treaties of Friendship signed with the Kribati, Tuvalu, and Cook Islands in 1979-1980. The second stop, scheduled for passengers and refueling, was at Nadi, Fiji Islands, in the very early morning. This brief stop gave me my first view of the stars of the Southern Hemisphere. We landed in

Sydney but did not stay because we were to return there for the last stop of an unprecedented three-city meeting. The flight from Sydney to Melbourne was somewhat amusing. As we sat in the lounge area of the Lockheed Electra, we heard the pilot announce our speed. We asked the stewardess to inform our A.N.A. pilot that the Electras were not permitted to fly that fast in the U.S.A. An upper speed limit had just been established in the U.S., and the Australian National Airlines had not yet heard about it. Our pilot did not slow down on the basis of our unofficial information, but we did pique his curiosity. The plane held together to Melbourne.

I recall feeling cold in Australia. It would be like February in the U.S., but without as much hotel or house heating. The international meeting progressed from Melbourne to Canberra to Sydney, with lectures, tours, and social functions. The Australians, most hospitable, were showing off their country to advantage. It was a time to make acquaintances and develop new friendships as well as renew old ones. All who attended were impressed by the experiences and sights, whether it was the shared chemistry; a first glimpse of Western Australian flowers flown in to enhance the decorations; the side-curtained street cars of Melbourne; the layout of the capital Canberra and the War Museum there; the gum trees; the aspects of Sydney including the bridge, botanical garden, opera house under construction and endangered by sinking, the arms of Sydney Bay, the oysters; the beaches near Sydney (Bondy, etc.); petting a wallaby in a walk-through preserve; or holding a eucalyptic koala.

I had the pleasant surprise of being invited to participate in a free, post-symposium, week-long trip to Papua, New Guinea. We were an international group of twenty-four invitees, just enough to fill the small plane that carried us over the Coral Sea to Port Moresby. The territory was administered by the Australians in those years, and they introduced some usual rules and regulations. Alcohol was banned. Cannibalism was outlawed and had become only sporadic. Some light industry was promoted, e.g., manufacturing plywood from indigenous timber; cash crops were introduced, e.g., rubber and coffee; gold-mining operations were resuscitated, mainly involving a reworking of the tailings from the prior river diggings that had been ruined by Japanese bombing. The Australians were trying to convert the inter-clan attacks to athletic contests. Since Papua, New Guinea, achieved independence, so recent travelers tell me, there has been retrogression in most of these areas. Alcohol is no longer banned. Inter-clan fighting has increased, jails are full, lands of the "rascals" have been appropriated, and Port Moresby is a very dangerous place because those dispossessed have nowhere to go. I am sad to hear all this, because during our visit in 1960 I felt very comfortable with the natives,

some of whom were wildly (and permanently) decorated. In fact, it was probably part of a New Guinea public relations scheme for us to be greeted at the Port Moresby airport by just such a wildly decorated native, clad in a loin cloth and speaking perfect English. He was the official “greeter”, and he did his job astonishingly well. The astonishment was actually ours, most probably the reaction intended. Rather than describe step-by-step the events of that exciting week, I shall simply list my observations, experiences, and some stories about our group of chemists. Here we go, then, with no attempt on my part of creating complete sequential sentences.

#### Port Moresby, Southern Part

Mangroves all along the water’s edge. Many sunken and half-sunken ships in the harbor from World War II. Great mixture of different indigenous peoples and Australians.

#### The Highlands, Including Wau

Landing on the tilted, grassy airport that marked the furthest, surprise incursion of Japanese soldiers who had stumbled and climbed through the jungle from the north side of the islands. The U.S. soldiers had jumped out of their planes upon landing and had had to clear the airport of Japanese soldiers so that further planes could land. It is estimated that at one point in the conflict there were on the Islands of New Guinea one million soldiers either trying to find each other in the jungles or on the beaches—or actually in combat. General MacArthur had correctly discerned that the route to Australia through New Guinea was one arm of the pincer movement that the Japanese were following. The other pincer was through the Pacific Islands. Both routes were fortunately contained.

I was looking at some unusual vegetation along the top end of the tilted airport (there were no flat places among the steep hills). I was in a kneeling position. When I looked up, my eyes came even with a perfect death’s head, about 1.5 inches top to bottom. It was the back of a huge spider.

I saw *Alstonia constricta* trees for the first time, about 300 feet tall. During my doctorate research at Columbia

## MORE THAN A MEMOIR

University, 1939-1942, I had been working on the constituents of the bark of this tree that had the native reputation of being antimalarial.

