

A TRIP TO EUROPE

Sixteenth article in a series by Miss Margaret Laundry.

July 21st, 6:00 p.m. Kath and I left Ireland from one of the largest natural harbours in the world. The Cork section of the harbour is narrow with many shoals, requiring a good pilot to steer our 4,000 ton Innisfallen thro' Aswe reached Cohb it widened but was still very protected by high rolling hills on either side. Black Rock Castle jutting out on a small point marks the meeting of fresh and salt water. The Cohb Cathedral stands high on a hill, its spire rising far above the town, overlooking the harbour from its large rose window. It took two hours to run the length of that harbour, so you can imagine its size. Now out in the open sea we started rolling considerably and decided that since the sea air was making us so drowsy, that we'd go below and curl up in a lounge chair for the remaining seven hours of the trip.

At 3:00 a.m. we landed in Fishguard, Wales. The purser, dear soul, realizing that we could scarcely go hitching at that hour, showed us down into a dormitory where we had 3 hours of undisturbed sleep. The morning was misty and raining but as luck would have it, Mrs. Price in her new green station wagon picked us up on the dock and drove us a good one hundred miles on our way. She was an Englishwoman in her 30's who kept us entertained with stories of her dogs and horse and the chase.

In Hereford we visited a large Norman cathedral. The lacy, carved wooden screen which divided the nave from the choir was inset with coloured stones and mother of pearl. For the first time we saw the work of vandals who had carved their initials into the stone and marble effigies and tombs in the cathedral.

We drove down thro' the very beautiful and fertile Wye Valley with fields almost maroon in colour to either side of us. This is the bread basket of England and Wales for wheat, barley, hops, oats and mangles are grown here. These fields are larger than the general run of British fields and are divided off by hedges or bushes. We took snaps of the immense shell of Tintern Abbey which was ransacked by Cromwell's men who broke all the stained glass windows and destroyed the roof as well. Now it sits in a valley of green grass - an impressive sight from the surrounding hills.

(Cont. on next col.)

A TRIP TO EUROPE (Cont.)

The Chepston Hostel is set on top of a steep 1/2-mile-up hill; but a "bloke" at the bottom offered to take our pack sacks up on his motor bike, which lightened our load considerably. Since he took another road to ours we were worried as to whether we might not see them again - but there he was at the top when we arrived. From here we got a lovely view over the Bristol Channel and the Severn River. Supper was our first meal of the day, other than for a cup of tea and a sausage roll when we left Mrs. Price. Having covered the better part of 200 miles with a good bit of sight seeing thrown in and little sleep on the ship, those hostel bunks couldn't have been more attractive. We fell in exhausted!

Next day we took the ferry boat across the Severn River which has one of the lowest and highest tide changes in the world. We could also have gone under it by tunnel. We were whipped thro' Bristol, a clean well laid out city of 350,000, with an undertaker who queried us of our religious beliefs.

South about fifteen miles is Bath, whose history goes way back to the Romans. It was a beautiful afternoon when we arrived so we had our peanut butter sandwich lunch in a very lovely park. One of its gardens was a large crown patterned from greenish-grey cacti and small red green and white plants. It could vie with Edinburgh's clock for attractiveness and detail of design.

The Abbey in the center of the town is in the courtyard skirted by small shops. On either side of its Great West Door angels are climbing a stone ladder, some, seemingly finding the task too difficult, are falling down.

The Roman Baths, from which Bath gets its name, are built over a warm spring whose temperature and volume does not vary, no matter what the external temperature, since time began. The mosaic floors raised on piles of tiles allowed hot spring water to flow underneath and thus the floors and rooms were warmed for those going into bathe. Central heating is modern???? -- That was 54 A.D. The Roman baths were not discovered until 1880 for the foundations had been built upon by many other generations. The water tastes heavily of salts and claims many cures.