A n invitation from Professor Tozo Fujii, my former postdoctorate who had become Professor at Kanazawa University, to spend a period as visiting professor at his university allowed Nell and me to plan a prior visit to Indonesia. We broke the outgoing trip with a stop in Waikiki, Hawaii, where we stayed at the Hyatt Regency Hotel and toured the island by limousine. Flying on to Jakarta on Java, Indonesia, we stayed with Nell's sister Hilda and her husband Paul Renardel de Lavalette at the Netherlands Embassy, where he was the resident Ambassador. We had a privileged tour of Jakarta that included a visit, but only passing by, to the house of Nell's grandfather Jan Dinger, where she had lived following her first five years in Shanghai, China. Her mother's father was in the long line of the Dutch who had set up the major banking system on Java. The large colonial mansion had been divided into many apartments when, following the departure of the Japanese invaders, Indonesia had become free. The harbor of Jakarta was a bustling port, with small ships of all variety used for inter-island commerce. Memorable also were the rice paddies, the carts pulled by water buffalo, and the bananas. There was also an ambassador's house in the mountains, Puncak, where Paul and Hilda could escape the heat from time to time. When I dove into the small swimming pool there, all the little geckos jumped out. Then these lizards scrambled back into the pool when I climbed out. It was obviously a kind of mutual ownership arrangement.

The Javanese food was varied and delicious, even if somewhat unsettling at times, and we appreciated the siestas after lunch, when the temperature and humidity outside were too challenging. Nell and I took a separate trip to Jogjakarta, where a guided, all-day tour included the Prambanan Temple, Sultan's Palace, a batik factory, and Burubudur and famous Buddhist temples. Hilda joined us then on Bali, which the natives speak of as being the origin of sunrise of the world. Beaches (Sanur, Kuta), dances (Gabor, Kechak, Legong, and Baris), and a holy spring (Tirta Ampul) occupied our attention, and we enjoyed the quiet luxury of the Bali Hyatt
Hotel. When we were all back in Jakarta, we tried to obtain an impression as to what the other Indonesian islands would be like with a visit to Taman Mini, where imitation villages on display represent the architecture and life style of each of the islands. It is pasteurized tourism at its best.

Our departure from Jakarta via Hong Kong to Tokyo was exquisitely timed for the passage of a typhoon through the travel area. Garuda Airlines, the national airlines of Indonesia, merely transferred all the passengers from a canceled flight to the next one, with priority over those scheduled on the second (or third) flight. While most of the Western would-be passengers responded by adding to the confusion, retrieving and rechecking luggage, going in and out behind the departure desk, and, in general, shouting about how the airline (not the typhoon, of course) was affecting their lives and businesses. I decided upon a more Eastern approach of patience and passivity. Sure enough, after three or four hours of my standing quietly by the desk, Nell and I were given the last two seats on a plane. We were bound for Hong Kong in the turbulent air that follows a typhoon. In Hong Kong, we were transferred to a flight on Singapore Airlines. The employees charmed us into forgetting the typhoon and further delay. We arrived at Narita Airport, Tokyo, after midnight, and transferred, without luggage, to the city terminal. We were supposed to be met by Professor Takeo Sato of Tokyo Metropolitan University, but we were hours late. (He had been a postdoctoral research associate in my laboratory.) Nevertheless, there was Takeo, smiling broadly and cheerily saying hello, when we came down the escalator into the air terminal in Tokyo. How did he know when or how we would arrive? There was no opportunity for communication. He had logically assumed that, under the circumstances, we would simply take the first plane we could from Hong Kong to Tokyo, and he was prepared to stand there until we arrived. Takeo died in May, 2000. I wrote to his widow that I had never been as happy to see anyone in my life as I was to see Takeo that early morning in Tokyo. On October 15, 1978, then, Takeo made arrangements for our luggage, on whatever flight it might arrive, to be delivered to our room at the Hotel Okura, where he dropped us off for our still-guaranteed reservation. A bellboy knocked on our door at about 5:00 a.m., bringing the luggage, much to my relief. I say “my” relief because Nell had entrusted her worry to me and was sleeping peacefully. Takeo drove us all around Tokyo after a late breakfast, which was a special treat for Nell because it was her first time in Japan since she was four years old. There was no bill to pay when we checked out of the Okura Hotel. Takeo and Michinori Oki had taken care of it.