As my one-day companion Professor Holgar Erdtmann from Sweden and I walked down a jungle “road”, we decided to explore a bit into the jungle because he had a huge machete along. We estimated that we had to cut our way in only about 30 feet before it was almost too dark to see. On the way back out, following the machete marks, he freed two sturdy vines from their tree attachments so that I could play Tarzan, swinging widely (wildly?) at the end of one vine and jumping to the other vine as he passed it to me. Appropriate noises accompanied these gymnastics. What was my age? A mere 44. Holgar was noted for unconventional behavior!

One tribe in the Highlands was having a “Sing-Sing”, and it was attracting many visitors, including us. The men spent each morning getting painted and “dressed”. Each afternoon they paraded about to rhythmic chanting, and this went on into the night. A few of us did some parading with them in the afternoon, and the Papuans seemed pleased with our collaborative performance. This particular Sing-Sing had been going on about one month. During this time, pigs—especially piglets—are butchered and eaten. The native population is normally on a low protein diet, and the slaughter of the young pigs means that they will soon return to a low protein diet—for a long time. The Australians were attempting to prevent Sing-Sings, but they had some attractive magnetism. At such feasts, there was reputed to be some “lift-em leg” going on in the night. An interesting feature of this supposition was that there was no special increase in the number of births nine months thereafter. Also, according to repute there were special secret gardens where two varieties of plants were grown that had the combined effect of “the pill”. The Australians were never able to confirm all this. The original information had come from a Catholic missionary in the area.

Coming upon a native walking proudly along the road with his four young wives, all bare-breasted, my Illinois colleague

Roger Adams persuaded them that they should allow him to take a picture, which they gladly did. Then he persuaded the local chief, for that he must have been, to let Adams be photographed with his wives. That became Adams' 1960 Christmas card to his close friends.

The eating places were open on all sides, and vines grew in. We swore the vines were visibly extending themselves as we ate. John "Kappa" Cornforth, a brilliant, totally deaf chemist from England, later a Nobel prize winner, and I imagined that we were guarding our soup from the geckos (small lizards with toes having adhesive disks) who climbed the vines and walked the ceiling above us. They always looked as though they would fall down, especially into the soup.

Shoes had to be examined each morning to make sure there were no scorpions inside. Some of the old English and German professors put their shoes outside the motel-like rooms at night. We supposed they expected polishing. This was too much for two of our more exuberant younger chemists, and on the final night in the Highlands, the shoes were separated and randomly hidden. What consternation!

Up in Wau, there was a dour Scotsman living alone and directing a sluicing operation by natives for the recovery of gold. He did not like people and was happiest when the road up to his little house was washed out so that no one could come and bother him. I told him one of my odd wishes in life was to hold gold dust in my hand and allow it to flow through my fingers. He obliged by taking a heavy coffee can down from a shelf in his kitchen and letting me do just that. He used a small brush to replace in the can any gold dust that was still adhering to my hand. What a rich thrill!

We visited a new rubber plantation that was planted on an unprecedented slope of 18%. Orchids were growing in the crotches of all the young trees. A flock of white parrots flew overhead to make the exotic picture complete. I detected that the owner was Dutch, so I lingered after the official tour to talk with him. It turned out that he had attended the Dutch Agricultural University in Wageningen

## MORE THAN A MEMOIR

with my wife's first cousin, Jan Dinger. Somehow, one discovers that all Dutch are connected in some way. On the basis of that, I was invited into the house for tea, met his wife, and I was given the opportunity of taking a dip in his swimming pool. We got along very well. When it came time to leave, he said (the Dutch are always frank), "Oh, by the way, I should tell you that I didn't like Jan Dinger too much. It is only fair to say that." I told him that I was not very fond of Jan either. We parted good friends.

The trip down to Lae, the port on the Northeast shore, was managed in open command cars along a twisting road, one lane and very dusty. The drivers were coastal natives who seemed to have a sixth sense that told them when someone or something was coming up the mountain on the same road. The road itself clung to the side of various cliffs in a very unconvincing manner. We came upon one chap who had never seen a white man before. He had come out of his village to hunt some rat and tree kangaroos, and he had special arrows for each, along with his bow.

On a coffee plantation outside of Lae, as I talked to the owner, an *Anopheles* mosquito settled on my arm in characteristic tilted, head-down position. The plantation owner asked me what I was taking as a prophylactic against malaria. I said, "Chloroquine." He said, "Let the mosquito bite you," so I did. When he found out that I had worked on Chloroquine as part of the war research, he was delighted. He told me that on the wet North coast he would not have been able to maintain a plantation if it weren't for the antimalarial Chloroquine.

We said goodbye to Papua and to our Australian hosts and guides in a typical Australian "farewelling." I am sure this was invented by the Australian men so that they can kiss, very fondly, all the women present at the time of goodnight or goodbye.

We flew from Lae to Sydney and back to Honolulu, which seemed remarkably insipid and civilized after our sojourn in New Guinea. From Hawaii, it was back to Chicago and home after a memorable journey.