My stay in Japan was sponsored by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, and they provided a stipend, travel expenses, and an allowance
for my wife, all very generous. Our first stop on the tour was to be Kanazawa, and Tozo Fujii joumeyed from there all the way to Tokyo to be our guide and escort on October 16. The limited express from Ueno Station took us through the Japan “Alps” on a seven-hour scenic ride to the western coast. We decided to stay in a hotel for the first five nights (Kanazawa New Grand), while we were becoming accustomed to the city, and then to stay in a Japanese inn (Kaikan Kaga) for a more indigenous experience during the remaining 13 nights. Tozo’s wife Keiko guided Nell around the city so that she would be familiar with transportation and shopping, and the ladies also visited kindergarten and schools and even a dress rehearsal for a Noh play. It is so unusual for a Western person to be interested in the traditional Noh Theater that Nell was interviewed by the local newspaper for her impression of the whole lengthy performance. I gave three talks in Kanazawa, one of them on October 18 at the 11th Congress of Heterocyclic Chemistry. Outside the halls where the lectures were held was a plinth bearing the bronze figure of an American bison. I remembered it well, because I still had it clearly in mind when I learned, probably by 1991, that it had been sculpted by Peggy’s mother and had been donated to Kanazawa by the Mayor of Buffalo, New York, its sister city in the United States. Small world! Back in October of 1978, I gave two lectures at Kanazawa University, one sponsored by the Hokuriku Branch of the Pharmaceutical Society of Japan and the other a seminar in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences of the University. I walked to the laboratory early each morning, when we were staying at the New Grand Hotel, by a route that took me through the beautiful Kenroku-en Garden, considered to be one of the most classic gardens in Japan. It amused me that the regular denizens of the garden were daily so surprised to see a Westerner, especially one who seemed to appreciate their favorite surroundings. In fact, Kanazawa had so few Westerners that Nell and I tended to greet them and to start a conversation when we would see other Westerners on the street. We smiled a lot in return for the smiles that the surprised local inhabitants bestowed upon us.

There was much to do and see when Tozo and I were not discussing research: an aquarium, an Edo Village of the 1608-1867 period, a Buddhist temple given by the King of Siam, and the nearby villages and mountains. Tozo and I practiced golf swings at one of the driving ranges ubiquitous in Japan, and Nell, Tozo, and I played a round of golf at the Toyama Country Club, where Tozo’s brother was a member. That was a very special mountainside experience. The golf pro walked us through the first hole, probably out of hospitality or politeness, but possibly also to determine whether the foreigners were going to chop up his course. I was lucky to
make a par on the first hole, and Nell was only one or two strokes above, so the pro waved us on enthusiastically to the second hole. The rest of our game was close to disastrous, and we heard a lot of "Too bad, O.B." from our lady caddy. Indeed, our scores were ruined by the many shots out-of-bounds, but those did not prevent us from having a good time at a favorite but exclusive Japanese pastime. The most special Kanazawa experience was a drive up one side and down the other side of the Noto Peninsula with the Fujiis. This territory is noted for an abundance of Buddhist temples and for factories making lacquered furniture. The details of our further travel and of my speaking engagements are to be found in a copy of my report to the JSPS, delivered on November 15, the day of our departure from Tokyo for home. What follows is a more personal account of the rest of our month in Japan, with stress on people, experiences, and impressions.

As any traveler to Japan has experienced, Japanese friends and hosts are most solicitous concerning departures and arrivals and even travel in between. It may be a custom that has descended from earlier times when the importance of a traveler was indicated by the size of his retinue. In our case, Tozo Fujii had journeyed to Tokyo to accompany us back to Kanazawa. When we traveled by bullet train from Kanazawa to Hiroshima, we were met by another of my postdoctorates, Fumio Toda, who then accompanied us to Ube, in the Kansai district. My lecture at Ube Industries provided the means whereby the three of us could stay overnight in their guest house and then transfer by rail, Ogori to Yanai, and taxi to the ferryboat that would take us across the Inland Sea to the island of Shikoku. Luckily for Nell, the sea was calm. Incidentally, there is now a spectacularly beautiful bridge, Seto-Ohashi, joining Honshu and Shikoku with both auto and rail traffic. The attractions were Ehime University in Matsuyama, the mountains and sea coast of Shikoku, Fumio's house, where we had dinner, a museum of an archeological site where there were objects 6,000 to 12,000 years old, and a tangerine orchard on the small island of Omishima. Nell and I also tried our hands at forming vases in a famous ceramics factory. We flew from Matsuyama to Osaka, where we stayed in the Royal Hotel and where I visited two pharmaceutical firms. My former postdoctorate Ichizo Inoue was our host at the Tanabe Seiyaku Company on the first day, and my old friend Dr. Ken'ichi Takeda, Director of the Shionogi Research Laboratory, was our host on the second day. One must be prepared to banquet on a lecture tour of Japan, and our November tour was no exception. The Takeda-hosted dinner party at the Restaurant Tsuruya in Osaka was the most aesthetic culinary highlight of our trip. I have never experienced a more beautifully prepared and served meal.
In Osaka, Minou Park was notable for the color of the maple leaves. Our next stop, Nara, was notable for the deer that populated the park, which we traversed in a very soft drizzle, adding atmosphere to the setting. We had an interesting experience at Nara Hotel. As we entered the hotel, climbed the wide stairway, and walked along the second floor corridor, Nell had a strong feeling of having stayed there when she was a child of four or five. She said she expected to find a broom closet at the end of the hall, and there it was! She remembered being put temporarily in that broom closet by the hotel manager to discourage her from running up and down the hall. We found that the hotel had been built in 1909, so the timing could be accommodated. When we checked with my father-in-law in a subsequent exchange of airmail letters, he confirmed that the Nara Hotel was indeed the place they had stayed on a visit from Shanghai, where he was an officer in a bank, to Japan in the early 1920s. Nell had always felt that goats had taken her bread in the park when she was a little girl. In 1978, she could now realize that they were deer and that she was supposed to feed them. The deer were very polite; as Japanese deer, they bow to you.

In Kyoto, where we stayed at the Miyako Hotel, Hajime Iwamura and his wife were our hosts. The visit to Nijo Palace was memorable, as were visits to the many temples and to the Handicraft Center (gifts to take home). The gardens of the Katsura Imperial Villa can be visited by Japanese only if they are in the company of foreigners and only if they apply for a date and time months in advance. It was the first visit for Hajime, who is a native of Kyoto. The perfection of the gardens has to be seen to be believed. Even photographs cannot provide the formal balance and meaning of every view. It is a total tribute to precious, fragile, natural beauty manipulated by man.

A Kodama (shadow) bullet train took us to Shizuoka, where Professors Minoru Sekiya and Keiicho Ito (later of Hokkaido Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences) were our hosts. We toured round the vast, sloping sides of Mount Fuji and stayed the night in Hotel Mount Fuji in Yamanaka. Is the beautiful Mount Fuji always shrouded in clouds? We saw it under cloudless conditions at sunrise. The splendor of that volcano is etched forever in my memory, as we saw it from our bedroom window and then from the garden of the hotel.

It was then back to Tokyo, where we stayed at the Hotel New Japan (which later had a disastrous fire). I lectured at the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences of the University of Tokyo, where Masaji Ohno was my host. He had been a postdoctorate with Professor E.J. Corey at the University of Illinois and had accompanied him to Harvard University.
in 1960. My 1953 colleague, Professor Takeshi Hashizume, was my host for a lecture at Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology. Dr. Issei Iwai of Sankyo Company gave us a complete tempura luncheon and guided us in camera shopping. Takeo Sato appeared again to help us do more sightseeing and shopping, and we visited the University of Tokyo, hosted by Kyoshi Mutai and Michinori Oki. Nell felt the need of a visit to a church on November 12, our last Sunday, as a result of which she had the company of several new “old” friends on Monday. Sunday afternoon was special and included a wonderful time in the Okis’ home with their daughters and friends. Fusae’s art teacher also taught Nell a few fundamentals of charcoal drawing.

The final get-together was impressive. The Hashizumes, Okis, Satos, Iwamuras, Mutais, and Tozo Fujii assembled for a departing banquet at Totenko, near the Ueno Station. Gifts, of course, were exchanged, and we benefitted from the advice that Michinori gave us as to what was appropriate from our side. Our last vision of friends on the next day was of the smiles on their faces as we disappeared up the escalator in the Tokyo Air Terminal. Were they smiles of relief?—no, I do not think so; rather, affection. On a final note about the transport home, it is wise to book an “all coach” flight and to ask for seats near the front. If the seat configuration has not been changed, the forward seats will be equivalent to business class. We were lucky.